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**THE INSTITUTE FOR THE ART AND
PRACTICE OF DISSENT AT HOME**

ENGEL

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**THE INSTITUTE FOR THE ART AND
PRACTICE OF DISSENT AT HOME**

2008-2012

INTRODUCTION

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home was set up in 2007 at 19 Livingston Court, L17 8XZ in South Liverpool, but moved to new premises at 7 Bright Street, L6 1DL in Everton in January 2008. The Institute is co-organized by Gary Anderson and Lena Simic, together with their children Neal, Gabriel and Sid, who were 7, 5 and 0 back in 2007.

Frustrated with the way things were we, Gary and Lena, decided to try an experiment in family activism. We were terrified of bringing up our children to be passive consumers of corporate commodities and looming on the horizon was the Liverpool08 European Capital of Culture. There we saw explicit links between art making and capitalism and it made us feel sick. It made us worry about our children. It made us worry about ourselves. The celebrations of commodification were appalling to us and, we felt, no one really seemed to be complaining. So, we wanted to create a space for doing things a little bit differently, with our eyes on the prize of a workable model for cultural dissent based in a family. Motivating everything was our concern to bring up our children critically and lovingly. In other words to encourage them to structure the world as a problem, whilst making sure they got all the love they'd need from us to get through it all. Hopefully this will help them (as it is helping us) to grow into conscientious citizens active in social and ecological justice. We had to make a big promise at first to get us going. We promised that, whatever we do we'd do it with financial transparency, through 'homemade' aesthetics and whatever we did it would have to be relevant to our everyday lives. We also promised ourselves it would be fun. But the key to it all was dissent. We decided that the Institute should be focussed on social transformation through dissenting the current state of affairs, for example consumer capitalism, the nuclear family, big oil generated ecocide. To this end we thought we should refigure a part of the family living space into a meeting place for artists, activists and cultural dissenters. The spare bedroom.

We hope that the Institute continues to be a self-sufficient and sustainable initiative. For funding it continues to draw 10% of all income from its members (Gary and Lena work as university lecturers as well as freelance artists, children receive child benefit). Collectively, this currently stands at £5100 a year (in 2013), but it was £ 2857 when we made those first promises.

In order to try to get some of these points from this Introduction across to you in book form we have decided to arrange the following into five parts, emphasising, where we can, our 5th anniversary:

5 critical concerns

5 performance events

5 post cards from visitors

5 artist residencies

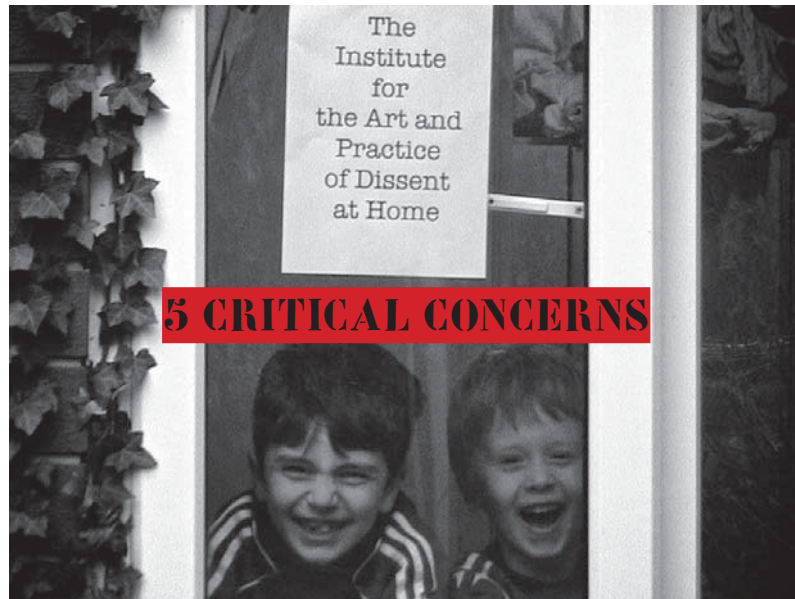
&

5 conversations about the future.

A big thank you for picking this up and having a look through. For us it has been lots of fun, we hope you have some too.

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The Institute commissioned five people to provide a few paragraphs on the possible contexts for the Institute. They were paid a fiver for every paragraph they wrote.

THE ART OF DISOBEDIENCE: THE DOMOPOLITICS OF THE INSTITUTE FOR THE ART & PRACTICE OF DISSENT AT HOME

Bruce Bennett and Imogen Tyler

‘We have decided to disobey. We, as a family, have decided to be naughty.’

Introduction

The Institute for the Art & Practice of Dissent at Home is an ongoing collaboration between the artist-activists Gary Anderson, Lena Simic and their more or less willing children, Neal, Gabriel and Sid. Operating out of the spare bedroom of their family home in Everton, Liverpool, which contains a library, a documentary archive of their work, whose walls are plastered with texts and images and which is the base for other ‘family artists’ who are invited to take up residencies in *The Institute*, the members of this art collective practise what they term ‘family activism’: ‘A practice which politicizes everyday living by thinking critically through our immediate contexts.’ This essay attempts to think critically about the work of *The Institute* as a practice that both exposes and resists ‘domopolitics’, and in so doing will offer a series of reflections on what it means to be disobedient today, and why disobedience ‘begins at home’.

Disobedience

In 1963, the social psychologist Eric Fromm published a short, provocative essay titled ‘Disobedience as a Psychological and Moral Problem’, in which he proposed that human capacities for disobedience had been incrementally diminished, arguing that we were living through a period of the *obedient subject*. Underlying this shift to an irrational culture of repressive obedience, Fromm argued, was a struggle between a rationalist ‘authoritarian conscience’ (the internalisation of authoritarian social and political ideologies) and a ‘humanistic conscience’ (an intuitive knowledge of what is human and inhuman, right and wrong). For Fromm, human beings are only free in their capacity to engage in acts of disobedience. To be able to say ‘no’ to power, be it the power of an authoritarian family or a state, is a fundamental measure of individual or collective freedom. It is also crucial to personal and cultural ‘intellectual development’. To say ‘no’ is to begin to think critically. Yet, Fromm proposes that our capacity to enact this negative freedom has been radically curtailed by the very kinds of subjectivity constituted by *the state we are in*. Our obedience has been secured, he suggests, through a

fear of freedom itself, and thus the conditions of possibility of disobedience have been eroded from ‘within’ and ‘without’. While Fromm’s brand of individualist radical humanism is dated, his argument that the institution of new (neoliberal) forms of subjectivity limits our capacity for disobedience and resistance remains a powerful manifesto. It comprises a set of ideas that we want to explore here through a consideration of the practices of disobedience that characterise **The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home**.

Why disobey now?

Alongside rising levels of economic and social inequality, Britain has witnessed the erosion of workers’ rights, civil liberties and human rights, legal protections that are seen to interfere with and distort competitive markets. The systematic tearing-up of the new social contract that was instituted after the Second World War can be tracked through the period that extends from the 1970s through the rollback of the welfare state, the decomposition of trade unions, the securitisation of borders, and a redefining of British citizenship. At the same time, formal and informal modes of democratic protest, exemplified by workers’ revolts and the political movements of minority subjects (notably the women’s movement, black civil rights, queer and disability politics) in the 1970s and 1980s, have been seriously undermined. Britain is becoming more unequal and less democratic.

At the same time, as both the political left and the right share the reactionary, market-oriented consensus that there is no realistic alternative to deregulated corporate capitalism, there is no mainstream political opposition to policies that have curtailed democratic freedoms, fractured communities and (re)constituted nineteenth-century levels of economic inequality. One effect of the emergence of a neoliberal political consensus is that people’s capacity to protest effectively against the state we are in has been eroded as acceptable spaces and platforms for formal and democratic protest have become practically non-existent. At the same time, the aggressive policing of recent protests by students and other groups against the shock austerity measures introduced after the 2008 financial crash, reveals how *protest itself has been criminalized* (See Tyler, 2013).

Strategies for disobedience

At this historical moment, and inspired by Fromm, the pressing question is not so much, ‘why disobey?’ as ‘how?’ How might we continue to be disobedient when direct forms of political protest have become subject to intensive state control, and protest criminalized so that protestors are increasingly held under catch-all terror laws that reconfigure political protest or disobedience as terrorism? The menacing figure of the domestic, ‘home-grown’ terrorist is mobilized as an alibi for a wide range of state actions from neo-colonial military interventions, increases in border security, the radical extension of domestic and international state surveillance and increasingly aggressive policing of demonstrations. This is a situation that the artist and so-called ‘domestic extremist’, **The Vacuum Cleaner** (aka James Leadbitter), has explored and parodied in his solo work and his work as a founder



"The Kids are Revolting: An Art-Activist Son". Photograph – Bruce Bennett

member of the collective, **The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination. The Vacuum Cleaner**, whose work extends from performance art interventions, gallery installations, and the ‘subverting’ of corporate brands such as Starbucks and Apple, through to films such as the crowd-funded documentary about climate change activists, *Just Do It* (James, 2011), constitutes one model for a disobedient practice that is diverse, satirical, ambiguous, non-commodifiable, and politically challenging¹.

We would suggest that in the highly securitized, intensively surveilled and paranoid environment of contemporary Britain, *disobedience must be creative*, and in this context the activities of artists such as Leadbitter and his collaborators offer *strategies for disobedience*. In particular, it is in its potential to stage what Graham St John terms, ‘carnivalized methods of protest’, that art can show us how to say ‘no’ (2009). In the face of the failure of political representation, art-activism offers a means by which we can voice our opposition to the state we are in and imagine alternative ways of being together.

Disobedience as love

Parodying a scientific research centre, and presenting its projects as ‘experiments’ in protest, **The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination** offers a good example of art as carnivalized disruption in which an activist politics is integral to the form and meaning of the work². Among The Lab’s experiments was the formation of the ‘Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army’³, which protested at a G8 meeting in Scotland in 2005, the delivery of lecture courses in post-capitalist culture and activism at the anti-G20 protests in London in 2009, a snowball fight with bankers in the City of London in February 2009 in retaliation for their role in the financial crash, the modification of hundreds of abandoned bikes into ‘tools of civil disobedience’ at the UN Climate Change talks in Copenhagen in 2009 (which was also the site for work by *The Institute*), and the launch of the ‘Great Rebel Raft Regatta’ (GRRR) to shut down the Kingsnorth coal-fired power station in 2008. As an essay by two of the rebel clowns, Isabelle Fremeaux & Hilary Ramsden, puts it, although this work is inspired by political anger and can involve direct physical confrontation, in this context a disobedient art practice is also *an act of love*.

What is at stake in the playfulness and humour of these interventions or experiments in dissent is a refusal of the rationalizing, destructive logic of neoliberal capitalism through an almost utopian insistence upon play, laughter and absurdity. This is a practice that confounds and confuses a financial and institutional order that can only understand the world in terms of commerce, exchange-value and commodification. The rejection of this economic ethos is perhaps most symbolically evident in the sacrificial installation, ‘Everything for Everyone, Nothing for Ourselves’ (2006) in which the group scattered their £500-pound budget as penny coins across a gallery floor in London to which visitors could help themselves.

Emerging from the traditions of conceptual art, performance art and experimental theatre, this model of contemporary art activism holds open the possibility of an entirely different way of thinking about the world and social relations. As **Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination** - collaborator John Jordan writes

Most radical politics is suffused with despair and a neurotic obsession with “being realistic”. No one is going to want to change the world unless it is the most joyful and desirable activity around. In a time when capitalism has hijacked our desires and wants, we must make rebellion more beautiful than anything capitalism can ever dream of.⁴

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home works within this optimistic and utopian ambit of art activism; one of its distinctive features is the way that its work embraces just such playful rebellion. At the same time, *The Institute* grounds this in the everyday, mundane sphere of the domestic space by *rethinking the family unit as a collaborative art collective*. Rejoicing in both the absurdity of an avant-garde art practice that is based in the spare bedroom of a council house, as well as in the normality of this situation, the work of *The Institute* offers a model of domestic radical art practice. As well as working in metropolitan art galleries, on the streets, and at specific events such as the UN Climate talks in Copenhagen, in the ongoing practice of *The Institute*, the revolutionary ambitions of radical politics are also explored on the stage of the family home, public transport, schools, local streets and parks.

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home

Inspired partly by the work of *The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination*, and also by a history of politicized and feminist art that deals with the domestic or uses the domestic space as an extension of the gallery or black-box theatre, *The Institute* was established in 2007 as a response to Liverpool’s designation in 2008 by the EU as the **European Capital of Culture**. Renamed by *The Institute* and other opponents as, variously, the “Culture of Capitalism,” “Capital of Culture” and “Capital(ism) for Vultures”, this expensive year-long event was the focus for protests by various groups against the neoliberal project at the heart of the European City for Culture programme. Liverpool 08, as the project was branded, saw large areas of the city centre sold to commercial developers, the demolition of inner-city housing and the eviction of local residents, and the effects on local people and artists have been documented in the film *Liverpool 08 – Capital of Vulture* (Cyranek, Cyranek, Christen, 2011). Born out of this controversial moment of dissent and investment in the ‘cultural industries’, *The Institute* describes itself as a vehicle for attacking ‘the capitalism of culture’. Indeed, their practice can be characterised first and foremost as protest practice.

It is also important to note that *The Institute* was established in Everton, one of the most deprived wards in Britain, where the unemployment rate is among the highest in the country and the mean household income

lies well below the national average. Ironically, this is a situation that may have been exacerbated by the diversion of funds to the city centre for Liverpool's multi-million pound 'cultural regeneration'. Thus, *The Institute* offered an alternative account of what art might be, producing art within Everton in protest at this marginalization, but also demonstrating that art can be made anywhere at any time – not just in officially designated spaces and with official funding and corporate sponsorship.

Family activism

We are artists. We are activists. We are a family.
Mummy and kids are in the frame and Daddy's behind the camera.
We are a nice nuclear family.
We are a hetero-normative unit.
Tesco loves us, Disney adores us and McDonalds can't get enough of us.
We are complicit in consumer capitalism (check out the footy gear!)
We, the family, are the solid bedrock of society at least that is what we are told.
Instead we will dissent! We will have fun and take the piss.

This is how *The Institute* first described their practice. We would suggest that there are four overlapping themes explored by The Institute that mark its practice as distinctive:

- Anti-capitalism and social class and, in particular, engagement with the kinds of working class cultures, sensibilities and solidarities peculiar to northern cities such as Liverpool.
- Immigration, citizenship and national identity, informed by Lena's migrancy and by collaborations with migrant activists and artists.
- The sexual politics of the household and, in particular, the organisation, exploitations and affective economies of domestic labour.
- Romantic and parental love.

These themes are variously addressed in the register of 'family activism'. This might seem to be a misnomer, given that the promotion and preservation of the family has been the bed-rock of conservative politics since the backlash against the women's lib movement and LGBT rights in the 1980s. The 'family' is repeatedly invoked as the very symbol of heteronormativity, enshrining nostalgic ideals of romantic love, clearly defined gender identities and roles, and an imaginary, gentle, community-minded past, uncontaminated by identity politics, in which everybody happily accepted their allotted place within a strictly classed, racialized and gendered hierarchy. Accordingly, the image of the family under siege is typically used as a means of dramatizing the threats posed

by social reformists. For example, the women's movement was repeatedly, and continues to be, blamed for the disintegration of the cohesive nuclear family and, by extension, the disintegration of social stability.

In its operation as a family unit, *The Institute* is, of course, not a reiteration of right-wing calls for the reinstatement of the Patriarchal family – which might, arguably be the case for the art collective, the Boyle family, headed by Mark Boyle. Rather, by identifying its work as the product of a family activist group, *The Institute* forces recognition of the sexual politics of family and of art practices. For *The Institute* the family is not so much 'the solid bedrock of society' as the lens through which the stratified composition of society can be examined. A critical, self-reflective art practice that is oriented around family activism exposes the dynamics, tensions, behaviour and routines of the family, contesting precisely such naturalized notions of the familial as the private and intimate. In their words, it constitutes, 'A practice which politicizes everyday living by thinking critically through our immediate contexts.' The family is re-politicized here as a front-line border-zone, exposing its role as an ideology-machine for reproducing identical components, an Ideological State Apparatus in Louis Althusser's words. Critical thinking, for *The Institute*, begins at home.

Through the simple act of placing the family within the frame by designating the spare bedroom an 'Institute' and documenting family activities as assiduously and seriously as any art event, the day-to-day activities of the family are reframed as ritualized public performances that are denaturalized and laid open to scrutiny. The process of representation invites us to view apparently natural and insignificant activities such as a family picnic as formal, scripted, rehearsed events that are staged for an audience.

At the same time, the foregrounding of the family also subverts the pomposity and self-aggrandisement with which avant-garde art is sometimes associated. The bemused presence and participation of the children helps to transform what might have been a solemn, pretentious performance, such as their 2010 reworking of Yoko Ono's notorious 'Cut-Piece' and John Lennon and Ono's 'Bed-In' as a performance about the current government's swingeing cuts on welfare spending, into a playful, unpredictable, but nonetheless serious event.

The family activities staged and documented by *The Institute* include picnics in city centres, such as the Hazardous Family 'performance intervention' in which excerpts from Engels' writing on the social function of the family were read aloud by the parents while the family picnicked in a taped-off area of Parsonage Park in Manchester. In this intervention they performed or staged heteronormative family roles (Lena undertaking the domestic labour, changing nappies and feeding the kids, while Gary performed solid, working-class, left-masculinity, reading out Engels in a public square), while for COP15, the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in 2009, they recreated the family as an activist 'cell'. This involved an arts council-funded 'slow travel' journey to Copenhagen during which every moment of consumption was documented and every cup

and food wrapper from the journey collected.

It is useful, we want to suggest, to understand *The Institute's* brand of 'family activism' in the context of the emergence of what William Walters describes as a new 'domopolitics' (Walters, 2004) - a politics of the 'domos' (the ancient Greek word for house or home).

Domopolitics – nothing but homes

In the last decade, safe-living has emerged as a central trope of European and North American governments. In the US this is perhaps best encapsulated by the establishment in 2001 of the **Department of Homeland Security**, evoking the name of the **British Ministry of Home Security** established during the Second World War. The UK has seen the proliferation and exploitation of anxieties around domestic security and secure borders since 2001, and we are witnessing the securitization of everyday social spaces on an unprecedented scale. The homeland has, once more, become the 'home front' in the continuing 'war on terror'.

This new 'domopolitics' is publicly sanctioned by a state that promises to protect its citizens from the 'terror' *originating within* as well as beyond national borders. This emphasis on homeland security has instituted an expanding and virtually uncontested regime of policing and surveillance. Measures that were justified as necessary to combat 'terror' have been extended to encompass a wide range of tenuously related activities. 'Domopolitics' is a 'fateful conjunction of home, land and security' that 'rationalizes a series of security measures in the name of a particular conception of home' (2004, p. 241).

The home as hearth: a refuge or a sanctuary in a heartless world. The home as our place, where we belong naturally, and where, by definition others do not... Home as a place we must protect... Home as a place to be secured because its contents, our property is valuable and envied by others. Home as a safe, reassuring place, a place of intimacy, togetherness and even unity, trust and familiarity (Walters, 2004, p.241).

'Domopolitics', Walters argues, is a performative politics that employs the rhetoric of home as a means of gaining legitimacy for exceptional measures, including the violent abjection of non-citizens and the militarization of everyday life. In the new world order of domopolitics, politics is reconfigured as a question of who can be permitted to stay within the home-nation legally, and who should be expelled. In a perversion of the maxim of second-wave feminism that the personal is political, domopolitics reduces the complexities of international politics to a powerfully affective domestic register – in this political imaginary, weakened and exposed British homes must be defended from migrants and terrorists by a newly militarised "daddy state". *If the new securitised world order is conceived and branded in terms of homes, then this is where dissent must also begin.*

The Institute, in our account, is a form of family activism which is both engaging with and contesting the new domopolitics. The 'Reclaim the Streets' movement occupies roads and challenges the dominance of the hydrocarbon industry, and the anti-capitalist 'Occupy' protestors, inspired by North African pro-democracy protests, attempted to reclaim public areas around Wall Street and the City of London as anarchic, playful common land. However, if the home has been suborned as an extension of the battleground of the war on terror and the financialization of the economy, then an equally radical and equally necessary gesture is to *reclaim and occupy the home*.

If the actual and imagined space of the home is the central terrain through which neoliberal social and economic policies, border controls, state surveillance and policing, are being instituted and struggled against, then it is important for artists to reappropriate this contested space, converting the home into a workshop, studio, laboratory, gallery, classroom, lecture theatre and performance space. This is precisely what we think, or what we like to imagine, *The Institute* is doing. At least, this is what *The Institute* is doing for us. It has enabled us, in our home with our two kids, to rethink 'home' as a collective practice and as space for creative resistance.

We have decided to voice our discontent. We have decided to ask questions around art and culture, money and capitalism, private and public, familial and civic life. We have decided to disobey. We, as a family, have decided to be naughty.

Endnotes

1 <http://www.thevacuumcleaner.co.uk>

2 <http://www.labofii.net>

3 <http://www.clownarmy.org>

4 http://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/pdf_docs/SRG_Jordan.pdf

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QUESTIONS FOR NEAL, GABRIEL AND SID

Jane Trowell

Jane sent a series of questions for the children by email. Gary asked them at the Institute, on the 17th March 2013, 13:07 after having filmed Anti-Oedipus shots in Everton Park.

Jane If there hadn't been the Institute, what would you have missed?

Neal We probably wouldn't have been to COP15 and all that. We wouldn't have slow travelled. I wouldn't know what anarchism was... I would have thought anarchism was just extreme violence. I wouldn't have known what communism was...

Gabriel I would have missed my personality and I would have missed the inner me and, I wouldn't be so brave going on, I wouldn't... I would get dead nervous going on stage if it wasn't for the Institute.

Sid I wouldn't know who Jesus was.

Gary What's Jesus got to do with the Institute?

Sid He's guiding our way and is the king of our babies.

Gabriel We would never have met Jane Trowell and would never have been answering these questions.

Neal We, yeah, wouldn't have had to put up with your (Gary's) weird friends.

Gabriel I know they're so annoying.

Sid If the Institute didn't, if it wasn't true I'd never met Neal.

Neal We wouldn't have been on that canal barge.

Gabriel It was boss wasn't it!

Neal No!

Sid We wouldn't have any friends.

Neal Maybe I wouldn't have met the school friends, coz you wanted us to go to a left-wing school. We wouldn't be in this house, coz we needed a room for the Institute. We gave the Institute a room and a name, a hope and a dream. And a purpose and a faith and we gave it hospitality.

Sid And we gave it sexy boobies.

Jane What do you think Lena and Gary have enjoyed about the Institute?

Neal Oh, ho! Bossing us about!

Sid Bossing us in the computer suite.

Gabriel Watching us grow up to follow their left-wing example.

Neal Oh my God! All that Derrida and Levinas!

Sid Oh my God what's it called?

Gabriel Why don't we make a video message? It's easier?

Sid They love the Institute and they want to marry it.

Gabriel Slow travelling.

Neal No, no, remember they had that big argument when we were slow travelling?

Gabriel Oh yeah.

Neal I don't think they enjoyed that. They probably enjoyed imagining what the Institute would be like, but realising they are not that successful.

Gabriel They stride on to victory.

Neal In brackets, 'defeat'.

Sid I thought they loved it when it first came.

Gabriel They got an excuse to watch these boring films and talk about philosophy... erm... which I think they're just doing that to annoy us.

Jane What's been difficult about the Institute? Can you think of a time you weren't happy about it?

Neal When we had to go to the Arnolfini on our birthday...that was sort of crap.

Gabriel I thought we lived on that barge?

Neal No. no. One hundred days before that.

Gabriel After discovering that no matter how hard you try, how eager you get, you hardly make a difference.

Neal When we had to waste our weekend on some sort of protest.

Gabriel When was that?

Neal I swear, it was like...

Sid When Neal lost his key.

Gabriel No Sid, that was the astronomy thing.

Sid I don't know when.

Neal How about when we had to walk for ages, going to cities to do protests?

Sid Oh horrible, for five hours!

Gabriel I know, I'm starting to regret the Institute with these bad memories.

Sid Why is it raining?

Gabriel Coz God's peeing.

Sid When we had that massive walk and my legs were killing.

Gabriel That wasn't the Institute.

Neal When we were walking in Wales in the forest?

Gabriel Yeah.

Sid I mean, I mean, for hours, FOR HOURS.

Neal No, that was Plas Caerdeon in Wales... giving out fliers in London was a bit embarrassing.. 'take this...take this... it's the Free University of Liverpool'

Gabriel Then we got on the telly with some woman talking about 'the Free University of Manchester; and I said 'just screw you'...

Neal You didn't say that directly...'just screw you'... imagine saying that?

Gabriel Ha ha ha!

Sid That girl that we... whatever her name is... she go to Gabriel, 'Hey love, Hey love' and she said, 'Can you get your Dad?' and she said 'Because we are doing the Free Uni in Manchester'...

Gabriel Sid you just killed that!

Sid And Dad said, 'Can I kiss you on the lips...?'

Jane What's your best memory of doing Institute things?

Gabriel Can we do a memory of what's not yet made or is that just illegal? Going on that boat to Denmark! That was boss!

Neal The food, the food on that boat! And there was this navigation thing that showed where we were.

Gabriel And there was that clown, magician, who went the same school as you Dad!

Neal And remember there was Tom and Jerry on that boat? Going on that boat was boss. And that clown who was in your school.

Gabriel And that boat was one of my profile pictures on facebook.

Neal Then, when we went to that place in Denmark we had to wait forever in that queue.

Sid erm...

Gabriel Emergence Summit! It was boss those eco-homes were boss where we stayed.

Neal Oh I wasn't there. It was good when me and mum went to Newcastle.

Sid Oh that was fun in Croatia!

Gabriel We never did Institute stuff in Croatia.

Sid I went there with Louie and Mum and...

Gabriel Louie named you Sid, didn't she?

Sid Yes.

Gabriel Oh wait, I've got something... oh no it's gone.

Neal The trains and UpperCrust and all of that. The Marco Polo boat. That was alright. To Rijeka then Rijeka to Zagreb, Zagreb, Budapest, Budapest, Munich, Munich Paris, Paris London and London to Liverpool. Dad, was that correct?

Gabriel Emergence Summit. The song writing was sick.

Sid When Neal lost his key, that was so funny, hilarious...you were like 'where's me key, where's me key?'

Jane How much do you think your friends would like to organise an Institute in their house with their families?

Neal Not a chance. All the kids in Blue Coat are for David Cameron and that. All of them are training to be bankers and whatnot, investors and businessmen and all that.

Gabriel I remember once in school when a picture of David Cameron came up and Mr Allen went, no Mr Stewart went, 'Who's that?' And Mr Allen said 'Well that's just out lovely prime minister, sir'. And then everyone in the class went 'Eeh, I hate him' (David Cameron, not Mr Allen).... some of mine, like 75% of my friends would be like ' Oh yeah, I'm up for this' then the other 25% would be like 'Oh, what? I'm scared, I might get put in prison'.

Sid I thought they would love to - like a 1000, one thousand percent.

Neal Some of the people may want to set up their own business institute enterprises or whatever they are called, but not Institutes like this one. The difference is that ours isn't like right wing where poor people are staying poor and rich people are getting richer.

Then they all went off to watch the telly.

THE (IR)RESISTIBLE RISE OF THE INSTITUTE FOR THE ART AND PRACTICE OF DISSENT AT HOME

Lois Keidan

I first met all five founders of The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home at the annual Performance Studies international conference in June 2006, organized that year by Queen Mary, University of London. *PSi12: Performing Rights* was themed around the complex relationships between performance and human rights, and LADA had curated, with Lois Weaver, a programme of performances, debates, films, and installations by UK and international artists, including many of the new breed of artist-activists. I'd known Lena Simic and her politically engaged solo performance work for a few years, but I didn't meet the whole family until our paths crossed outside the *Gallery of Utopias* in Mile End Park, the venue for various *Performing Rights* installations, where the Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination were 'redistributing' their £500 artists' fee to the public as a mountain of pennies.

Although they were already making mischief as the collective twoaddthree in 2006, it wasn't until the foundation of The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home in 2007 that Lena, Gary and the boys really made their mark as one of the most original, inventive, playful and instrumental artist led operations in the UK.

The Lab of ii's simple but audacious critique of financial transparency at PSi12 helped set the tone for the ways a new generation of artists were responding to the growing debates about the relationships between art and commerce, culture and ethics, and was a kind of gesture of defiance that the Institute have taken to whole new levels over the last five years with their groundbreaking economic models and collaborative approaches.

LADA and the Institute's paths have crossed many times since that gorgeous summer's day in 2006 and we have had the pleasure of collaborating with the gang on countless LADA projects. They have led inspirational programmes for DIY, our annual scheme for unusual professional development projects conceived and run by artists for artists, with *First Retreat then Advance!!* in 2008 and '*The Committee of the Free University of Liverpool in 2010*'. In 2008 they were invited experts for *Blackmarket for Useful Knowledge and Non-Knowledge No 11: On Waste*, our collaboration with the Bluecoat for the Liverpool Biennial 2008 (where, much to the joy of *Blackmarket* curator Hannah Hurtzig, they broke the strict *Blackmarket* rules of one to one expert-audience engagement by leaping onto their table to proclaim a manifesto of non cooperation with Liverpool Capital Of Culture 2008 to the whole room). They wrote the essay *Look Out! Here Comes Uselessness: The Institute On*

Financial Transparency for a chapter on Economies of Live Art in Live Art UK's *In Time, A Collection of Live Art Case Studies*, 2010 (including a Review of the Institute's Income and Expenditure Statement for the Year Ending 31st December 2008). They were guest artists for the vacuum cleaner's residency for our *Louder Than Bombs* season on art, action and activism with Stanley Picker Gallery in 2010. There are publications by them on the actual shelves of our Study Room and virtual shelves of our online shop. Their presence is everywhere in LADA's work, and that in itself is testament to the breadth and depth of their impact in research, action and art.

Artist led initiatives are the lifeblood of Live Art. Working beyond the restrictions of the museum, the gallery or the theatre they are not dependent on the permissions of others and do what they want, how they want, when they want, and where they want. Driven by passion, generosity and energy, and responsible only to themselves, their collaborators and their constituents, they are the spaces where different kinds of questions about the role of art and artists are asked, and where new ways of working are tried and tested. They are critical and essential catalysts for action and for change, and the Institute has, since 2007, been one of the most critical and essential we have.

Malcolm Miles¹

Dissent at home

Conventionally, dissent has two forms: it is identified with public expressions of refusal in public statements or demonstrations (in most cases, refusal of a regime or an institution such as a church, a professional association or an academy); and it can be aligned with more covert expressions of refusal under a regime which permits no open disagreement, through written and other material passed between those who know and trust each other (although this kind of dissent might more often be called dissidence, as in the East Bloc before 1989). The site of the first kind of dissent tends to be public space, such as when a monument is defaced, or the equally public but immaterial spaces of autonomous media. The site of the second kind tends to be in transitional spaces (such as the café or the bar) or, at times, in domestic spaces (because they are less likely to be under surveillance than public spaces, although not always). Taking these two kinds of dissent together suggests, nonetheless, that power is questioned in a public realm – whether claiming visibility or evading it. The idea of dissent at home challenges this. There are, of course, histories of identity struggles – notably for women and servants – in domestic settings; but these address specific inequalities (such as those of gender within domestic life). As I read it, *The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home* addresses wider social, economic, political and cultural questions. But it does this within the family – in the family house – in ways which cross over into the most public domains. The implication is at least a redefinition, and probably a dismantling, of the conventional boundary between public and private realms. This follows the dismantling of boundaries between art forms since the 1960s (especially in conceptualism) and the extension of academic fields into more politicised areas (such as cultural and human geographies in Britain after their readings of Henri Lefebvre's work in English in the early 1990s). It also follows the abandonment of much of the public realm to capital, as exemplified by the replacement of Liverpool's open shopping centre by L1, a privatised mall. As Zygmunt Bauman has written,² in the new world order most of us are at sea, either clutching at life buoys or drowning. An easy response is to feel helpless. IAPDH refuses that helplessness as a beginning of a refusal of the whole new world order. It does this in terms which do not hark back nostalgically to an old world order but which instead begin to imagine and to build an alternative, working within the flux which is the unavoidable condition of the present, uncompromisingly against the vile regime.

A new politics

Since the rise of neoliberalism (or neo-conservatism) in the 1980s, large areas of political life have been actively de-politicised. In Britain, New Labour pursued this by adopting a market style of presentation (Cool Britannia) as well as market values. Neoliberalism is allied to fantasies that donating the world's wealth (previously held in

part by the state as constructor and protector of the common wealth) to the super-rich will somehow lead to benefits for the poor (trickle-down); and that the markets will create their own equilibrium if left to their own devices, as if a perfect system or perpetual motion machine. Trickle-down might better describe an unfortunate by-product of human ageing - perhaps foreseen by Reagan and Thatcher – while the 2008 crash demonstrates the market's inbuilt chaos. The intentional outcome of neoliberalism is, meanwhile, that the poor become abject and all except the rich are disenfranchised. It is not surprising that the unfolding of neoliberalism is accompanied by widespread tax evasion, and by urban policies of post-code clearance carried out by the regeneration industry. To walk around the streets of terraced houses behind Liverpool Football Club's ground is to see one example of the new urbanism introduced by neoliberalism. But, as this disgusting narrative has unfolded, there have been new kinds of resistance. Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre both argued that power is never totally in control, or leaks, but as well as the side-effects thus produced there has been a new, direct democracy in action. It has a pre-history in the acts of the Levellers and the Diggers in the English Revolution of the 1640s; in factory occupations organised in France in 1934 by the Popular Front against fascism; in the actions of workers and students in various European cities in 1968; and in anti-roads protest in the 1990s. Most recently, there was Occupy. Occupy was criticised in the media for not having a programme, but it was not a political party seeking election in a representative system. Instead, it used direct democracy to enact (not represent) the values in which participants believed - calling a daily general assembly in New York, for instance – and in some cases organised social and health services (as factory occupiers did in France in 1934). The importance of the latter is that Occupy occupied not only public space but also the vacated site of the state. In these new political conditions, where daily life is negatively politicised, the home is a political site, making it appropriate that the art and practice of dissent is enacted there. IAPDH goes further, too, in its educational activities, working in the vacated site of free access to learning in a period of marketization in higher education, when the current unelected UK regime (The Coalition) has increased undergraduate student fees to a level which is equivalent, for those at the bottom end of the income scale, to a year's money or more. The Free University of Liverpool may be marginal, and it is unlikely to be approved by the Privy Council as a degree-awarding body, yet every new action of this kind, however marginal, extends the visible horizon. This gives hope.

Marxisms

Marx, Darwin and Freud were grand theorists. Marx explained the world, especially in terms of economics; Darwin explained that the origin of species was unknown, but evolution was a process of mutation, proliferation and adaptation; Freud explained that we do not know why we do things, but remember everything. These elderly white men could be dismissed now, their theories overtaken by more recent research amid concerns for gender equality in multi-ethnic societies. Still, looking to Marxism, the two basic ideas of alienation and immiseration remain valid. That is, by selling labour-time, workers are alienated from the things they make just as they are eliminated from the potential to make profit from those things. This produces new, quasi-biological

needs, as for leisure as release from and compensation for toil, which in turn, in a vicious circle, require more work-hours to pay the price of such activities. Equally, with credit cards and mortgages, those who are not themselves wealthy see the trappings of wealth paraded in the media, which encourages them to spend their meagre incomes on consumer goods and services which they cannot afford and which are designed never to satisfy and to become obsolete soon. Debts increase. Real wealth declines. The poor and aspirant become poorer. A simplistic response to this assault against the commonwealth would be to take back the wealth which has been, and daily is, stolen by the owners of the means of production. But there will be no crowds marching with banners and torches to storm the palaces of the rich, any more than another storming of the Winter Palace will occur (except as historical re-enactment for tourists). As suggested above, there is a new politics in direct action, and this operates across public-private boundaries. This is, obliquely, a revision of the revolutionary theory which began in, say, 1789, which Marx attempted to make into a political-economic science. Lefebvre revised Marxism in another way, relevant here, by introducing the concept of the Everyday. In particular, Lefebvre said that anyone, at any time, might experience a moment of sudden clarity – I see! That is how it is! Or how it could be!!! – which, although ephemeral, indeed entirely fleeting and seeming to be insignificant (which might also mean not standing for something else), is lingering and transformative. He called these interludes moments of liberation. Marxism grew rather than being overtaken by this. Similarly, Herbert Marcuse's idea of a promise of joy – in times when the prospect of real political change is absent, the study of aesthetics is justified because, in art, in poetry, in a literature of feelings of love (he cites Charles Baudelaire, Paul Eluard and Louis Aragon), there is a promise of joy which is a remaining image of utopia – extends rather than replaces Marxism. The work of IAPDH also extends Marxism, by citing Marxist tracts but also by re-interpreting and re-applying Marxist thought in ways which emerge in the conditions of a de-industrialised society. The means of production are less identified now with factories, more with media and education; but, as Walter Benjamin argues,³ the task of the writer – or other professional – is to insert her/himself in those means; which may mean, again, in the production of knowledge; or in the production of a city's idea of itself; or in the creation of relations within a family, in the family home.

Which (all of these) is where IAPDH comes in ...

Endnotes

1 Malcolm Miles is Professor of Cultural Theory in the School of Architecture, Design and Environment at the University of Plymouth, and author of *Herbert Marcuse: an aesthetics of liberation*, Pluto, 2011

2 For instance in *Globalisation: the human consequences*, Polity, 1998

3 'The Author as Producer', a lecture to a meeting of Communist writers, Paris, April 1934

THE INSTITUTE'S TOP AUDIENCE MEMBER

Mark Godber

Lena and I decided that I am probably the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home's top audience member, since I have seen six live performances in their first five years of work. My understanding of what they're about is based almost entirely on these performances, which have been mostly presented by the whole family, sometimes just 2 or 3 of them, and once as an 'outsourced' performance by a completely different artist. I've seen them perform and hold their own in galleries, courtyards, lecture theatres and cafes. I've seen them reuse and recycle flags, banners and bits of script from piece to piece. I've seen them throw food, cut holes in blankets and tear up train tickets. I've seen artist the vacuum cleaner empty out a box of all of the rubbish they had collected from going to COP15 in Copenhagen. I've seen them give away their performance fee to the audience, read out emails sent to them by the person who asked them to perform and generally reject the traditional position of artist in relation to institution and audience. When I first saw them in London in 2009, I saw half the audience getting totally distracted by watching Sid toddle around, looking a bit unsteady on his feet, still getting used to walking.

I've asked them to do performances in every one of Artsadmin's Two Degrees festivals, a programme of live art work about climate change, (and all of the other issues that we should be thinking about when we think about climate change). To be honest I never really know what they're going to turn up and do, but I trust them to do something interesting. What I often say about Two Degrees is that we do the festival because we want to be part of a bigger movement for change, and I can imagine the Institute saying a similar thing. When they make art about climate or political issues, they are not trying to say that they have a definite single solution and that everyone else is wrong. They are representing themselves honestly and with humour as a family who are torn between their utopian ideals and the practicalities of living as a family of artists, lecturers, schoolchildren, Brits, Croatians, activists and consumers in the 21st century. This is what makes their work interesting to me, it's based in our modern reality, and looking backwards and forwards to how we can sort out our societies, our education, our art, but definitely always about keeping it fun, playing and making trouble.



What follows is a series of performances by The Institute. We have chosen five. *The Family Picnics* were especially developed performances for arts venues and festivals. The methodology came out of the desperation of trying to work and keep the kids happy/fed at the same time. *Miss Julie in Utopia* and *Macbethmachine* took place at the Institute whilst *A Key to Utopia* and part of *With Our £2000 Artist Fee We Are Going to COP15* were outsourced performances.

List of Performances at/by the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home 2008 - 2012

Miss Julie in Utopia a reworking of Strindberg's classic in the wake of Liverpool08, Capitalism of Culture year (2008)

The Hazardous Family at Hazard 08 festival, Manchester, UK (2008)

A Key to Utopia, outsourced performance and exhibition at Salon of the Revolution in Zagreb, Croatia (2008)

A Promising Family Picnic for Two Degrees event at Artsadmin, London, UK (2009)

A Performance Report at C words exhibition at Arnolfini, Bristol, UK (2009)

Bed-In CUT PIECE at the Bluecoat, Liverpool, UK (2010)

Macbethmachine a specially commissioned performance for four heterosexual couples exploring ambition, violence and failures of capitalism (2010)

Mother & Son: that just sounds really sad artist residency and performance at 25SG, Newcastle, UK (2011)

The Family Cut Out for Two Degrees event at Artsadmin, London, UK (2011)

Gary's 40th Birthday Celebration (2012)

FAMILY PICNICS: THE HAZARDOUS FAMILY AND BED-IN CUT PIECE

The Hazardous Family

from

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home

investigates

**Engels' Collected Works through Political Speeches and a Family Picnic at
Parsonage Gardens, Manchester 12 July 2008 1pm**

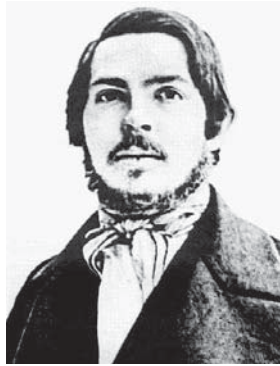
This is a performance intervention. This is an opportunity to investigate the construction of the family within present day consumer capitalism. This is a reading of Engels' texts. This is a family picnic. This is a chance for us to make political speeches. This is the act of calling upon office workers. This is in red, green and white. This is an experiment in family activism. This is a family from Liverpool on a day-trip to Manchester.

Directions

Mark out a picnic space with 30 meters of hazard tape. Tie the tape around a bin, move on towards a tree and then proceed to a park bench. This will make a triangular picnic space. Proceed to tie the red banner around the tree and park bench. Make certain the words 'The first division of labour is that between man and woman for the propagation of children' Marx & Engels, are clearly visible on the banner and written in white paint. Spread the picnic throw in the centre of the space. Place all the items of food and drink on the throw. Take the soap-box and place it front-right of the picnic space. Place all propaganda leaflets in clear view of the public either on the soap-box or on the picnic spread. The extracts from Engels' books are read out at intervals over the following lunch hour.

**'The first division of labour is that between man and woman for
the propagation of children.'**

Marx & Engels The German Ideology



In 1842, the twenty-two year old Engels was sent to Manchester, England to work for the textile firm of Ermen and Engels in which his father was a shareholder. Engels' father thought working at the Manchester firm might make Engels reconsider the radical leanings that he had developed at school. His office was just round the corner, here at 7 Southgate - now House of Fraser. In Manchester, Engels met Mary Burns, a young woman with whom he began a relationship that lasted until her death in 1862. Mary acted as a guide through Manchester and helped introduce Engels to the English working class. Despite having a lifelong relationship, the two were never married as Engels was against the institution of marriage which he saw as unnatural and unjust. During his time in Manchester, Engels took notes and personally observed the horrible working conditions of English workers. These notes and observations, along with his experience working in his father's commercial firm, formed the basis for his first book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* in 1844.

Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists. On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form, this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution. The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

from *The Communist Manifesto*



Revolutionary Seat at Chetham's Library where Marx and Engels wrote parts of *The Communist Manifesto* in July 1845



List of Engels' residencies in Manchester

51 Richmond Grove, Chorlton on Medlock

The former Commercial Hotel at 63-65 Cecil Street, Moss Side

252 Hyde Road where he lived with his partner Mary Burns

under the false names of Frederick and Mary Broadside

Thorndcliffe Grove

Dover Street.

Manchester proper lies on the left bank of the Irwell, between that stream and the two smaller ones, the Irk and the Medlock, which here empty into the Irwell. On the right bank of the Irwell, bounded by a sharp curve of the river, lies Salford, and farther westward Pendleton; northward from the Irwell lie Upper and Lower Broughton; northward of the Irk, Cheetham Hill; south of the Medlock lies Hulme; farther east Chorlton on Medlock; still farther, pretty well to the east of Manchester, Ardwick. The whole assemblage of buildings is commonly called Manchester, and contains about four hundred thousand inhabitants, rather more than less. The town itself is peculiarly built, so that a person may live in it for years, and go in and out daily without coming into contact with a working-people's quarter or even with workers, that is, so long as he confines himself to his business or to pleasure walks.

from *The Condition of the Working Class in England*

Working Men! [and Women!]

Having, at the same time, ample opportunity to watch the middle-classes, your opponents, I soon came to the conclusion that you are right, perfectly right in expecting no support whatever from them. Their interest is diametrically opposed to yours, though they always will try to maintain the contrary and to make you believe in their most hearty sympathy with your fates. Their doings give them the lie. I hope to have collected more than sufficient evidence of the fact, that --be their words what they please -- the middle-classes intend in reality nothing else but to enrich themselves by your labour while they can sell its produce, and to abandon you to starvation as soon as they cannot make a profit by this indirect trade in human flesh.

from *The Preface to The Condition of the Working Class in England*

[The whole family gives out the propaganda leaflets].

The whole family 'Office workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your nine to fives! You have a world to win!'

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home is a home-run initiative, run out of the spare room of a council house in Everton, Liverpool. The Institute is run by a family of two adults and three kids, collectively, twoaddthree (Gary Anderson, Lena Simic, Neal, Gabriel and Sid). The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home is concerned with dissent, homemade aesthetics, financial transparency as well as critiquing the capitalism of culture embodied in Liverpool08, Capitalism of Culture.

'The Monogamous Family is based on the supremacy of the man, the express purpose being to produce children of undisputed paternity; such paternity is demanded because these children are later to come into their father's property as his natural heirs.'

'Monogamous marriage comes on the scene as the subjugation of the one sex by the other.'

'The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife, and modern society is a mass composed of these individual families as its molecules.'

Friedrich Engels

The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

The Hazardous Family is a part of HAZARD 08, outbreaks of hazardous behaviour and guerrilla live art throughout Manchester on 12 July 08.

Bed-In CUT PIECE

9th Dec 2010 – the Bluecoat

Performed as a part of the Bed-In at the Bluecoat



Mother (Courage) and (Her) Children sit still, wrapped in a large white sheet on the bed.

Mother Children, it's time for cuts!

Father checks on the children and mother and takes his place on the baby stool at the side of the bed with a pair of large scissors in his hands. He performs a performative cutting action (waving the scissors in the air) before he begins.

Father It is time for cuts. Yoko Ono first performed her seminal piece 'Cut Piece' in 1964 in Tokyo and later in different cities and venues such as Carnegie Hall in New York. She re-enacted it in Paris in 2003. 'Cut Piece' is about Yoko Ono sitting motionless on the stage after inviting the audience to come up

and cut away her clothing. There was one instruction: CUT!

Kristine Stiles, professor of art history, says:

'Cut Piece' entailed a disrobing, a denouement of the reciprocity between exhibitionism and scopophilic desires, between victim and assailant, between sadist and masochist: and, as a heterosexual herself, Ono unveiled the gendered relationship of male and female subjects as objects for each other.

The piece changed each time with new locations and new audience members. It is said that in Japan, the audience was shy and cautious, in London the audience was violent and in Paris, somewhat too courteous.

C'mon Liverpool, it's time for cuts!

We will now perform a re-enactment of Yoko's piece with a contemporary twist. You the audience will do the cuts.

Mother, children are you ready?

Mother and Children No! Nearly! Yes...

Father The government is a public body, an executive that decides how money from taxes (and other things) will be spent. 669.62 billion pounds was spent last year on the public sector. See the Guardian chart behind us. The government, in order to spend all of this money, is organised into departments.



For example the Department for Work and Pensions or The Department of Communities and Local Government or The Department of Health or the Ministry of Defence or the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

The Spending Review 2010, as delivered by the Chancellor (who is in charge of all the money) George Osborne on the 20th October proposes many, many cuts to the government's spending. Here are some: 490,000 public sector jobs – CUT!

Mother Who will do the cutting? C'mon Gary. Choose somebody. Just point at somebody and make them.
An audience member makes a cut into the white sheet with a pair of scissors and signs the register. Over time, with each new cut, mother and children gradually emerge from underneath the white sheet.

Mother Sign our petition. Bed-In Against the Cuts. We'll be posting it to directly to Cameron and Clegg.
19% of all departmental budgets – CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

The Department of Communities and Local Government Social Housing 60% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Council Budget 7.1% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Capital Spending on Local Government 100% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Capital Spending on Communities 74% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

The Department for Work and Pensions

Welfare Benefits – 7 Billion ON TOP OF 11bn already announced – that's 18 billion pounds – CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

State pension age to rise from 65 to 66 for men and 60 – 66 for women by 2020. – Women's Pensions – CUT faster and harder than pensions for Men. Overall, this is 5 billion pounds – CUT!

Mother Intervention! Intervention! . . . As we will be working ourselves to our grave, some very rich billionaires have it easy... Yes, yes the government has decided to spend 900 million to target tax evasion. But do you know what's been going on?
At the same time as making massive cuts to public services, this government is letting rich individuals and corporations avoid billions of pounds of tax.
For example, Philip Green is a multi-billionaire businessman, who runs some of the biggest names on British high streets. His retail empire includes brands such as Topshop, Topman, Dorothy Perkins, Burton, Miss Selfridge and British Home Stores.
Philip Green is not a non-dom. He lives in the UK. He works in the UK. He pays tax on his salary

in the UK. All seems to be in order. Until you realise that Philip Green does not actually own any of the Arcadia group that he spends every day running. Instead, it is in the name of his wife who has not done a single day's work for the company. Mrs Green lives in Monaco, where she pays not a penny of income tax.

In 2005 Philip Green awarded himself £1.2bn, the biggest paycheck in British corporate history. But this dividend payout was channelled through a network of offshore accounts, via tax havens in Jersey and eventually to Green's wife's Monaco bank account. The dodge saved Green, and cost the tax payer, close to £300m. This tax arrangement remains in place. Any time it takes his fancy, Green can pay himself huge sums of money without having to pay any tax.

Philip Green's £285m tax dodge could pay for:

- The full, hiked up £9,000 fees for almost 32,000 students. - I'll come back to that one.
- Pay the salaries of 20,000 NHS nurses.

And if that's not reason enough to take action against Sir Philip, it is worth noting that he has built his £5bn fortune on the back of sweatshop labour, using Mauritius sweatshops where Sri Lankans, Indians and Bangladeshis toil 12 hours a day, six days a week, for minimal pay.

I urge us all to join UK Uncut's Big Society Revenue & Customs (BSRC) and become part of an army of citizen volunteers determined to make wealthy tax avoiders pay.

And Vodafone... they avoided paying £6bn tax bill. George Osborne, yes, that same guy who proposed severe public sector cuts, let them off!

This was one of the most shameless, blatant and costly examples of corporate-government cronyism in years.

Vodafone do it everywhere. They tried in India too. £1.6bn tax bill. However, the Indian authorities, unlike the British, have successfully pursued Vodafone for the money, forcing them to pay up.

Typically, companies rely on the indifference of the media and the technical difficulty of the issue to avoid public anger at tax dodging activities. But in October, anger at the Vodafone deal spilled onto the streets. In dozens of cities all across the country people came out to protest, forcing around 10% of Vodafone stores to shut down.

And it is not over, the campaign against Vodafone continues.

Father

Thank you for that. Where were we? Who will cut and sign away a 5 billion cut in State Pensions? Please, for all the honest workers in the country. £5 Billion – CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Council Tax Benefit – 10% CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Father: Child Benefit 2.5 billion – CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Mother Intervention! Intervention! It is not children but bankers that got us into this mess! All mothers need child benefit. Actually, all mothers perform invisible labour every day – no one is paying them for the fact that they are bringing up the workers of tomorrow. A Mother's work is all for love, a bit like artists'. In 1972, Selma James set up the International Wages for Housework Campaign, which argues that running the home should be recognised as work in official statistics and that people doing this labour should be paid a wage by the government. According to Selma James, housework should be paid £500-£600 per week. Now, Child Benefit is being cut!

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport

The Arts Council England 29.6% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

RFO's (Regularly Funded Organisations) which get desperately needed money from the Arts Council every year will be...you guessed it – CUT! (goodbye Bluecoat?) RFO's to suffer even further cuts of an extra 10% (this is on top of the 33% cuts to fund the Olympics). This means a total Arts Council cut of more than 40% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Within The Arts Council, Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE), which focuses on children and young people, will see its budget reduced from £38m to £19m. That's a 50% CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

The Arts Council's development funds, including money to support touring and cultural leadership 64% – CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

Mother Intervention! Intervention! Artists are a bit like mothers and housewives – they also work for free. The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home are not being paid to participate in this event by the Bluecoat. And I doubt that any of the others got any money for this. Yes, we all have tea coffee and cake. Why do we do it? There is no money in the arts, not for artists! And neither for interns! Let me tell you about Carrotworkers' Collective, a London-based group of current or ex interns, mainly from the creative and cultural sectors who regularly meet to think together around the conditions of free labour in contemporary societies. They are currently undertaking a participatory action research around voluntary work, internship, job placements and compulsory free work in order to understand the impact they have on material conditions of existence, life expectations and sense of self, together with their implications in relation to education, life long training, exploitation, and class interest. We shouldn't be working for FREE!!! None of us!

Father The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills 25% - CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

This is the department that covers Further and Higher Education. The Department of Education

does not exist anymore. It was replaced by all sorts of other departments. This makes it easier to – you guessed it – CUT!

Universities teaching budget – across the board cut by 40%. The STEM subjects – meaning science technology engineering and mathematics will not be cut at all. This means the teaching budget for arts and humanities will be cut by more than 90%. This means there will be virtually NO public funding for the teaching of arts and humanities in England. This is an unprecedented 90% CUT!

Father gives scissors to another audience member.

The tuition fees will be raised to £9000. The EMA (the Education Maintenance Allowance) will be scrapped. This means that university education is only for the privileged. For those with private means – meaning lots of money. The government will not pay teaching salaries anymore - the students will. Tuition fees are set to skyrocket and students will not be seen as human beings with ideas to learn but as customers with products to buy. The lecturers will be customer services providers. The government is to vote on the issue on raising tuition fees at 4:30 today – in 2 hours time... Students all over the country have been fighting and protesting. We've seen a magnificent revolution and the occupation of the Millbank Tower on 10.11.10, we've had our first national walkout on 24th Nov and a second national walkout on 30th Nov, we had a day of action yesterday, we've had university occupations all over the country, we've had Tate Britain turned into a teach-in, and Lloyds TSB a classroom for an inaugural lecture of the University for Strategic Optimism.... Today we have a march, a protest, a vote....

Mother Intervention! Intervention! Calling all students, calling all workers – We are in this together..
All They say CUT BACK! We say FIGHT BACK! No ifs no buts, no public sector cuts!

PROPAGANDA PAMPHLET 2106200821
The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home
presents

MISS JULIE IN UTOPIA

Performance on Saturday 21st June 2008 at 9pm

(Preview on Friday 20th June 2008 at 6pm)

Produced and funded by The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home



Collaborators

Cathy Butterworth (Miss Julie)

Gary Anderson (John)

Lena Simic (Tina)

Sid (hopefully asleep)

Place

The Institute for the Art and
Practice of Dissent at Home
7 Bright Street Liverpool, L6 1DL

Time

2106200821



Instructions for Audiences

Except for Preface which takes place in the Front Garden, all action is inside the House. Please follow the instructions as they will be given to you by the performers. Try to move from one room to another as quickly as possible.

Breakdown of Action

Preface: Collaborators make a speech from the window of the Institute. **The Front Garden.**

Scene 1: The servants Tina and John gossip about the aristocrat Miss Julie and her socialist ideas. **The Kitchen.**

Scene 2: Miss Julie takes John to the people's party. **The Kitchen.**

Scene 3: Tina gives out tools for the Revolution. **The Institute.**

Scene 4: Miss Julie and John flirt with each others' class. **The Back Room.**

Scene 5: Miss Julie and John try to become equals. **The Hallway.**

Scene 6: The Revolution. Please help with taking downstairs doors off and wrapping red banner round **The House.**

Scene 7: Julie and John need to escape the Revolution. **The Front Room.**

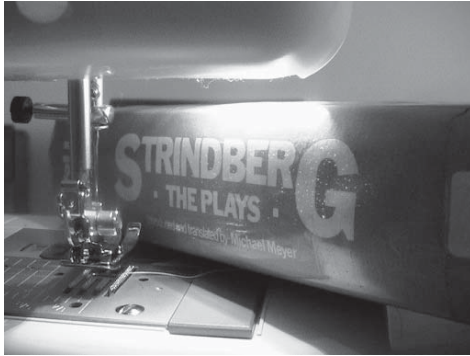
Scene 8: Tina calls Julie and John to the Party. **The Front Room.**

Scene 9: Julie and John fail to become equals. **The Landing.**

Postscript: Generic stew, red red wine and revolutionary soundtrack. **The Institute.**

Background Story

We met at Imogen's party. It was September 2007. We talked about theatre. We thought we might want to act again, do some proper acting, do some proper theatre, do some proper preaching. We needed a play for two women and a man. We considered Pinter, Sartre and Churchill. There are always too many parts for males and hardly any for females. Then we all remembered that misogynist play Miss Julie. We thought this was the perfect challenge.



Extracts from Miss Julie in Utopia

Scene 4, announced by Lena: **Miss Julie and John flirt with each others' class. The Back Room.**

JULIE I dream the people are coming. I stand waiting to greet them, dressed as one of them, my fine clothes swapped for uniform, my shoes for boots. I hear the murmur of their song as they approach. Delighted, I try singing along. Then it occurs to me I haven't learnt the words. As they come closer I can make out a fine young man of noble birth. He is leading them. He wants me to join in the singing. He mouths the words to me clearly and distinctly, but I still can't make them out. As they file past I try to join them. But the ranks close before me. I can't get in. They move on together as one, their song fading as they march away. I am left behind.

JOHN In my dream there are hundreds upon hundreds of people. I'm trapped in the middle and can't move, I can hardly breathe. The crowd is marching away. Singing in unison, under their breaths as though hypnotised. To one side a young man is waving the singers on. As we file past I can see that the man has a cut across his cheek, and his coat is dirty and worn thin. As we march away it is clear that the young man is not waving the people on, but warning them. I turn my head and meet his gaze. He mouths something to me, I can't make it out. I march with the others, resigned to fight for a cause I don't believe in with the people, whom I despise.

Scene 9, announced by Gary: **Julie and John fail to become equals. The upstairs landing.**

JOHN The count is back. It is John, your lordship! Yes, your lordship! [Listening] Yes, your lordship! At once! [Listening] In a minute, your lordship! [Listening] Yes, yes! In half an hour!...I'll clean up sir. [At the bottom of the stairs] It's over Miss Julie. This little adventure of yours. Your father is back. It's over. I'm to clean up.

JULIE He mustn't know I played a part in this.

JOHN As you know, it is my duty to inform him.

JULIE You can escape. You can be the hotel owner, the entrepreneur.

JOHN But not now. The count has returned.

JULIE But we can escape.

JOHN My only real escape Miss Julie, is to serve your father. Your only escape is to run away.

JULIE But there's another possibility. Another world.

JOHN You'd desert your people, your father, your privileges?

JULIE My father puts the protection of our privileges above all other concerns. He is prepared to do anything to defend our way of life.

JOHN And I to follow him, Miss Julie.

JULIE For the last time, I'm not Miss Julie.

JOHN I'll join the count's ranks. Together, we'll fight. The count - with me at his side.

JULIE Cleaning the blood off his boots. My father would never see you as anything other than his lackey. He sees you the way you see the others in his service. Not as equals.

JOHN I can't do anything else. I won't join Tina. I spent the first half of my life trying to get out of the class into which I was born. I refuse to spend the second half of it trying to get back in.

JULIE I'll go back to my father and return the money I stole.

JOHN You can't, not after what's happened. The Count would do anything to preserve the privileges of his class - you said so yourself. I doubt a daughter like you would be welcome. Neither there nor here. As they file past you try to join them but the ranks close before you, you can't get in.

JULIE And you, trapped in the middle of hundreds and hundreds of people, you can't move, you can hardly breathe. But the people march on.

The full performance text is available to download for free from www.twoaddthreethree.org/archive under ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS



Our Preface to Miss Julie in Utopia

120 years ago this summer in England, an authorised translation of the Communist Manifesto was published with a preface by Engels. The opening goes: 'Workers of the World unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains.'

120 years ago this summer in France, Eugène Pottier wrote words for the song 'The Internationale.' The opening goes: 'Arise you workers from your slumbers, arise you prisoners of want!'

120 years ago this summer in Sweden, August Strindberg wrote Miss Julie – a new kind of naturalistic tragedy that deals with, amongst other things, conflict between the classes.

It's been just 11 years since New Labour came to power – the most right wing government since the Second World War. Where is the Left now? In January this year Liverpool 08 Capital of Culture was officially launched with Ringo Starr singing on the roof of St Georges Hall. 'Liverpool I left you, but I never let you down'. The Capitalism of Culture celebrates whilst the Left, of which Liverpool has played a crucial and difficult role, is terribly let down. Liverpool has become a toy shop for the private property developer and retail entrepreneur. And all this under a labour government (albeit a LibDem council). These are bleak times.

High on the agenda of the Capitalism of Culture is culturally-led social regeneration. A favourite phrase of New Labour is often repeated 'a private-public partnership'. In other words an emptying out of accountable public services into an increasingly unregulated private ownership environment, by definition unaccountable.

In our own way, we are also interested in a private-public partnership. Here in the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home we are in a private space, owned by a Housing Association, a Charity in fact, publicly accountable, with open board meetings for members and tenants to attend. This room is the third bedroom of the family home. It is not entirely public, not entirely private. This is a reversal, a reinvigoration, a regeneration.

Here, at The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, we take pride in, even invite and certainly practice accountability and financial transparency. The Institute believes that stating a political, ethical or philosophical position, with rigour and integrity, is a productive practice for thinking through current issues. Miss Julie in Utopia is, for us, a thinking-through of a political position through the filter of a play that suggests but does not deliver on a political promise.

This play is deeply problematic. Strindberg was a left-winger, who had a demonstration of Dock Workers campaign for a state pension for him on his 63rd birthday, outside his bedroom window in Stockholm. Strindberg was also an insufferable misogynist, a woman-hater, subscribing to ideas about the 'weak dying out' making way for 'the stronger'.

Our strategy to counter this was to rewrite, rewrite, rewrite! Miss Julie and Christina (now Tina) are accountable to the changes going on in the world around them. Tina is a revolutionary, not compliant fiancé. Miss Julie a radical, a dissenter, not the troubled daughter of a repressive father, the Count, the stalwart of the ruling classes. Miss Julie in Utopia is a feminist intervention into a text that has, for the past 120 years, in our theatres and classrooms, been oppressing women.

120 years ago saw the seeds of revolution sown in the Communist Manifesto, The Internationale and with some amendments Strindberg's Miss Julie. Now, more than ever, since our right wing governments let the

corporations run amuck, it seems important not just to remember the seeds of revolution but to sow them again, for our time, our place. In tonight's play we've tried to make that international triangle from 1888, make sense, for us today, 120 years later. Thinking class, claiming history, imagining Utopia in England, in Liverpool, on Bright Street, at number 7, in the third bedroom.

The play will begin in five minutes. All the action takes place within the house. Please proceed through the alleyway to the back garden.



The Internationale by Billy Bragg

Stand up, all victims of oppression
For the tyrants fear your might
Don't cling so hard to your possessions
For you have nothing, if you have no rights
Let racist ignorance be ended
For respect makes the empires fall
Freedom is merely privilege extended
Unless enjoyed by one and all

Chorus

So come brothers and sisters
For the struggle carries on
The internationale Unites the world
in song
So comrades come rally
For this is the time and place
The international ideal
Unites the human race

Ingredients for Generic Stew (Summer Solstice version) by Clare Owens



2 medium onions, sliced
1 tablespoon of olive oil
200g (7oz) mushrooms
225g (8oz) celery
225g (8oz) carrots
225g (8oz) swede, turnip or parsnip
2 tbsp flour
175g (6oz) split red lentils
60ml (2flox) soy sauce

900ml (1_ pints) vegetable stock
1 bay leaf, 1 tsp sugar, 1 tsp dried
thyme, 1 tsp rosemary, 1 tsp
marjoram
3-4 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
freshly ground black pepper
**at midsummer add a handful of
broad beans**

Method

- 1 Slice the onions and fry gently in the oil in a large pan for about 5 minutes - until soft and transparent
- 2 Slice the mushrooms and celery, slice the carrots into rounds and dice the swede/turnip/parsnip and add to the pan
- 3 Mix in the flour thoroughly and cook gently for a few minutes
- 4 Add the red lentils, soy sauce, sugar, bay leaf and dried herbs and mix well. Add the hot vegetable stock & bring to boil
- 5 Cover and simmer for about 30 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Stir occasionally.

Add the broad beans 10 minutes before serving. Add the parsley just before serving. Season with black pepper to taste Serve with soda bread, oatcakes and vodka

Breakdown of Expenses

Cathy's taxi money to and from rehearsals: £40.
Two times fry-up from the local café £16.57
One time sandwiches from the local café: £6.80
Banner: £33.16
Screwdrivers: £14.80

Front of House: £44.16
Food: £50
Wine: £90.00
Beer: £29.52
Total: £325.01

A sample of Bryan Biggs' revolutionary soundtrack



We shall overcome by Joan Baez (1963)
Revolution by The Beatles (1968)
Revolution by Tomorrow (1968)
Something in the air by Thunderclap Newman (1968)
Street fighting man by The Rolling Stones (1968)
Barricades by The Koobas (1969)
The old revolution by Leonard Cohen (1969)
What about me by Quicksilver Messenger Service (1970)
Won't get fooled again by The Who (1971)
Bring down the government by Lindisfarne (1972)
Revolution by Toots & The Maytals (1974)
The Revolution will not be televised by Gil Scott-Heron (1974)
Shake some action by The Flaming Groovies (1976)
No more heroes by The Stranglers (1977)
White riot by The Clash (1977)
Smash it up by The Damned (1978)
Rockin on the red book by Henriette C (1980)
Red flag by Robert Wyatt (1983)
Waiting for the great leap forwards by Billy Bragg (1988)
I predict a riot by Kaiser Chiefs (2005)

Thank you to

Claire Chrystall, Ross Dalziel and Annette Etkind for babysitting Neal and Gabriel.

This production is funded by 10% of twoaddthree's combined monthly income: This includes two 0.5 lectureships, child and working family tax credits, child benefit and freelance work. This production is not associated with Liverpool08, Capitalism of Culture. This production is not funded by Arts Council England, The Culture Company, The Gulbenkian Foundation, The PH Holt Trust, The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Pro Helvetia, Swiss Life, A.H.R.C. or any other corporate capitalist body. The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home believes that financial transparency is crucial to a healthy arts practice.

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A KEY TO UTOPIA

from

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home
7 Bright Street
Liverpool, UK
L6 1DL



Please Take One

Extracts from Email Correspondence between the Institute and the Curators

Subject: Salon of the Revolution

From: theinstitute@twoaddthree.org

To: ivana.bago@g-mk.hr

CC: antonia.majaca@g-mk.hr

Sent on 26/08/2008 21:41:14

In case this amount is not possible, we have thought of PLAN B. This would involve outsourcing the labour of the event to a local artist for the minimum wage. This would be in the light of recent capitalist modes of production (and recent artistic practices) where, in the interests of maximising profits, the work is 'outsourced' to cheaper labour markets. The ethics of this particular practice are deeply questionable in the market place, but as an arts event that seeks to make visible the workings of capital (in order that it is critiqued and rejected) we feel it might add an interesting layer to the piece. We offer this solution though only in the case of limited funding for travel from Liverpool to Zagreb. Otherwise the piece would cost the same (cca £300) plus postage and packaging and the wage for the local artist. We would include all this in the A4 programme write-up on the project.

Sent on 11/09/2008 10:51:32

We are assuming that the outsourced labourer would be one of you, either Ivana or Antonia or both. In that sense the piece would be multilayered and complex in that the actual outsourcing of work BEGINS with you the curators, and is reflected back onto us as 'artists' and the ones who outsource the labour back to you. We understand that you will be very busy with other work and we will try to keep our instructions (all of which will appear on the propaganda pamphlet) simple and low impact.

We do like this idea very much and are excited by the way in which this can help us to think about (and critique) current capitalistic modes of production through an artwork - this is one of the 'key' aims of the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home.

Looking forward to your response

All the best from Utopia

twoaddthree

Sent on 15/09/2008 21:02:21

We are delighted that you will be the outsourced labourers and appreciate your thoughts on that. We agree with you wholeheartedly that the outsourcing of this piece from you - to us - back to you, is indicative of the perils of cheap labour markets AND (perhaps even especially) a form of critical engagement in the circulation and exploitation of social and symbolic capital. We are all invested in this process - the point, as our correspondence testifies, is to try to make those processes visible, to offer them up for discussion and further action. We are delighted again to be part of the asking of these searching questions with you. We have often been frustrated by arts organisations' reluctance to engage in the issues and themes of a piece of work THROUGH the actual processes that produce the work - meaning the mechanisms of the arts world. It is a blind spot for many curators and organisations, so we welcome your thoughts on this work all the more. We hope to reflect this in the pamphlet and will use some of your formulation in these emails for this purpose. We would applaud the decision to make the budget transparent. The Institute is always happy to let people know the 'bottom line' in terms of monies. We have found this very useful in building trust between people AND a way of intervening in the normative practices of financial secrecy that arts venues have become adept at. You have a very laudable take on 'refusing' to be paid financially, rather symbolically and socially/culturally. We respect this position very much and feel in the circumstances that - as long as the audiences are made

aware of this process – this is the best way forward. We will put it in the pamphlet that, in this instance, cultural capital is being preferred over financial.

Sent on 23/08/2008 18:24:53

Dear Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, I am happy to inform you that your proposal for the Salon of the Revolution has been selected for the exhibition that will take place in Zagreb, October 4-26 2008 and I also thank you once again for your application and interest.

Sent on 01/09/2008 09:11:34

Concerning the production, we must again get back to the cheap labour markets topic and our own situation as the cheap and non-profit culture market. The material production itself including 68 nails, 68 keys, hammer, 200 printing copies would definitely cost considerably less than £300 in Croatia and it would also include reduction on the shipping costs as shipping a lot of metal should be very heavy and expensive. We would suggest that you send us a single key and we would make copies here, as well as buy the exact kind of nails that you would want. In this way and with the outsourced artist-worker the idea of outsourcing too would be complete as it would refer to the entire production including raw material taking place in the cheap East whereas only the 'design' was created and 'delegated' from the West.

Looking forward to your reply.

Many kind greetings from Zagreb!

Antonia & Ivana

Sent on 11/09/2008 11:40:31

I can happily say that YES, we can be your outsourced labourers! I was really happy to read this in your email and it definitely adds up yet another layer to the project, so we are also very much enjoying our correspondence with you. Not only that, as you said: "the piece would be multilayered and complex in that the actual outsourcing of work BEGINS with you the curators, and is reflected back onto us as 'artists' and the ones who outsource the labour back to you", but also it again continues on the 'cheap culture market' story from our previous email and the fact that the principle we work according to or the one we are sometimes forced to work according to, is always almost exceeding the maximum with very minimum means, and so much is based on the circulation and exploitation of not financial but social and symbolic capital. As we have, through our work as curators, and now as curators of the Salon, been accustomed to often being the ones whose actions in the project range from its conceptualization, text writing, working with artists, researching etc. to fundraising, organizing, PR-ing, painting the walls and pinning the nails, we find that us being outsourced by you to set up your work and reproduce and spread the 'master key' (we love this term!) will in no way be only a decoration in which artists outsource curators for manual labour, (in the decorative way that is often seen in the so-called practices of institutional critique in the west)...

Sent on 22/09/2008 20:44:51

Thanks for sending the key, we are expecting it every day now. Just wanted to drop an info for the pamphlet -we will definitely get the keys copied for free, as I suspected before. The shop that is glad to become our supporter in making this project is called Super brava - Super Lock. So now we are taking the Master Key to Super Lock! ... We feel that this long-distance and 'blind' exchange of emails is definitely a component of the piece itself and what was discussed also in the first emails about the invisibility and the 'never-really-there' aspect of the promised Utopia. And the text in the catalogue also makes a statement about that - a statement why, in the end, we all feel that what we do is really worth it. So we really hope that the process of sending, receiving and distributing the key will not stay frozen as a symbolic gesture in the context of an exhibition and its catalogue but stay a reminder of a door that we will all wish to keep open not only now as a one-time exchange but for the future.

Set of Instructions for the Curators/Outsourced Labourers

Items:

Wall space: 2mx3m = 6m sq

68 nails (make sure that the nail head fits through the key hole)

68 keys (all copied from the Master key)

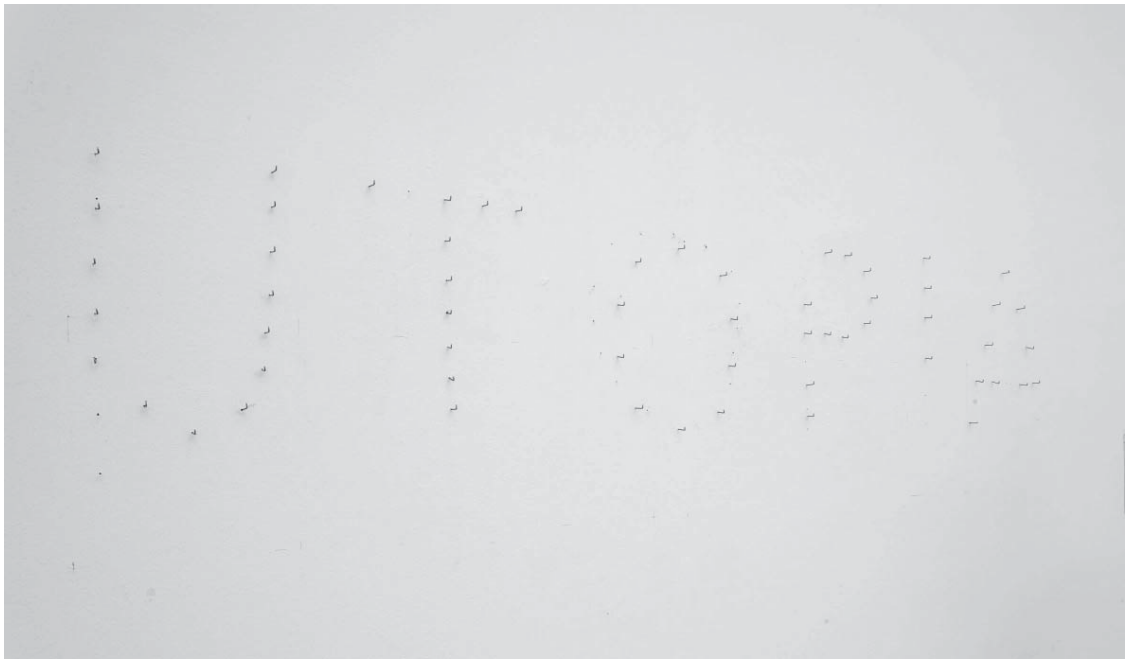
1 hammer

1 notice 'Please Take One, The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, 7 Bright Street, Liverpool, L6 1DL, UK'

Task:

Imagine the word UTOPIA in capital letters on the wall in 6m sq. Concentrate. Decide on the best position for the letters. Do not use pencils or other helpers to make it right. Start with the first nail and bang it directly into the wall at the top left hand side of the first imagined letter 'U'. You are doing well. Concentrate. Repeat the action 67 times, making necessary adjustments as you go. Remember to make sure there is enough space between the nails so that the keys can fit on them without touching. Don't worry if one letter is smaller or larger than another. This will not be perfect. Once all 68 nails are nailed on the wall, pick up the first key and place it on the top left hand point of the letter 'U'. Repeat this 67 times, making the necessary adjustments as you go. Take the notice 'Please Take One'. Attach this to the wall at the bottom right hand side of the final letter 'A'. Have a coffee and relax; the installation is over. Remember to return the Master Key by post.

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**WITH OUR £2000 ARTIST FEE
WE ARE GOING TO COP15**



Letter to the vacuum cleaner for What Difference Does it Make roundtable discussion on
27 March 2010 at Stanley Picker Gallery, part of **Louder than Bombs: Art, Action and Activism** series of
residencies and events

(READ OUT LOUD PLEASE – pausing between lines)

James,
Hello.
How are you?
Are there many people there,
Listening?
What we have to say is for you
Really
Not for anyone else.
But
If
People are there
then we don't really mind them listening...

We went to COP 15, slow travelled there and back in December – if train and boat can be included in the practice of slow travel. We used the money that we got from the Arnolfini to buy tickets and spend on food and other costs. It was a £2000 pound artist fee for our participation in PLATFORM's C Words: Carbon Climate Capital Culture. Since we promised that we'd spend the money on going to COP15 then we thought we'd better make sure we kept that promise.

The money came, like lots of 'art' money does, through the taxpayer, siphoned off through the treasury to the ministry for arts culture and sport to the arts council. Then the Arnolfini applied to the Arts Council in order to, amongst other things, secure fees for commissioned artists participating on C Words.

We're not trying to be clever by not appearing in person, but travelling down to the big shitty (that's what we like to call London) would not help us in our battles to defossilize our economies. We'd quite like to be there with you, the other speakers and the audience (if any turned up) but we felt that sending a package was more appropriate. And also, Sid has chickenpox and Gabriel's in Wales, on a school trip. In a way we feel that we are probably more 'present' in this form than if we had turned up. It's funny how presence and absence mess each other up sometimes, but let's focus on the package. The package is what's left from our COP15 trip.

Please lift the package high above your head (but not directly over your head, arms a little bit in front). You may need someone to hold this piece of paper while you do this so you can read from it. Ask someone from the audience (if there is anyone there) to hold the paper up in front of your face so you can continue to read as you hold the package high in the air.

Do that now. Go on ask someone. Maybe Olivia could do it, but we'll leave that up to you.

We know how these artist events go, sometimes you fall out with the curator and feel awkward asking them for assistance after you've been swearing at them in the morning.

OK. So.

Please tip the contents of the package onto the floor in front of you.

Sorry we forgot to say that you should go and stand in an empty space.

If you have emptied all of the stuff over some chairs or on a table or something then that'll just have to do, but ideally we were thinking about an empty floor.

Nevermind.

Now you have an installation of rubbish. COP15 rubbish. We hope this fits with the Stanley Picker Gallery aesthetic, not only that, we heard that outsourcing labour – that's you doing our work for us, James - was 'in'.

There is a used cup, a empty wrapper, a serviette.

James, please name a few more items.

There is a comprehensive list of our expenditure for COP15 somewhere in the pile of rubbish. This outlines how we spent our £2000 artist fee and what rubbish we accumulated as a result of it.

So, this is it, a collection of much of the rubbish that we accumulated on our trip to COP15.

The five of us, without brilliant pre-planning admittedly, found ourselves hungry and thirsty at exactly the wrong times in exactly the wrong places.

Train stations, sea ports, bus stops.

Packaging. Packaging. Packaging.

The smell of diesel in all of it.

There's just one more thing to do before we end.

James, we know you like to clean up after capitalism, we know where your name comes from, the vacuum cleaner, but this time you can clean up and earn a wage.

Out of the £2000 artist fee that we dedicated to the COP15 trip we have £198.11 left.

If you rummage around in the rubbish you will find it, in a small white envelope.

This envelope is lodged inside Little One's Eco Disposable Nappies plastic bag.

There should be about £190 there. Count it out.

We deducted from £198.11 postage and packaging for this rubbish to get to you at the Stanley Picker gallery. This is for you to use however you see fit. Primarily it is to pay for you to clean up our rubbish after us. But we have no criteria for how you use this money.

Pay your friend's rent with it or buy yourself a new cardigan or go the pub with the audience afterwards (if any turned up).

Whatever you decide to do we genuinely feel that the best last resting place of the taxpayer funded £2000 artist fee is up your sucker.

Love

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home.

With Our £2000 Artist Fee We Are Going to COP 15

EXPENDITURE		£2000	RUBBISH
Harwich - Esbjerg Ferry Return Ticket	£332.10	£1667.90	A4 receipt
Liverpool - Harwich Train Return Ticket	£142.80	£1525.10	tickets
3 croissants Delicie de France @ Euston	£4.05	£1521.05	Delicie de France bag + napkins
3 baguettes 2 waters @ Upper Crust	£13.97	£1507.08	Upper Crust bags + napkins + 2 bottles of Buxton water
Harwich International Terminal Cafe	£8.65	£1498.43	3 Ribena juices, straws, plastic, 3 Walkers crisps, 2 polystyrene cups with lids
Ferry Food: Dinner and Breakfast	£100.80	£1397.63	some food waste + napkins
Ulla Present: L'Oreal and Glenlivet	£53.15	£1344.48	packaging for makeup and whiskey - to be dealt with by Ulla
3 bottles of wine and bottle opener	£43.35	£1301.13	3 bottles, packaging for wine opener, 2 plastic bags from Duty Free Shop
Virgin Mobile Top Up for L&G	£20.00	£1281.13	
Extra in £ on Carmel's dog & wine	£4.65	£1276.48	
M&S Food @ Euston for train journey	£20.90	£1255.58	3 drinks carton, 1 water bottle, 4 banana skins + packaging around them, 5 packs of crisps, 3 plastic boxes for ham...
Wizz Kidz donation @ Euston	£1.00	£1254.58	... 1 plastic box for cheese, 3 plastic small wraps for cheese, chocolate chip cookies wrap, chocolate raisins bag, 2 plastic bags

Two Virgin train teas	£3.20	£1251.38	packaging from two teas, 2 cups, 2 paper bags
Taxi home	£5	£1246.38	
3 LFC scarfs - present for Ulla and kidz	£17.97	£1228.41	
postage includng envelope	£5.59	£1222.82	
Cash Book	£0.65	£1222.17	
Esbjerg - Copenhagen Train	DKK 608		train tickets
4 hot dogs and waters	DKK 124		hot dog tissue/bags 4 plastic bottles, 1 given back to the shop for DKK 1
chocolates	DKK 51		chocolate wrappers
crisps and teas on train	DKK 72		crisps packets, 2 teacups, 2 bags of tea, more napkins which are used as tissues
bus tickets in Copenhagen	DKK 42		bus tickets
2 pints and 3 juices near Ulla's	DKK 140		3 bottles from juice but café will deal with it
8 beers and 5 juices from shop	DKK 195		8 cans of beer + 5 bottles of juice- will be recycled, says Ulla
3 sweatshirts Climate Justice	DKK 600		
pastries near Christiania	DKK 106		2 bags+ napkins from pastries
Nemoland café food, juices and teas	DKK 100		2 plastic cups + 2 wooden sticks
bus tickets in Copenhagen	DKK 42		bus tickets
butchers - mince beef for Shep Pie	DKK 62		packaging from food shopping, from meat, carrots. . .
corner shop veg + stuff for Shep Pie	DKK 176		... tomatoes, peas, potatoes, peppers, cheese
corner shop veg + stuff for Shep Pie	DKK 151		

wine and cheese	DKK 200		1 wine box
metro ticket for 10 rides	DKK 130		1 metro ticket for 10 rides
pizzeria near Reclaim Power march	DKK 255		6 plastic cups, 2 pizza boxes, 1 plastic bag, 1 bottle of lemonade, napkins
given to Ulla for hot chocolate	DKK 100		
butchers - leg of lamb, Louise dinner	DKK 237		meat packaging - some paper
rosemary	DKK 40		
potatoes and parsnip	DKK 30		veg packaging
given to Ulla for beef soup-dinner club	DKK 500		
ice skating	DKK 115		
muffins, coffees, hot juices	DKK 155		stuff around muffin, juice bottles that café deals with
4 falafels + lemonades	DKK 200		foil in which falafels were wrapped, one plastic bag, lots of napkins, 4 cans
wine and beer	DKK 250		cans of beer - not sure how many, lots; box of wine
Copenhagen - Esbjerg train	DKK 775		
bowling next to Klima Forum	DKK 175		
sandwiches at Klima Forum	DKK 100		4 sandwich wrappers
teas and juices at Klima Forum	DKK 55		3 plastic cups, 2 teabags, 2 paper cups, 1 wooden stick
cakes at Klima Forum	DKK 60		2 paper plates, 4 serviettes for cakes
bread at Netto	DKK 33		2 bags of bread packaging, also eggs cartoon
tooth fairy	DKK 50		

food for train journey	DKK 227		5 banana skins, 1 plastic bag, packages from 4 sandwiches, 4 plastic bottles from apple juices
one cup of tea on train	DKK 18		1 paper cup
toilet on Esbjerg train station	DKK 2		
Carmel's present: beer, sausage, chocolate hearts at Esbjerg market	DKK 300		1 plastic bag
Carmel's present: dog + wine on ferry	DKK 450		3 bottles of wine
dinner on ferry	DKK 796		minimal food waste, 2 toothpicks
breakfast on ferry	DKK 327		some blue napkins
	DKK 8049		
	£ 974.06	£248.11	
			receipts in general
			26 nappies out of which 14 were soiled
			45 wipes, two of which were randomly used, one was blooded
			1 nappy bag
			8 cosmetic pads
			Klima forum magazine
			packaging from Ali Kazam and 2 Jack the Pirate costumes
Art not Oil Diaries	£50.00	£198.11	
£198.11 is the left over money that we are sending to vacuum cleaner in Stanley Picker gallery in a package. We will deduct p&cp expenses.			

MACBETHMACHINE

Performance event at The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home for Winter Solstice, 21 Dec 2010
An exploration of ambition, heteronormativity, coupling, violence and the failure of capitalism

SCHEDULE FOR **Macbethmachine** REHEARSALS between 23 Sep 2010
- 20 Dec 2010

Protagonists	Audiences	Couple	Ben Lorena	Dan Penny	Gary Lena	Tim Britt
Four Heterosexual Couples	Four Couples	Room	Master Bed-room	Living Room	Dining Room	Children's Room
Ben Phillips	No couple	Session 1	13/10/10 16:00	25/10/10 20:00	23/09/10 21:00	25/10/10 10:30
Lorena Rivero de Beer		Session 2	20/11/10 11:00 Lorena alone	06/12/10 11:00	07/10/10 20:45	04/11/10 09:00
Daniel Simpkins	Eleanor Rees	Session 3	21/11/10 16:00 together. Lorena alone.	12/12/10 12:00	23/10/10 45min 20:45 24/10/10 45min 21:15	24/11/10 10:00
Penny Whitehead						
Gary Anderson	Bryan Biggs	Session 4	05/12/10 14:00	14/12/10 11:00	08/11/10 21:15	27/11/10 11:00
Lena Simic	Cathy Butterworth	Session 5	12/12/10 12:00	17/12/10 09:00	23/11/10 19:30	8/12/10 worked from home
Tim Jeeves	Elinor Randle	Session 6	18/12/10 13:30	20/12/10 10:00 worked from home	18/12/10 20:30	20/12/10 18:00
Britt Jurgensen	Lorraine Nicholson	Perfor- mance	21/12/10 13:30	21/12/10 13:00	21/12/10 13:30	21/12/10 13:30

Could you please let us know your preferred time for sessions. We are happy to leave you in the house on your own, or be in the house whilst you are having your sessions. You can also work in the night if this is necessary - we will arrange this beforehand. Usually, children go to sleep around 8:30pm, and parents go to sleep around 1am.

MORNING PERFORMANCES
(for each other)

AFTERNOON PERFORMANCES (for external audiences of 4 couples)

11 00	Tim/Britt perform for Dan/Penny Ben/Lorena perform for Gary/Lena	Performance	13 30	13 45	14 00	14 15	14 30 Institute (all)
11 15	Gary/Lena perform for Tim/Britt Ben/Lorena perform for Dan/Penny	Living Room	Dan/Penny TBC	Dan/Penny Bryan/Cathy	Dan/Penny Nick/Julie	Dan/Penny Elinor/Lorraine	
11 30	Dan/Penny perform for Gary/Lena Tim/Britt perform for Ben/Lorena	Dining Room	Gary/Lena Bryan/Cathy	Gary/Lena Nick/Julie	Gary/Lena Elinor/Lorraine	Gary/Lena TBC	
11 45	Gary/Lena perform for Ben/Lorena Dan/Penny perform for Tim/Britt	Master Bedroom	Ben/Lorena Nick/Julie	Ben/Lorena/Elinor/Lorraine	Ben/Lorena TBC	Ben/Lorena Bryan/Cathy	
12 00	Tim/Britt perform for Gary/Lena Dan/Penny perform for Ben/Lorena	Children's Room	Tim/Britt Elinor/Lorraine	Tim/Britt TBC	Tim/Britt Bryan/Cathy	Tim/Britt Nick/Julie	
12 15	Ben/Lorena perform for Tim/Britt Gary/Lena perform for Dan/Penny						

Commission email sent out on 21 Sep 2010 to Ben & Lorena, Dan & Penny, Tim & Britt by Gary & Lena

Commission: **Macbethmachine**

History:

During the FIFA World Cup last summer, Gary and Lena wrote **Macbethmachine** (attached) after Shakespeare's **Macbeth** and Heiner Muller's **Hamletmachine**.

In creating this performance text, we read 'Macbeth' closely, discussed it in depth, researched 'Hamletmachine' and Heiner Muller's work, thought about recent European history and the fall of communism. When writing we followed the structure of 'Hamletmachine' and its 5 scenes. All of our creative and discursive sessions were held in 90 minute sessions, in line with the then ongoing World Cup matches. 45 minutes play, a half time break, 45 minutes play. Full Time! Thematically we picked up on the failure of communism (in Muller's work) which translated into the failure of capitalism and its promise of freedom (in our text). We were intrigued by the notions of violence and heteronormativity (in Shakespeare's Macbeth and Lady Macbeth) as well as family life/childlessness. Capitalism, ambition, failure/success were further broad themes that we wanted to address through the writing. 'Macbethmachine' builds on the work we did through the Institute's project on **Miss Julie in Utopia** in 2008 (after August Strindberg's **Miss Julie**). In 'Miss Julie in Utopia' we worked closely with Cathy Butterworth and a little with Bryan Biggs and the performance took place during the summer solstice on 21 June 2008. In a sense this is the sequel.

Present:

The autumn equinox takes place on 23rd September, in 2 days time. This will be the first day of autumn. The beginning of the process. We wish to commission you to produce a short performance loosely based on our performance text **Macbethmachine** for 21 December 2010 – winter solstice. You have 3 months.

Future:

The 4 performances by 4 couples (which includes Gary and Lena) will take place at the Institute on 21 December 2010. You need to be available for this day.

Strict Rules for the Commission:

The performances must be developed through the medium of **heterosexual couples** (Ben and Lorena, Dan and Penny, Tim and Britt, Gary and Lena). We are interested to further explore the notion of violence as it exists through 'coupling'.

You must work on the premises of 7 Bright Street in one of these four rooms: living room, dining room, master bedroom, children's bedroom. You can express your preference for the room but must work in the one which will be allocated to you. When working/rehearsing in the room you must **keep the door closed behind you**.

You can use text from **Macbethmachine** or Shakespeare's **Macbeth** in any way/form/order you want. You should address the themes of failure of capitalism, [heteronormative] violence, illusion of freedom and ambition.

You must work on this commission in **7 sessions**, 6 of which would be 90 minutes long and the last, the 7th one, would be a performance. The structure for 7 sessions and 90 minutes comes from 7 matches that the winner of the World Cup must play and win. We must agree on your working schedule for the first 6 sessions.

The final performance will be performed in your couple in your room with the door closed.

The performance will be viewed by other performers-couples and members of audience, also in couples. We are anticipating a scene of some 5-10 minutes, which will need to be repeated throughout your first 45 minutes of the session, but can also be durational for the whole 45 minutes period, if you wish.

On this day you will have to see the other 3 performances by other couples as well.

The remaining 45 minutes of your session will be spent in the Institute with all 8 performers creating something together – having just seen each other's performances for the first time.

You will be paid **£62.26 each** – this sum is derived from 10.5 hours work (7 x 90 minutes sessions) x £5.93 (minimum wage). Additionally you will get Xmas bonus of **£30 each**. This makes **your total sum £93.26 each**. You will receive this sum immediately after the performance on 21 December 2010.

Could you please let us know ASAP (**by 23 September** would be ideal) if you would like to participate in this project, including a list of preferences for the rooms (1 most desirable, 4 least desirable) and a preliminary schedule for your 6 sessions.

We look forward to having you behind the closed doors of 7 Bright Street.

Lena and Gary

'As an intellectual you belong at last to the middle class; as soon as you even make the beginnings of a career, as you have some success, you belong to the establishment you fight against. You get into the establishment by fighting it; as a writer of literature, for instance, there is no other way to join it, I believe. But then you're 'in' and live in the dilemma that you belong, yet don't like it [**don't like it, don't like it – in Sid's voice**]. And it's quite typical here that once very good authors have written a bestseller, their tragedy of success begins; people are ground down by success.' Heiner Muller

Macbethmachine – Text for Performance

first written during World Cup 2010, edited during rehearsal process 23 Sep - 20 Dec

1. FAMILY ALBUM

Macbeth/Lady Macbeth: I am Mrs Macbeth, not 'lady'. I went back into the room of the king with the daggers in my hand and whispered in Duncan's ear – it was still warm, he was moaning weakly, just about to go – 'When she walks through your bedroom with butcher's knives, you'll know the truth.' There's a pleasure in letting people know things. My sons, all three of them, watched me do it. I let them. I want them to know. Now they have a head start in life. But privilege isn't everything, to be privileged is nothing, but to be safely privileged! My husband thinks he's clever, he's forever reading how to undermine others with words, words, words, then I put the daggers in his hands. He moved from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer to Reader to Professor in a matter of hours. They'll be others to take your place. The line stretches out till the crack of doom. He mumbled something about washing his hands of it all. That shite about not being able to wash the blood off – that was all make-believe – just to make sure the men knew they were in charge. Every time I played that scene I'd come off stage FURIOUS demanding a rewrite. THERE'S A SPECTRE HAUNTING him, Banquo's snow-white eyes like Minerva's, sightless, gawping, giftless: PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, GET

OVER IT, CHEER UP! The bells sound, CHAAAANG, the wall falls, CHAAAANG, the till's ching, CHAAAANG and the spectre disappears. The new homeless take up their places in the back door entrances of newly opened chainstores CHAAAANG – hear it not, husband for it is the bell that summons thee...

When opportunity comes, don't knock it! It is my right to have the freedom to own a property on Eldred Road (£235,000) or Towers Road (evening and weekend viewing only £285,000) or a 3 bedroom on Highville Road or a big garden on Harthill Avenue, or Mossville Close, Pitville Avenue, Heatherdale Road (all just under £200,000), or the detached Edale Road, a bargain at £249, 950 just next to TESCO in Allerton, all on the market NOW. Being realistic, we're moving to a new castle – the kids can't play in Glamis the other kids are too rough, Cawdor's got no local amenities and we have a right to a 4 bedroomed semi-detached with a large back garden. We're both FULL TIME for God's sake. Duncan's place is not all it's cracked up to be. There's some structural damage and there's a terrible draft blowing. There's a bird stuck in between the walls, must have fallen out of its nest up in the cockloft. At night you can hear it squeak and walk about, tap tap tapping on the wall. He says it'll stop in a few days. He still can't sleep at night.

BREAKDOWN 1 improvised conversation on 11+ tests

We must begin before the beginning. The path to success is clear – those who can see it walk it. Today has been cancelled, called off and replacements are to be brought in. The only direction is forward – no lingering, no browsing, buy what you want and get out of the shop quick. There's no walls anymore. All the walls are down – you can tell by the 'beep beep beep' of trucks reversing to offload their stock in unison with the beep beep beep of the tills as they scan your meats and plastics 'beep beep beep'. Let's take that castle on Edale Road – early morning we'd be infused with the truth, the rhythm of new products arriving in trucks to go on shelves to go off shelves into bellies and bins. To be replaced, replaced and replaced like a line of plastic packaged products stretching out until the crack of doom. My Thane of Edale Road.

2. ERASURE

In front of the empty walls of the Institute

Fleance (as if talking from the future) : I remember a red shirt, something to do with revolution and communism. I remember a badge FREE PALESTINE, red, black, green and white. I remember a plastic bottle of water blu-tacked to the South-East corner of the Institute wall, towards Mecca – with a story inside the plastic bottle. A witness account of the murder of the innocents – notes left over by an activist from the FREE GAZA movement. Possibly read this. I remember a plaque saying PERFORM A MOMENT OF FREEDOM in red, yellow and green. I remember the Guardian poster of British prime ministers, from Sir Robert Walpole to Gordon Brown ... further material here... An artist from Bulgaria/USA visited in early June and added a Cameron-Cleggs clone to finish the line (till the crack of doom). I remember postcards, some like vaginas, some like penises. I remember an old woman, with grey hair trying to get out of a sea shell. Hecate.

I remember bus tickets for 17 people who later on squeezed into the Institute. I remember a postcard with words, a text that needed decoding, a propaganda pamphlet from MISS JULIE IN UTOPIA, a dangling thing about war from a performance artist from Denmark – a woman soldier. A woman unsexing herself. A photograph of my Goddaughter with my children one two three. A note telling me to read Mierle Laderman Ukeles, and then the quote in my head: After the revolution, who's going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?

3. SCHERZO/FAILURE

Lady Macbeth breastfeeding Fleance.
Macbeth with blooded hands – rubbing the hands.
Banquo licking the blood off Macbeth’s hands. Using baby wipes.
Three Weird Sisters distributing snow balls amongst the audiences.

Football results are announced via megaphone (random reading):

BREAKDOWN 2: conversation on exceptional people over mediocrity

Group stages		Round of 16	Semi final
Friday June 11, 2010 South Africa 1 - Mexico 1 Uruguay 0 - France 0	Saturday, June 19, 2010 Netherlands 1 - Japan 0 Ghana 1 - Australia 1 Cameroon 1 - Denmark 2	Saturday June 26, 2010 Uruguay 2 - South Korea 1 United States 1 - Ghana 2	Tuesday July 6, 2010 Uruguay 2 - Netherlands 3
Saturday June 12, 2010 South Korea 2 - Greece 0 Argentina 1 - Nigeria 0 England 1 - USA 1	Sunday June 20, 2010 Slovakia 0 - Paraguay 2 Italy 1 - New Zealand 1 Brazil 3 - Ivory Coast 1	Sunday June 27, 2010 Germany 4 - England 1 Argentina 3 - Mexico 1	Wednesday July 7, 2010 Germany 0 - Spain 1
Sunday, June 13, 2010 Algeria 0 - Slovenia 1 Serbia 0 - Ghana 1 Germany 4 - Australia 0	Monday June 21, 2010 Portugal 7 - North Korea 0 Chile 1 - Switzerland 0 Spain 2 - Honduras 0	Monday June 28, 2010 Netherlands 2 - Slovakia 1 Brazil 3 - Chile 0	3rd Place
Monday, June 14, 2010 Netherlands 2 - Denmark 0 Japan 1 - Cameroon 0 Italy 1 - Paraguay 1	Tuesday June 22, 2010 Mexico 0 - Uruguay 1 France 1 - South Africa 2 Nigeria 2 - South Korea 2 Greece 0 - Argentina 2	Tuesday June 29, 2010 Paraguay 0 - Japan 0, Paraguay win on penalties 5 - 3 Spain 1 - Portugal 0	Saturday July 10, 2010 Uruguay 2 - Germany 3
Tuesday, June 15, 2010 New Zealand 1 - Slovakia 1 Ivory Coast 0 - Portugal 0 Brazil 2 - North Korea 1	Wednesday June 23, 2010 Slovenia 0 - England 1 United States 1 - Algeria 0 Ghana 0 - Germany 1 Australia 2 - Serbia 1	Quarterfinal	Final
Wednesday, June 16, 2010 Honduras 0 - Chile 1 Spain 0 - Switzerland 1 South Africa 0 - Uruguay 3	Thursday June 24, 2010 Slovakia 3 - Italy 2 Paraguay 0 - New Zealand 0 Denmark 1 - Japan 3 Cameroon 1 - Netherlands 2	Friday July 2, 2010 Netherlands 2 - Brazil 1 Uruguay 1 - Ghana 1, Uruguay win on penalties 4 - 2	Sunday July 11, 2010 Netherlands 0 - Spain 1 in Soccer City Johannesburg
Thursday, June 17, 2010 Argentina 4 - South Korea 1 Greece 2 - Nigeria 1 France 0 - Mexico 2	Friday June 25, 2010 Portugal 0 - Brazil 0 North Korea 0 - Ivory Coast 3 Switzerland 0 - Honduras 0 Chile 1 - Spain 2	Saturday July 3, 2010 Argentina 0 - Germany 4 Paraguay 0 - Spain 1	
Friday, June 18, 2010 Germany 0 - Serbia 1 Slovenia 2 - USA 2 England 0 - Algeria 0			

4. INDUSTRIOUS SOLDIERSHIP

Macbeth/Lady Macbeth (with the help of Banquo and Three Weird Sisters):

Fear not, till Birnam Wood

Do come to Dunsinane; and now a wood

Comes towards Dunsinane.

Open the gates, let the flooding begin. The people are gathered, they are pouring in. The freedom seekers, the freedom fighters, the liberty lovers, the great army of the new bourgeoisie. They will have it all, the ones that fear not to fall, one by one.

1989 The Velvet Revolution. Czechoslovakia is to be divided in two (later on in 1993); 'Romania was the only Eastern Bloc country to overthrow its government forcefully or to execute its leaders' (wiki says), late December in 1989 the Extraordinary Military Tribunal is formed, the trial is held. Christmas day, death sentences are given to the couple. Paratroopers with their service guns: Elena and Nicolae Ceausescu are dead. 1991 the USSR is gone, we have a multitude instead: Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania.

Yugoslavia was chopped up into eight separate countries, a long and bloody Balkan affair, between 1991 and 1995.

Hungary had its free elections in March, 1990. In 2006 George W Bush remembered the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He speaks from Gellért Hill during the commemoration:

From this spot you could see tens of thousands of students and workers and other Hungarians marching through the streets. They called for an end to dictatorship, to censorship, and to the secret police. They called for free elections, a free press, and the release of political prisoners. These Hungarian patriots tore down the statue of Josef Stalin, and defied an empire to proclaim their liberty.

Poland - the Solidarnost candidate is elected in 1990. On the 10th of November 1989, the Bulgarian Communist Party gave up its political monopoly.

All is fine. Eastern Europe is thriving. East and West Germany are united. FREEEEEEEEEEDOM!

Much later on we hear of some Chechnya troubles - something to do with theatre and terrorism - such barbarism over there, far away... but this was in 2002, the terrorist era, beyond the utopianism of the liberal democracy of the 1990s. The new millennium was to bring trouble, strange things... by the ticking of my bombs something wicked this way comes. Macbeth language needed here... women suicide bombers

Tick tock - it's time to go! Would you plant a bomb? A woman terrorist?!

At which point do you say 'enough'? Sleep no more...

BREAKDOWN 3: conversation about nervous breakdown being an intervention into the work ethic (ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!)

Let us recall the giant leap into freedom after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Let us recall the fantastic spread of liberal democracy throughout Europe.

FIFA - the most inclusive organization in the world, 208 member associations, the UN counts a meagre 192. England 1 Germany 4 ha ha ha.

....

2010 and the European World Cup Final, again. European nations one two three in South Africa 2010

Fortress Europe – you’ve done well
All hail!
The Schengen Agreement – you are well
All hail!
EU – may you prosper
All hail!

Great European philosophers speak:

- Derrida: In my opinion, the most ‘free’ thought is one that is constantly coming to terms with the effects of the machine. That’s why I rarely use the word ‘freedom’.
- Satre: We are condemned to be free.
- Hegel: No idea is so generally recognized as indefinite, ambiguous and open to the great misconceptions (to which therefore it actually falls a victim) as the idea of Freedom, none in common currency with so little appreciation of its meaning.
- Derrida: Between the machinelike and the non-machine, then, there is a complex relation at work that is not a simple opposition. We can call it freedom, but only beginning at the moment when there is something incalculable. ... the other always responds, by definition, to the name and the figure of the incalculable. No brain, nor neurological analysis, however exhaustive it’s supposed to be, can render the encounter with the other. The coming of the other, l’arrivance de l’arrivant - the “arriving-ness” of the arrival - this is what happens, this is the one who or which arrives as an unforeseen event.

9 Nov 1989 The Fall of the Berlin Wall

It was to be expected. After all those years of brutal communist regimes.

Freedom reigns over the former Eastern Bloc.

Because work makes you free. The fall of the wall. The flight of the ball. Rooney allowed to roam free on the left. Gerrard roaming free on the right?

On 12 June, 1987 at 2pm at the Brandenburg Gate, protected by two thick panes of bulletproof glass some old movie star, with help from his wife, with the daggers in her hands, said:

We welcome change and openness; for we believe that freedom and security go together, that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace. General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace... if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!... This wall cannot withstand freedom.

If you google the phrase The Fall of the Berlin Wall – you get 1,470,000 results in 0.17 seconds. If you google it with the word freedom in you get Barack Obama saying about the fall of the Berlin wall that ‘there could be no stronger affirmation of Freedom’.

5.

Children’s choir: Fleance is joined by Malcolm, Donalbaine, Young Siward, Boy (son of Macduff)

A prophet once said: I would like to stage MACBETH on the top of the World Trade Center for an audience in helicopters.

Macbeth, Lady Macbeth and Banquo were amongst the victims.

Fleanace (like Macbeth, with the help of the children):

Macbeth is the machine. Macbeth is the machine.

There is nowhere to hide now. The future is at hand - and yet the future has not happened yet.

We are becoming it, the machine.

Macbeth, Macbeth, Machinelike

All hail!

Macbeth, Machinelike, Macbeth

All hail!

Thou shall be hereafter.

Forever hereafter.

I am a Machine. They tried to overthrow me by some pure white snowballs in February 2009. They staged a fight against me. I was well protected by the taxpayers bank - RBS's bullet proof glass and my laughter.

Forever hereafter. The Machine.

Three Weird Sisters serve the Witches' brew in cauldron.

NOTE: Each scene is prefaced by

Macbeth

If we should fail?

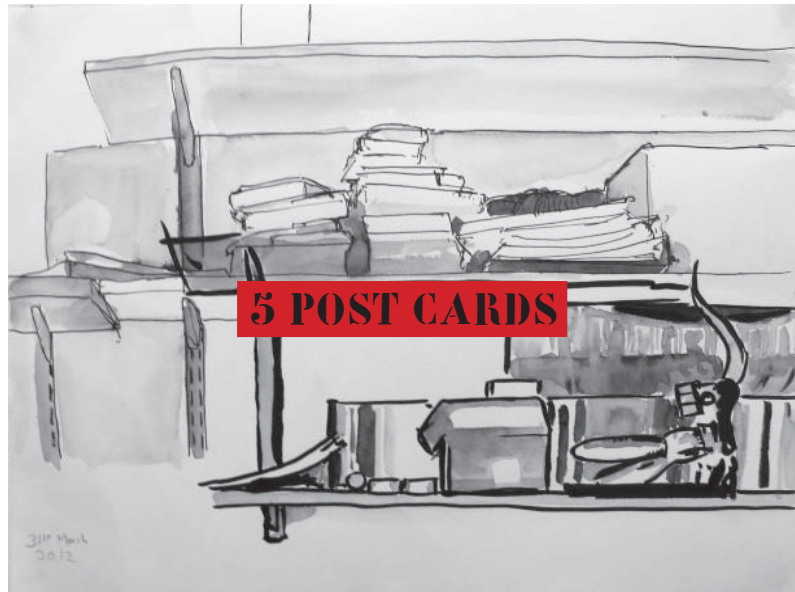
Lady Macbeth

We fail!

But screw your courage to
the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail.







We've been receiving Post Cards and hanging them on the walls of the Institute.

These five have been specially commissioned for a fiver. The five visitors were asked to remember their visit to the Institute in five sentences.

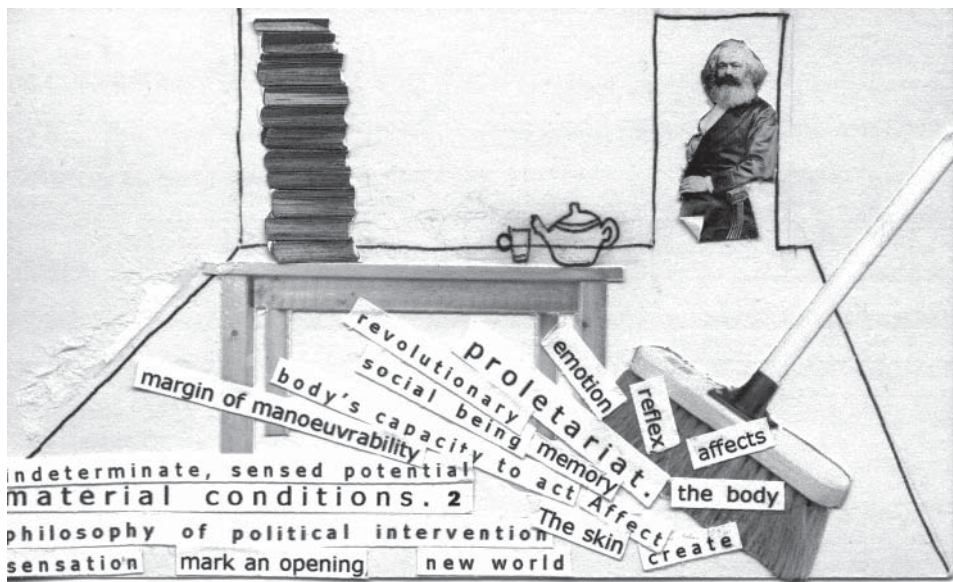
Nicola Kirkham

Zhao Chuan

Rev Billy

Monika Vykoukal

David Lloyd



Nicola Kirkham, writer-in-residence, 2008



Dear Lena & Gary
Thanks to the invitation to your
Institute last year. Thanks for
the dinner. I really feel at home

Through what u told me and
our talk, I can understand your
'Dissent at Home'. Is that the
only way we can do at this time?
At least, I like the way u do.

Best

Zhao Chuan



25. March 2015

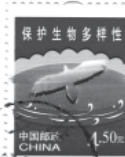
www.chinaciff.com
chinaciff@yaho.com.cn

THE 7TH CHINA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL 第八届中国独立电影节

To: The Institute for the
Art & Practice of Dissent
at Home

7 Bright Street
Liverpool L6 1DL

UK (寄英国利物浦)



中国独立电影节

独立工作组

2015

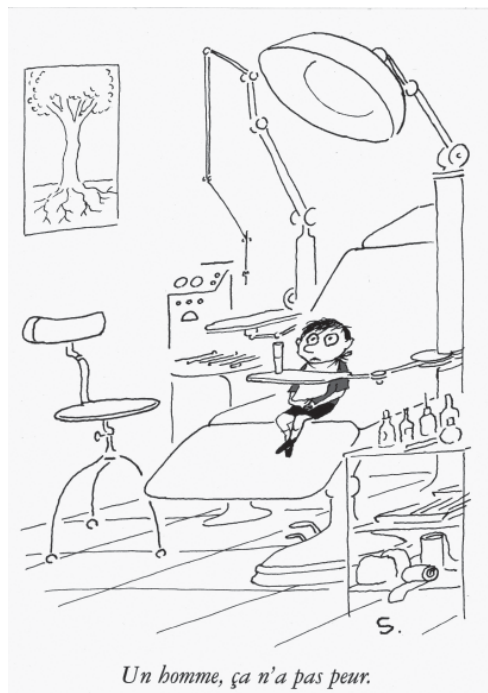
03

28

15

独立电影节

CHINA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL



Un homme, ça n'a pas peur.

We all had dinner together, then
we looked at some books upstairs.
You, L., suggested the club on Sunday.
It was a good place to meet people in
new town.

It was cold, but sunny.

I was nervous, not feeling good about
my work.

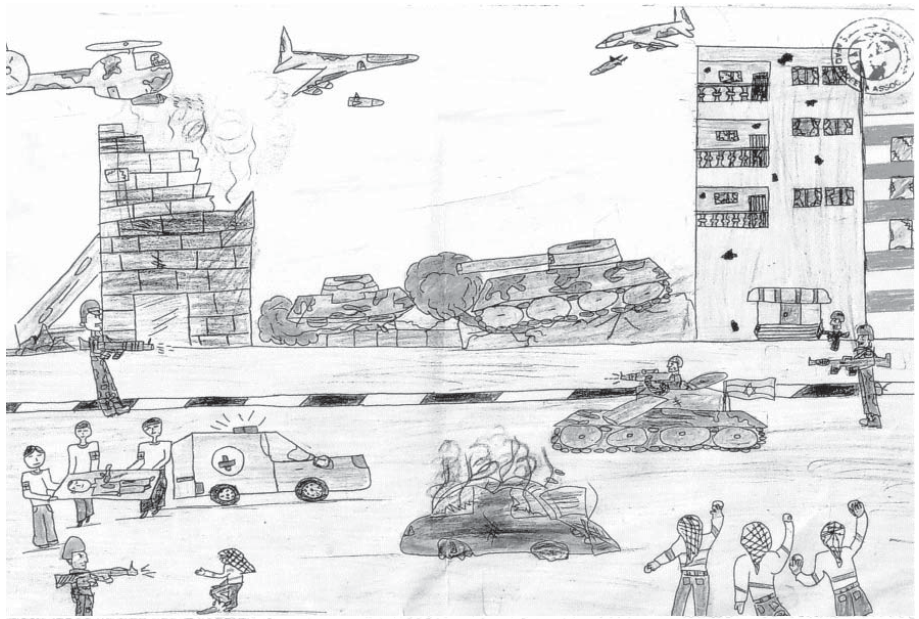
It was a very warm feeling-welcome,
although I wondered how it seemed
earlier when I talked about
the whole urban development-stuff
with you all...



Le Petit Nicolas® - contact
Textes : Gascigny - Dessins : Sempé - www.petitnicolas.com
© 2004 IMAY éditions Distribution : Éditions du I
NP 041 Printed in France

The Notebook for the Art & Practice of
Direct at Home
7 Bright Street
Liverpool L6 1DL
Royaume-Uni





"A Child's View From Gaza" is a traveling exhibit of paintings and drawings made by children in Gaza following Israel's three-week assault in the winter of 2008-2009. It can be seen on MECA's Facebook page.
MECA, 1101 8th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710 www.mecaforpeace.org

JULY 16, 2013

I remember: the walk up the hill
in the buffeting wind, stride by
stride with Gary, to the small
house above;

I remember: the puppy and the
gated room below the stair, with
the plastic sheet down;

I remember: the room upstairs,
with the books and a window
looking down the hillside, a
place to write in;

I remember: Mahmoud Darwish
says, in Memory

MECA

for Forgetfulness,
that coffee reveals
the soul of the
person who serves it;
I have not forgotten:
a promise that one
day I will return
and make coffee, for
five.

David Wop
Dane, California

LIST OF VISITORS 2008 - 2012

Dr. John Bennett	Felix Dalziel	Sarah Haythornthwaite	Christian Petersen
Annette Etkind	Daniel Simpkins	Rachel Rogers	Hannah Hurtzig
Anna Ketskemeti	Penny Whitehead	Julia Samuels	Frauke Luther
Jack Tinsdale	Di Clay	Becky Vipond	Lawrence Bradby
Iona Etkind	Elaine Kordys	Tom Vipond	Stephanie Anderson
Angus Etkind	Martin LeSanto-Smith	Margaret Connell	Susan Nicolesi
Ross Dalziel	Dan Gretton	Sarah Milner	Dino Nicolesi
Imogen Stidworthy	James Marriott	Ben Amunwa	Paula McClosky
Severin Domela	Ewa Jasiewicz	Roksana Achilova	the very cooperative
Simon Bowes	Dave Whyte	Victor Merriman	Andre Guedes
Dale Rathbone	Simon Murray	Niamh Malone	Francisco Malheiro
Stuart Tait	Abi Lake	Carmel Cleary	Sarah Nicolls
Alan Eddy	Caroline Wilson	Roger Hill	Emily Speed
Stuart Watson	Maya Mofardin	Emma Smith	Susan Massey
Michael Pinchbeck	Anna Francis	Emma Gregory	Tracey Eastham
Amra Watson	Helen Simpson	Eleanor Rees	Karen McLeod
Rob Watson	Elaine Speight	Mary Prestige	Sam Vardy
Ella Watson	Robina Llewellyn	Pete Clarke	Fionn McCloskey Beardon
Nina Watson	Rebecca Chesney	Clare Owens	Elyssa Livergant
Dr. Gary Bowman	Sasha Dundjerovic	Pete Hindle	Ben Cerf
Elaine Bowman	Ilva Navarro	Julian Hughes	Monica Hunken
Florence Bowman	Lucas Dundjerovic	Branka Cvjeticanin	Valerie Kelley
Phillip Duffy	Nicola Kirkham	Tom Robinson	Tola Abiade
Fiona Stirling	Bryan Biggs	Steve Higginson	Mi Sun Choi
Andrew Butterworth	Tina Gverovic	Ruth Beale	Sophie Mcadam
Nina Butterworth	Pam Wilson	Karen Breneman	Gaylen Hamilton
Theo Butterworth	Sharon Smith	Andrew Davies	Savitri D
Laura Devereux	Anna Richter	Rob Scales	Reverend Billy
Claire Humphries	Francesca Batistoni	Lorena Rivero de Beer	Laura Newman
Peter S. Petralia	Andrew Winder	Ania Bas	Claire Hicks
Cathy Butterworth	Terry McGrath	Jane Trowell	Richard Dedomenici
Claire Chrystall	Casper Jones	Ange Taggart	Thomas Shepard
Jacob Dalziel	Paul Domela	Janice Harding	Julieann O'Malley

Tom Hall	Faye Ward	Claudia Brazzale
Nela Simic	Amy Crownshaw	Zoe Zontou
Zeljko Simic	Peter Merrington	Steve Benson
Connor Sweeney	Richard Irvine	Louis Joe Jeck Prestidge
Josh Sweeney	Oisin McCloskey Vardy	Angela Ballone
Sophie Hope	Josie Berry Slater	
Monika Vykoukal	Anthony Iles	
David Lloyd	Hannah Marsden	
James Frieze	Nate Stevens	
Josephine Frieze	Nehemiah Lockett	
Britt Jurgensen	Narayan Shilpa	
Peter Arlt	Chantel Lucier	
Daniel Bozhkov	Robin Wilson	
Emily Underwood-Lee	John Quilty	
Clare Duffy	Adetola Abiade	
Jennifer Verson	Lena Talen	
Robert Harrison	James Solomon Benn	
Ella Rose	Sierra Carrere	
Ellen Loudon	Molly Chanoff	
Mark Loudon	Donald Gallagher	
Hayley Cripps	Magda Tyzlik-Carver	
Maresa Mackeith	Leanne Frain	
Caroline Mackeith	Sarah Deakin	
Roberto Sifuentes	Karen D'arcy	
Guillermo Gómez-Peña	Tim Jeeves	
Anna Powell	Grace Harrison	
Elinor Randle	Sara Newton	
Lorraine Nicholson	Christopher Madden	
Helena Walsh	Miriam Craik-Horan	
Kevin Biderman	Michael Rogers	
Ella Walsh Biderman	Sally Lemsford	
Melissa Rood	Ritchie Hunter	
Clayton Denwood	Zhao Chuan	
Maggie Denwood	Adam Byrne	
Maria X	Jayne Lawless	





Artist Residencies started in 2008. The Institute has hosted a variety of projects ranging from a day's visit which involved a little film making to a month sojourn which involved deep house cleaning. The majority of residencies were three days long. We followed an old Croatian saying: Svakog gosta tri dana dosta (Three days is enough for any guest).

List of Artist Residencies at the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home

2008

PLATFORM and Remember Saro-Wiwa (April 2008)
Anna Francis (May 2008)
Pete Hindle (June 2008)
Michael Pinchbeck and Julian Hughes (July and December 2008)
Tom Robinson (July 2008),
Branka Cvjeticanin (July 2008)
Ruth Beale and Karen Breneman (July 2008)
Simon Bowes (September 2008)
Ania Bas (September 2008)
Nicola Kirkham (November 2008)
the very cooperative (November 2008)

2009

PLATFORM and Virtual Migrants
Abi Lake
Sam Vardy
Cathy Butterworth

2010 (some issues)

Branka Cvjeticanin
Maresa MacKeith

2011 (family residencies)

Helena Walsh, Kevin Biderman and Ella
a place of their own
Townly & Bradby
Reverend Billy, Savitri D and Lena

2012

Stuart Watson
the vacuum cleaner
Pete Hindle
Cinderella Residency: Dr Persilovsky

BRANKA CVJETICANIN - 2008

to: theinstitute@twoaddthree.org
from: branka cvjeticanin
contact: branka.cvjeticanin@polygon.hr
subject: RESIDENCY
date: February 28, 2008

**AU PAIR ARTIST WANT TO BE PART OF THE LIVERPOOL EU CAPITAL OF CULTURE
2008 WITHIN THE DISSENT GREAT BRITAIN FAMILY.**



PROPOSAL

There is an old Slavic saying “*Otisaolla je u svijet trbuhom za kruhom*” - “He/She went to the world following his/her belly in search for the bread”. The whole Universe is described in that sentence, it’s historical, social, cultural, political and economic phenomena and state of mind of many generations in my family and in many other families from this Balkan Europe part of the world. On that “western” side, specially in the case of Great Britain there are only few legal economic channels open to foreigners (read: those who were never part of the former colonies). One of those legal economic channels is AU PAIR - a young foreign person, typically a woman, who helps with housework or child care in exchange for room and board. (origin - late 19th cent.: from French, literally “on equal terms”. The phrase was originally adjectival, describing an arrangement between two parties paid for by the exchange of mutual services; the noun usage dates from the 1960s). I decide to follow the agency pamphlet which promise me following: If you are the girl between 18 and 27 years (-), and you love to travel (+), and you willing to improve your English (+), get to know British tradition (+) through the life in family and children care (+)? (=) Au Pair in Great Britain will support you in that and even give you more by becoming equal member of the family, through the experience which leads toward long lasting friendship with your hosts. The family provides: pocket money from 50 - 100 GBP weekly (Croatian average salary is 400 GBP per month, artist average is lower); accommodation and food for free with the family; spare time for attending language school; health insurance; Great Britain is a land where tradition is interweave with the newest trends. Experience by yourself the most modern architecture, and not fare from idyllic countryside environment preserved from the times of Jane Austen, visit the wildest discotheques in the world or shopping in the most equipped shopping malls. In the brake for the lunch eat traditional “fish and chips” or visit thousand of authentic restaurants with national kitchens. No matter if you going to spend a year up to north or in the south in this magical country, your hosts will make you feel Great Britain as your own home. With traditional tea you will support the Manchester United (this was in the brochure) or talk about the newest gossips in the royal family. One is for sure: in Great Britain you will never get bored!. MOTIVATION I hope I will enjoy Great Britain’s architecture and work on my proper English accent indeed. Starting to visualise my life in GREAT Britain. Interaction and exchange follows.

Workload, Rules and Regulations for Artist/Au Pair Branka Cvjeticanin during the Residency at the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home

Work Start Date: Wednesday 2 July 2008

Work End Date: TBC

Pay Day: Fridays

Pay: £100 per week (£20 per day)

Work Days: Monday – Friday

Working Hours: varied but not exceeding 8 hours per day

Days off: Saturday and Sunday

Duties will vary each day, but generally artist/au pair will be taking care of Sid, 10 month old baby and some care of Neal, 7 and Gabriel 5. Artist/Au Pair is, in addition to salary, offered food and accommodation. Artist/Au Pair is allowed to eat any food she finds in the kitchen. She is welcome to all family meals: breakfast with the children in the morning, lunch with parents and the baby, and main evening meal with all the members of the family. However, Artist/Au Pair is also expected to help herself from the family's kitchen and prepare simple meals for herself and the children. In taking care of the baby, Artist/Au Pair is expected to prepare baby milk, feed the baby, bath the baby, put the baby to sleep, change nappies, take the baby for walks, go to playground, play with the baby, apply sunscreen if necessary, visit local baby/toddler's clubs... In taking care of the older boys, Artist/Au Pair is expected to teach them a bit of Croatian, play with them, read them stories, take them for cultural visits (Museum, Galleries etc), take them to the park and playground, prepare simple meals (pizza in the oven, fish fingers, scrambled eggs, pasta etc).

Schedule from Wednesday 2 July to Friday 4 July

Schedule for next week will be issued Monday morning!

Wednesday 2 July: take care of Sid (and Neal and Gabriel) from 12pm to 8pm (5:30pm to 8pm) while Mum and Dad attend a conference at University of Liverpool. You will need to pick up Neal and Gabriel from Black Sisters After-School Club at 5:30pm. Directions to Black Sisters After-School Club will be given beforehand.

Suggested activity: hang out with Sid at home/garden/neighbourhood. Around 3:30pm take Sid in the buggy and go for a walk around University of Liverpool area, visit Metropolitan Catholic Cathedral (in University's proximity) and then pick up Neal and Gabriel at 5:30pm from Black Sisters. With all three children, go home, prepare a quick meal (food will be provided), feed them



and wait for the parents to come back.

Thursday 3 July: take care of all three children from 3:30pm – 11:30pm. Sid goes to sleep around 7pm. Neal and Gabriel go to sleep at 8pm. You will be taken to Everton Leisure Centre for Neal and Gabriel's swimming lessons, after which you will have to walk them back home through Everton Brow. Simple meal, playtime, bedtime.

Thursday 3 July:

15:30 arrive home to 7 Bright Street, ready to work

15:45 join Lena and children to go to Everton Leisure Centre for Neal and Gabriel's swimming lessons

16:15 Neal and Gabriel's swimming lessons, watch them with Sid
16:45 Neal and Gabriel's swimming lessons finish, help them with showering and putting on their clothes
17:00 walk back home through Everton Brow, Neal and Gabriel should be able to help you in your adventure of finding home (estimated walking time: 30 minutes max)
17:30 arrive back home and start preparing simple meal for the children (pizza or fish fingers or eggs or anything else; Sid eats the same as children)
18:00 dinner with all three children
18:30 Sid has his last milk bottle for the day; Neal and Gabriel watch telly or play in the garden
19:00 Sid goes to sleep
20:00 Neal and Gabriel go to sleep (reading them a story would be much appreciated)
20:30 relax, watch telly, check emails, write your diary etc.
23:30 parents arrive back home

Friday 4 July: take care of Sid only 11pm – 4pm. Explore local neighbourhood or city centre with the baby in the buggy. Parents will meet you at home at 4pm. Visit FACT.
Workload Time Table for Artist/Au Pair Branka Cvjeticanin during the Residency at the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home

Friday 4 July:

11:00 be ready to work
11:05 play with Sid; sit in the garden until lunchtime
12:30 make lunch and eat with Sid (bread with butter, cheese and his milk bottle)
13:00 put Sid to sleep
14:30 Sid wakes up, change his nappy if necessary
14:45 take Sid for a walk round Everton Brow or explore Breck Road
16:00 parents arrive back home with Neal and Gabriel
16:05 payment for previous three days' work
Evening is free: Lena will take you out in the evening!

Special Notices:

You need to be flexible and adjust this workload timetable according to your needs. What is of utmost importance is that children are kept safe, clean (to a degree) and fed. Your working time needs to be somehow spent; everything else is up for improvisation. Follow this timetable, if it suits you – if not, invent your own.

Sid's daytime sleep pattern is changing: he tends to go to sleep anytime between 11 and 13 and usually sleeps for around 1 hour 30 minutes. Sometimes Sid will first sleep, then have his lunch; sometimes Sid will first have lunch, then sleep.

He can sleep at home or in his buggy, whilst out and about. If you want to go out, do not stay in because the baby is due a sleep, a feed or a change – all of these are very easily executed in public spaces. Always make sure you carry with you (in buggy) a baby milk bottle, some water, some food (banana, slice of bread, cheese) sunscreen, hat, nappies, wipes and extra clothes.

Monday 7 July 12:00 – 18:00

12:00 lunch with Sid and Gary and Lena at Cornerstone Campus of Liverpool Hope University

13:00 Take Sid for a walk towards city centre – you could go and see Super Lamb Banana at Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, or go towards galleries (Bluecoat, Tate or FACT). At some point, Sid will fall asleep – make sure his seat is in reclining position once he is asleep.

14:30 Check and change his nappy if necessary (for experience, try to use one of baby changing facilities in public, most galleries, restaurants and cafes have them)

15:30 start taking Sid back home (he will probably start being grumpy having spent lots of time in the buggy, alternatively try to find space in public where he can freely bum shuffle about – thus you can go home later)

16:30 arrive home, play with Sid using his toys and books

18:00 parents arrive with Neal and Gabriel, work stops, join in the family meal.

Tuesday 8 July 10:00 – 17:30

10:00 play with Sid, spend time at home/in the garden, pick up/fold/hang out the washing

12:00 have lunch with Sid (milk bottle, banana)

12:30 make sure Sid has his sleep, whilst he is asleep you can do what you like

13:30 take Sid for a short walk in the neighbourhood after his sleep (and after his lunch) – best is to take him to Everton Brow playground (further one from the house) where he can play at one of the swings

15:00 join Lena and Gary on their way to Neal and Gabriel's school. At this point Lena and Gary will take over Sid and you will take over Neal and Gabriel.

15:30 walk with Neal and Gabriel to MDI (Merseyside Dance Initiative after-school dance class.

16:00 dance

17:00 walk with Neal and Gabriel back home where the rest of the family will be waiting

Wednesday 9 July 10:00 – 17:30

10:00 – 17:30 daytrip with Sid to Antony Gormley's 'Another Place'. You will need to take a train from Liverpool Central Train Station to Waterloo.

Some extra pocket money will be provided for train tickets, packed lunch ingredients, ice cream, chocolate and postcards.

You will need to make packed lunch! Check the fridge, assess what is already here and what is necessary to buy. On your way to Liverpool Central Train Station (which is near Church Street and Bold Street) go to a shop and buy what is necessary for packed lunch (bread, cheese, ham, juice, water, fruit etc). Do not buy those things which are unnecessary; take some things from home.

Take a train to Waterloo. Once at Waterloo ask for directions for the beach – this is a 5 minutes walk.

Make sure to protect Sid from the sun with sunscreen, hat and clothes. You can both have fun in the sand. Enjoy your packed lunch together on a blanket. Be sure to take some photographs of Antony Gormley's 'Another Place' – this is one of the most famed Liverpool08 public exhibitions. When back in Liverpool, walk back home and when back home, relax at home!

I guess it is becoming clear that having a baby means lots of time-spending together and in a way it does not matter how that time is spent as long as both of you are relatively happy. So, as the days go by, you are left with big chunks of time with the baby and kids and you need to fill them as you wish... The following are only my suggestions.

Thursday 10 July 9:30 – 15:30

9:30 be ready for work. Parents need to leave the house and go to work around 9:30. In case of bad weather, hang out at home. You can try watching CeBeebies for a bit – this is a mind-numbing insane BBC programme for babies and children under 5. This is very much part of British culture of parenting and lots of mothers stay at home and watch telly. While at home, try to do some cleaning – like washing the dishes, sorting out washing, possibly arranging Sid's wardrobe... anything to pass the time. When Sid is asleep, you can work on your own stuff. It is important to program yourself to work in short intensive periods – if concentrated, you will find out that lots can be done in very small amounts of time. If weather is not too bad, go to Breck Road and visit some local shops (fruit and veg shop, bakery etc). You can also take Sid to the library and read him a few picture books there – there is a special section for parents and children there. Buy few bits and bobs in the local shops if you wish. If weather is ok, take Sid to Everton Brow Park to the playground.

15:30 parents arrive with Neal and Gabriel. They will take them to swimming lesson, and you are free until 19:00. This is your chance to get away!

19:00 Babysitter Claire arrives. All adults get ready to go out! We will go to the theatre and eat out! Our treat!

Friday 11 July 9:30 – 16:30

9:30 – be ready for work. Around 9:45 or 10 Gary will give you a lift to Ullet Road playgroup where you will experience ‘toddler’s group’ lifestyle and possibly meet some local mothers and carers. This playgroup is situated in Unitarian Church in South Liverpool. I used to take Neal and Gabriel to this playgroup a lot. Sid has never been there. Some of the mothers might recognize him, but then again maybe not. Playgroup finishes at 12. After the playgroup, hang out with Sid in Sefton Park and go to see Lark Lane, a somewhat bohemian part of Liverpool (where we used to live). Eat lunch at Keiths or Green Café or any other café there. Find St Michaels train station and take it Central and then come back home. Parents will be home around 16:30, after taking Neal and Gabriel shopping for football kits.

Monday 14 July 10:00 – 17:00

Do as you please. As usual, Sid needs to be changed/cleaned, fed and entertained.

**Miss Julie's brief return to The Institute 'with' her nan.
A conversation, and a walk – a small commemorative act.**

A transcript related to my residency at The Institute for The Art and Practice of Dissent At Home.

This writing will cover the subjects of family, leisure, entertainment, employment, finances, pets, the home-made, highest points, back doors and ghosts. It allows for slippage, loss of memory, unasked questions and the seemingly unbelievable, along with the inclusion of one or two white lies in the pursuit of pleasing resonance. All white lies are revealed in the footnotes (in due course). Slippage and loss of memory are mostly self-evident. Explanations of the seemingly unbelievable remain beyond the scope of this writing.

Lillian Butterworth (nee Porter)¹ lived in Amos Street, Everton from when she was born on 21 June 1925 until she was 12 years old, when the family moved to Compton Street, where she lived until she was 19. On Monday 26th October at 5.30pm my brother Rob (**RB**) and my two nieces Charlotte (**Charlotte** 11) and Samantha (**Sammy** 9) came with me when I went to interview my nan (**LB**) about growing up in Everton.²

CB So which year were you born nan?

LB 25, 1925

CB And where were you born?

LB In Amos Street³

CB In Everton?

LB Yes, in Everton, yes

CB And you know what you were just saying before about what it was like, what was it like around there then, when you were growing up?

LB Yes and they used to have the banners coming in the street...

CB Banners?

LB No bands, bands all coming to the streets. Yes, and we'd all sit on the kerb, and we'd all

be singing, to the band an' that , and a tram car used to come around, all lit up, you know, it was smashin'

CB And what did they play, what instruments?

LB All different things, drums, those erm you know squeeze box things

CB Accordion type thing?

LB Yes, and the spoons

CB And what sort of music did they play?

LB Ooh you know, band music, lively, erm I can't think of any tunes

CB So how old were you when you left there?

LB Erm, 19

CB So did you live in Amos Street til you were 19

LB No we went from Amos Street to Compton Street

CB And was that quite close?

LB Erm that was more, that was more Breck Road way. By St Margaret's Baths, I don't know if you know the baths?

CB No, I don't

LB Yes there used to be the baths there

CB So Compton Street was it

LB Compton Street I finished up in yes

CB But... how old were you when you moved there?

LB From there? Oh when I...oh... I think I was about 12 when we moved to Compton Street

CB So were you born in the house in Amos Street?

LB Yes, well not in the house no, in hospital ⁴

CB Oh, which hospital was it?

LB Yes, well, I can't think of the name

CB Oh I can find that out probably can't I?⁵ Erm, what else was I going to ask you? Erm so how many, I should know this shouldn't I?... how many brothers and sisters did you have?

LB 1 brother and 1 sister⁶

CB and what was your house like?

LB A two up two down

CB Was it?

LB [Laughs] Yes

CB I found a thing on the internet, like a... I'll see if I can get it working. It's film on the

internet and it's of all that area, in the old days

LB Ooh is it

CB Yes, so shall I see if I can get it on now?

LB Ooh yes, do you have to plug it in?

Break in the recording

LB Erm my sister was 10 months older er 10, 10 years older

CB Your sister was 10 years older [surprised]

LB Yes

CB Oh really?!

CB And your brother was...

LB Just...yes, erm 12 months between us two

CB and he was younger?

LB Me dad used to go away to sea you see

CB ...and he was 12 months younger than you?

LB Older

CB Older

LB Yes older

CB Ahhhh

LB My dad went away to sea until he left and come to work on the docks

Break in the recording

CB And can you remember anything about what it was like around there at that time? You know, because I can remember you talking about handrails on the streets?

LB Yes, if you were going down, yes, if you were going down the erm.. where I lived, we lived up steps so coming in from Heyward Street⁷ into our street going down to Netherfield Road [**Sammy** 'I support Liverpool'] to great Homer Street, an' that, it was all down hill

CB Have a look at this, it should be erm.... [**Sammy** You do have internet **CB** I know it's working now but it wasn't working before **Sammy** Can I go on it after you? **CB** No, Cos I'm showing your nan this]

CB This is in 1963⁸

LB Oh go'way, and where's that?

CB It'll show some street signs now

LB That was a car there...

CB Yes

LB But when I was there they didn't have cars

CB No, this is 1963, but I thought this might be a bit like it was when you lived there, it wouldn't have changed that much from when you were there...has it?

LB No, it hasn't

CB There look , Phoebe Anne Street, so this is erm

CB So that's Cain...er Cain Street?

LB Cain Street yes

CB Cain Street ⁹, Queens Road, do you know that?

LB Queens Road yes

CB There's the water tower...

LB Yes

CB Is that what the houses were like then though?

LB No ours was only straight erm just walk inAre you on strike today Rob?

RB No, not today, Thursday. It's my day off today ¹⁰

CB So straight from the street

LB Yes, we walked in straight from the street to ours

CB So this is all taken in the 60s, it's hard to read what the street names are... Sykes Street

LB Sykes Street yes, but it doesn't say erm 5 or 6 or that does it?

CB No, no numbers or anything. Do you mean house numbers?

LB Yes

CB Do you remember the number of your house in Amos Street

LB Number 7

CB Really?

LB Yes...or 9. 7 or 9.... that's the back alleys isn't it. The back entrys

CB Etna Street

LB Etna Street yes, ahhhh ... no these are more like our houses

CB oh are they

LB Yes

CB Mind the cup Charl you've got your foot right by a cup of tea

LB There's a can of coke or that there if you want one ...

CB Feet off the couch Charl. The corner shop...

LB Oh yes , the corner shop yes,

CB There'll be photos and that on here, I can have a look

RB The only car in hours

Laughter

LB Yes look at that a motorbike. Oh yes look it says Everton

CB Erm ... Old Triangle Club¹¹
LB Oooh Yes, well where I lived ... that was off Heyward Street
CB Oh yes?
LB And the club yes, yes, cos they used to go and erm , The Triangle Club. The club was were you could go dancing and they had wrestling...
CB In there, in that club?
LB That was in that club
CB Did you go in there? They had wrestling? Wrestling? 12
LB Oh yes, we used to go in all the time. Yes you could go in there you know with the dance, to dance, but only with the records. I loved the Triangle Club. 13
RB Were your mum and dad Irish nan?
LB You know when they played records, it was smashin'
CB Yes, where were your mum and dad from originally nan?
LB They were more down the erm, yes,...
CB Does this look familiar?
LB No...
RB I thought Butterworth was erm... oh that's
CB That's me grandad's name
RB That's Joe's name
LB They're old houses aren't they? But you know in some of them, like where Auntie Adelaide lived they had no back, you know like you have a back door ...
CB Yes
LB Well she had no back door or windows and they had to come out and go in to a erm, to a thing, like...a...
CB a yard?
LB to get water
CB Radcliffe Street, do you know that
LB Radcliffe Street , that's further down yes
CB Aber Street
LB Yes, Margaret Street was where the baths was
CB Do you remember that?
LB Yes ...that's more like Breck Road way when we lived in Compton Street
CB So your mum and Dad were originally from
LB More down Scottie Road
CB And so was it your mum and dad and you three kids that lived in the house?

LB Yes

CB Did you have any pets when you were growing up?

LB No we didn't, but there were always dogs around, you know on the street. Do you remember bringing all the dogs into Ross Avenue Rob, all the ones from around by us, Scooby, and Trixie from next door? Do you remember, he always had all the dogs in the house didn't he?

CB Yes. So how old were you when you started work? Did you work in Everton?

LB I worked down town in the erm, in the box place, yes, making cardboard boxes, makin them on the machine

CB Look, The Clock Hotel

LBthen that got bombed. Then I went to another one, I went to Crawfords, they were further out. They made crackers.

CB Can you turn that TV down a bit please Charl, Sammy?

LB Put it on ITV Rob. Ooh look at the old lamp

CB Yes... so what was your house like inside nan, can you remember it?

LB ooh yes it was only just one room

CB Was it really small inside?

LB Yes, and ..

CB SO this is the 60s but it looks like quite old footage doesn't it? What's that, the Belmont, do you remember that pub?

LB For me, I know more like round the 30s and 40s

CB Yes, I think I've got some from then , let me have a look, I've got some erm, lets see

LB Yes cos I was there through the war

CB I've got some from the 1930s, I think it's just photos though. Liverpool tenements of the 1930s ...

LB The tennys?!...is that the tennys?

CB This is the thing about homes for workers, 1938 so you would have been 13 when this was made ..

LB Well erm Betty used to work ..erm...live in the tennys. Oh it was smashin'...

CB Oh so Betty was from ...

LB She was from Liverpool as well yes .. oh that's , there coming down aren't they?

CB Yes , they're knocking them down .. .can you see that alright?

LB Oh that's when they're knocking them all down isn't it? Oh god it was smashing in there, they used to all come out on the landing and me mates, me mates all used to live in the tenements. They were more down in the town .. the others used to have a long landing ..

not just those, the landing come right across, see how they're standing out?

CB Yes ... so would people be out all the time, chatting?

LB Oh YES! And they'd be playing music, playing the spoons and all that, oh yes, the tennys were lovely There's one lot still up in Liverpool , there's students in it isn't there? They were alright inside you know. Is that the wash-house?

CB Yes... it'll go again in a minute, it's just taking a bit of time

Sammy My middle name's Lillian

LB Is it love?

Sammy Yes, didn't you know?

LB Erm, yes I think I did

Sammy Have you got a middle name?

LB No, we didn't have them then.....I've forgotten what they used to call the tennys, forgotten the name ... you'd put all your washing in there, to dry.... there you are there's the ones with the balconies that go right across

CB Did you used to go to the wash-house?

LB Yes we used to go to the wash-house , me mum used to go with the washing on her head...(Laughs)

CB So how many years younger than you was Betty?

LB She was in her 60s, she'd be in her 60s now ...

Charl Shh Sammy, she's recording

CB It's alright Charl

Charl Can we talk?

CB Yes of course

Charl Oh hi! (Laughs)

CB Have you got any questions you want to ask your nan about when she was little and growing up in Everton?

Charl Did you have to eat all the food that was on your plate?

LB Did you have to what?

CB Did you have to eat all the food that was on your plate?

LB Yes, else if you didn't eat it you'd get given it again to eat ...

Sammy What puddings did you have?

LB Pudding? Erm Bread and butter

Sammy What else

LB Just bread and butter

Sammy No other puddings?

LB No

Charl Did you get any pocket money?

LB Yes, a penny a week

Charl Ahhh (laughs), what did you spend it on?

LB Just sweets

Sammy What sweets were they?

Charl Oh yes Sammy would ask that wouldn't she? She's obsessed with sweets

LB Like erm ...

Charl Probably liquorice?

LB Yes liquorice and all, you know erm like the liquorice that used to go around

Charl Yes

LB With like a thing in the middle .. have you seen them , and you know the sherbert? sherbert in a thing...

Charl Yes, sherbert dip .. and what games did you play when you were little?

Sammy Did you have a playstation? Or a DS?

LB Two balls

Sammy Or a DS?

Charl Hardly Sammy they weren't even invented then

LB Two balls, we played two balls

CB So you said that your sister was quite a lot older than you, and what did she do? What was her job

LB She used to work in the dairy

CB Dairy?

LB Yes in the dairy because you never bought bottles of milk you used to have to go the dairy for milk

CB Oh and she worked in there? and where was that?

LB erm where was it? Anfield road I think... no was it? Yes. I know it was, we lived off Heyward Street and then it went further down... erm Spurgeon Street and all them

Sammy Can we watch The Simpsons?

LB Yes that was... Spurgeon Street was further down... and we lived Amos Street, that was the 2 up and 2 down, and then Compton Street

CB So how old were you then do you remember?

LB Yes, and then we moved to Compton Street... Heyward Street was in between

Charl I've got a question... Did you have a TV?

LB TV? (laughs a lot) We couldn't even listen to the radio

CB They didn't even have a radio Charl

LB Yes we did but me dad had it and he had earphones so we couldn't hear it

Laughter

Rob Didn't get a look in with the radio?

CB And your dad worked on the docks?

LB Yes after he come out the army...er Navy

LB Do you know I went down to Betty's that many times and I can't just remember where it is... where it was....

CB Lets have a look at this Liverpool from 1896 – 1955. I think these are photos, oh it's film as well

LB Look isn't that the tram? Yes and the horse and cart, because the horse and cart, you know when you go on the boat and you just walk on the boat it used to be like a float and the horse and carts used to go on there

Charl Auntie Cathy can I have your cake?

CB Yes... I think that's the overhead railway. Do you remember that? Did you go on it?

LB Yes, oh yes. Yes, our Georgie went on that, me dad took our Georgie on that when he was little

CB So, you left there when you were 19 did you? And did you move over here then?

LB Yes me sister, she evacuated with the kids and when she came to live over here and she told me mum there was a house going in Middle Road, and that's how we come over, she lived in Cherrybank the street next to ours , well that was only a two up and two down but the other one we had on Compton Street was a Parlour house

CB What was that, did that have two rooms downstairs?

LB No... erm like a parlour... Myrtle Gardens, Myrtle Gardens it was... where our Betty lived

CB Did you used to play out in the streets there when you were a kid?

LB Oh yes, it was smashin'

Break in the recording

LB If you were coming up from Scotland Road you'd come up a hill and you'd come up the steps and it had a handrail

CB Do you remember any of your neighbours? From then?

LB Not a lot no

CB That must be the docks isn't it ...and look at the boats on the river

LB Yes I mean you don't see them now

CB So did you go to church when you were growing up?

LB We used to go to, it wasn't a church, it was like a mission.

CB Oh yes, where was that do you remember?

LB That was in Heyward Street, yes we used to go there to watch the erm you know pictures on ...

CB Oh like a slideshow type of thing?

LB Yes the slides yes

CB And what did they have? What was it of?

LB Ah yes, it was all erm, used to be more for the young ones you know, from different places

CB From around the world?

LB Yes from around the world

Charl Did you play any sports, or like do any sport? like say swimming or netball?

LB Yes we'd go swimming. In school all we played was rounders

Charl Rounders? I play that, I'm not very good at it

LB And what's it called, netball

CB So what schools did you go to nan?

LB Lorraine Street... right through... and when it was nice we used to do our sums and everything on top of the roof

CB Did you go out on the roof?

LB When the weather was nice yes we'd do our lessons on the roof

CB So how old were you when you left school

LB Er 14

CB Can you remember any of your teachers?

LB I remember the main one, Mr Dorsey er yes I remember him, the headmaster

CB (about the film) So I don't know when this is, I think it said 1901

LB Yes coming off the ships

CB Was your house like that?

LB That was of the back yards that was wasn't it and the bin used to be in the wall in the back yard and the bin men just used to come and take the bin out

Charl What did you do for Christmas did you have like a giant family thing? Or...

LB Christmas?

Charl What did you do?

LB Well we only got erm, what? a penny in our stocking,

Charl Ahhh

LB And an apple and an orange, couple of sweets

Charl That's what they say on the telly, that they only got an orange and a penny, and like a yo-yo or a hula hoop. But did you have like a giant family thing?

LB We never had parties an' that

CB Like we have

LB Like they have now

CB ...and did you see your aunties and uncles a lot?

LB Yes well we all lived by one another

CB And did you know your gran? And granddad?

LB Yes cos we all lived around

CB Which streets did they live in do you remember?

LB Well we all lived in the same street, all lived around

CB ...and how many aunties and uncles did you have?

LB Well there was Auntie Maggie, she was me mum's sister, Auntie Annie was me mums' brother's wife, Auntie Adelaide, and the others were all cousins

CB But you'd see them all the time? Cos they lived quite close?

LB Oh yes cos that's all you had, all the family, then. Ooh look at the wash-house (about the film), see they used to put the washing on the dryer ¹⁴

Break in recording

CB So did you used to play out a lot when you were a child

LB Oh yes it was lovely ...and I mean we weren't closed in when we were kids, everything was all open cos I mean the mums used to sit out and the men went to work and the women looked after the kids...you know I don't think any of the women went out to work til after the war started because I never knew me mum to go out, but she used to take in sewing

CB Oh did she, what did she do?

LB Yes, and she used to make all my clothes

CB Did she?

LB Coats and that yes

CB Can you remember anything special that she made you? You know anything in particular that you used to like when you were little?

LB Yes when she made me a coat, with fur on. A red coat with white fur on it

CB Did she make all your clothes?

LB And they knitted, that's all they used to do. And she'd take in sewing for other people as well...

Intercom buzzer goes

LB Just press that top one Rob when you lift the phone up, the very top one... could you hear her say the door's opening?

CB So did you always have quite a lot of people in your house?

LB Yes it was never empty, all the neighbours used to come in all the time...

Break in recording

CB Welcome to our? (about the film)

LB Welcome to our what?

CB Welcome to our? I can't see what that says... I don't know where that is?

My cousin Jenna and her boyfriend Robert arrive to make my nan's tea¹⁵

CB We're reminiscing... What are you making for tea Jen?

Jenna A roast

CB Do you remember those buses nan?

LB Oh they're the buses now aren't they? Do you want a chicken sandwich rob?

Rob No I've had something to eat thanks nan

CB Nan look that's the punch and Judy thing

LB Yes that used to come around, yes we used to have the punch and judy... I think that's wotsername

CB St George's Hall?

LB Yes that's St Georges Hall there

Jenna Did me nan tell you about our party, me granddad?

CB Oh yes, what was all that about?

Jenna Well...

Rob Did it freak you out?

Jenna I never knew anything about it at the time

CB So who was it who saw him? Robbie was it your friend?

Robert Yes (Jenna's boyfriend)

CB What did he say about it

Robert He was just dead serious and he said who was that old fella with your Jenna's nan in the kitchen, he said he had to lean round him to get a glass and everything...

Jenna He said like he had a grey suit jacket on and I texted me mum and said did your dad used to wear a grey suit jacket and she said yes with a jumper underneath

CB a maroon jumper... with a hole in the elbow...

LB Do you remember that Cath? ¹⁶

Laughter

CB Yes, and a flat cap, did he have a flat cap on?

Jenna I dunno, he said that he saw him twice and he had to go round him to get a glass and he was standing by the food table and he said when Jenna's nan went I thought he just went with Jenna's nan, I was a bit scared yes, but I would like to know if it was him ¹⁷

LB Have you heard from your dad rob?

Rob No

LB Are you still doing that thing Cath?

CB What, the PhD?

LB Is that what it is? Your college thing?

Jenna She means your teaching

CB Oh, no, not at the moment, but I will be again next year

LB And what about that other thing you do, you know with the plays and that

CB Acting? Yes, I'm doing a thing in November

LB Not like that one with all the swearing (laughing a lot), do you remember that Rob, she was swearing her head off, don't know where she gets that from¹⁸

Rob That was the one where she had to wear a barrel

CB It was a water butt, painted

LB 'ere you go kids...¹⁹

Break in recording

LB I went to Scottie road, on a bus then I got a bus all round where I used to live

CB What, recently?

LB A few years ago

CB And had it changed

LB Yes it had all changed

CB Did you recognise any of it

LB It didn't go right up to where I... up to Heyward Street but it went all round where I used to know

CB Do you remember a street called Bright Street?

LB Erm, Oh Bright Street, yes, off Everton Road that wasn't it, a bit further down, I had a little mate who lived in Bright Street, or hang on...maybe it wasn't Bright Street...I can't remember now... but I think it was, all round by them little streets, yes. ²⁰

Break in recording

LB and do you know what? it shows you how the markets were before they opened the inside one Cath, I mean this is the old Scotland Road

Break in recording

CB So when it was the war were you evacuated?

LB No well I was 14 wasn't I, I had to go to work ... in the cardboard box factory
CB How long were you there for?
LB til it got bombed out in 1940...
iPod battery ran out....

Epilogue - 301009

I walked from Bright Street to all of the places highlighted on the map (the black and white map which shows the area in the 1930s). I walked to Amos Street first (or as close as possible to where I imagine it must have been, using Cochrane Street as a reference point) where my nan lived until she was 12 years old. It took 7 minutes at a dawdling pace and with a couple of stops; first to look at and answer Lena's text from the barge in Bristol, to take a photo of the Red Triangle Club²¹, and to check the map. I took a couple of photos of the gateposts that say Cochrane Street on them, but I haven't included them here because they don't say anything of the place.²² I walked to where Spurgeon Street would have been (-ish), and then on to Lorraine Street. In roughly the same place that my nan went to school and had her lessons on the roof when the weather was nice stands the newly built (still being built) North Liverpool Academy.²³

To Gary, Lena, Neal, Gabriel and Sid

Maybe, if you feel inclined, for Engels' first walk you could take him up to the bit of green near the Cochrane Street gateposts.....

Footnotes.

1 My dad's mum, 'Nana Butt'

2 We actually made a visit at 2.30pm but my nan was playing bingo in the common room of her sheltered accommodation and sent us away. We came back at 5.30pm assuming that the bingo must have finished by then

3 On the map of the area from the 1930s it looks like Avos Street – it's definitely Amos Street

4 My nan was born on 13th June, not 21st. But she was born in 1925

5 I haven't found that out

6 I forgot to ask their names

7 Actually Heyworth Street

8 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScjCujXknbs> (The first half of the Youtube film soundtrack is 'Halfway to Paradise' by Billy Fury. The second half is 'Dirty Ol' Town', this version by Ricky Tomlinson)

9 It's Caird Street

10 My brother Rob is a postal worker, a postman. <http://www.cwu.org/royal-mail-dispute.html>

11 It is actually 'Red Triangle Club'

12 I'm still not convinced my nan meant wrestling, she didn't elaborate

13 International Triangles/prologues/Red Triangle Club

14 My nan loves talking about the wash-house, or the bagwash, or the laundrette... for as long as I can remember she's talked about doing the washing. I remember her telling me that she never wanted to get a twintub in the house and that she'd rather go to the bagwash because you meet people there and you can have a 'jangle'

15 Dinner

16 The coat that my nan's mum made her was navy blue with grey fur trim

17 My granddad died in 1983

18 A production of Female Transport by Steve Gooch at The Unity Theatre in Liverpool, 1991

19 My nan gave Charlotte and Sammy £5 each, her winnings from the bingo. She also won a soap and moisturiser gift set which she gave to me
20 My nan didn't live at number 7 Amos Street. She couldn't remember which number she lived at and she didn't narrow it down to 7 or 9
21 I was hoping that this might have been the old Red Triangle Club but I looked at the Youtube footage again and I don't think it is
22 My mum phoned while I was in the Institute writing this. She called to ask how interviewing my nan had gone. She asked if I remembered my nan taking us over to Liverpool to see the Orange Lodge marches (in 1975, 1976, 1977). We'd then go up to Everton for a walk around her old haunts. I remembered the marching band, but not the trips to Everton. When I told my mum that I was writing up the interview in the Institute ('the house we did Miss Julie in') she said, 'oh bloody 'ell, you're not going to be taking all the doors off again are you?' I said I wouldn't...
23 <http://www.northliverpoolacademy.com/>

Cathy Butterworth has developed her own performance work, and has acted, moved, danced, spoken and performed in a variety of other people's projects, since 1993. From 2000-2006 Cathy was the dance and live art programmer at the Bluecoat in Liverpool, before leaving to write a PhD about the history of live art in the UK, during which time she taught on the History of Art BA at Liverpool John Moores University, and worked on a freelance basis with a number of arts organisations. In 2011 she embarked on a long-term, performance-making collaboration with artist and performer Grace Surman.

MARESA MACKETH AND THE POLITICS AND AESTHETICS READING GROUP - 2010

Discussion at the Institute, 19 November 2010

This is available to listen to at: www.disruptdominantfrequencies.net/main/ernst_bloch/ernst_bloch.html

[Maresa MacKeith's Story]

Maresa My story begins at a special school where we were assessed on our performance and our performance was supposed to prove our understanding.

I physically could not perform, so was assumed to have no understanding.

In the special schools many kids need so much help that there is never enough quality help around. It is usually just survival.

It is also impossible for the kids who can't talk or move to have relationships with each other, as there is nobody to assist those relationships. Friendship is not on the agenda.

When I was eight years old I got my communication system, which enabled me to say what I was thinking.

Unfortunately the school was not interested in my system so nothing at the school changed, although at home everything had changed.

Eventually I got a place in year five at a mainstream primary school for one day a week.

This was great from my point of view because I enjoyed that day and had an assistant who was being taught by us how to assist me.

My difficulty was that I missed out the other four days so did not know what was going on. By the second year I wanted to give up on it as it all seemed so hopeless. Then when I was eleven, I went to a comprehensive school.

There was no choice as in the city there were no wheel-chair accessible secondary schools, so I went to a school miles away which took one and a half hours travelling on the bus each way. Also I was not allowed into ordinary classes. They had a special unit for people like me, and the SENCO would not let us teach the assistant my communication system. I was usually on my own, in a room with a glass window where everybody passing could look in on me like a museum specimen.

After a few months, I tried to ask some of the kids from my year group to my house, as I wanted to get to know them better. I wrote some notes for the teacher to give out, but

she refused, saying the kids were not ready to come to my house.

All our friends were so shocked that they got their children to write letters saying how they would have felt if that had been said to them. These were sent to the SENCO, who was the one who had refused to let the notes be given out.

The SENCO had no idea what we were all so upset about, however much our friends tried to explain.

The allies for inclusive education then organized, with lots of the young people, to have a demonstration outside County Hall.

The young people talked to the director of education about the way I was being treated. He was very responsive and listened to us and got the LEA to say they would negotiate with the school.

Lots of meetings were held over the next year, but it did not make any difference. I was off school at the beginning of year nine, having a big operation. After six weeks when I should have gone back I did not and got a home teacher.

The home teacher was good and she let me learn and write in the way I could but I got very depressed thinking I could never have access to an ordinary education. The home teacher then negotiated with the local comprehensive school. This school had been made wheelchair accessible as the city had recently separated from the County Education Authority.

The school nervously said I could start there and we persuaded the school to let us recruit and bring my assistance.

This worked and I began to go to ordinary classes in the summer of year nine. I then had to build my confidence as I had no idea what the expectations were but I just loved the learning and did well. I got six GCSEs after two years.

[Part 1]

Gary If we're thinking about Utopia or significant social change or transformation, it seems to me that what I've learnt from you Maresa, is that vulnerability has to be a part of social change. Vulnerability has to be considered as deeply as possible in order that we, we, we the inclusive 'we' can move forward together to something better.

Maresa If we can't all feel protected, then we need help. We can't move.

Lorena And one thing I'm thinking is connecting this idea of vulnerability with the idea of stopping competing. Because there is this strive in the human being of development and I think lots of the time it is kind of confused with competition; it is hidden somehow,

sort of competition. But if, for instance, I'm feeling this kind of difference that is going on in the room it's maybe making us... or I feel, it's making me strive in a different way, but strive in my ability to listen. And it's very interesting how that has changed and it's just percept wise, something about perception, no?

Tim Listening to you say about striving to listen... It seems to me that there's two sides to vulnerability. Because there's the kind of the willingness to be vulnerable and then there's the willingness to accept someone else's vulnerability. And I think that they're the kind of the two things to go... actually what you were saying Gary... about perhaps on a larger social scale that they're the two blocks. And I'm finding myself wondering about what's the block to accepting someone else's vulnerability? Whether it's the teacher from Maresa's story or something. It kind of makes more sense to me that people might find it hard to show vulnerability themselves because there's an ego thing involved or there's that sense of people might take advantage or all the things that you can be scared of but... what are the blocks that people have with accepting other peoples vulnerability other than... is it just difference? Is that people's difficulty?

Lorena It's like... Sorry... I find something quite difficult to articulate at present. I don't know if you were saying the same thing I was saying? Or if you were saying something different. I'm thinking of when I'm thinking of listening, I'm also thinking of listening inside. And in a sense listening inside is like one starts listening to one's vulnerability. Vulnerability becomes more accepted. Does that make sense?

Caroline I feel the reason people can't accept another persons vulnerability is because they've been hurt around their own. You know, their own vulnerability hasn't been accepted by other people.

Tim Mhm, 'I've had to put up with that so why should I be accepting of yours?' That kind of attitude, yeah.

Caroline For instance, you know if as a child you can't ever be hurt and be allowed to express the fact that you've been hurt you know you really are going to develop a hardness, aren't you? And then that hardness... you're going to want to put other people down who haven't got that hardness. You know, you can see it in boys, especially boys. Adolescent boys... and it's quite... I find it quite scary. Because you can just see them... So scared! They're so scared aren't they?

Penny There's like a test that goes on at school for weakness and then someone that has weakness gets picked on like it's just... that's how it happens.

Caroline It's really scary I find.

Dan So it's being innate then, rather than a social construct? I'm just wondering if, you know

if our attitude to vulnerability in the West might differ from the attitude to vulnerability in the East? Or whether like you're saying, it seems like it's like a primordial... you know, some sort of innate fear that might, like you're saying exists more in men, say, than in women.

Caroline Well I don't think it's innate because, a lot of women they develop a hardness as well. I think it shows in a different way in women. You can watch young women as well, and the competition of what you look like, you know the being thin and you know, there's all sorts of stuff that goes on...

Lena I'm tempted to ask the children because they're getting a bit anxious here and wanting to go away... You know like in your school where you go to, are there certain children that like, I don't know, you pick on? Or... you know like this whole thing with bullying that's going...

Neal I'm not bullying anyone!

Lena No...

Gabriel It's anti-bullying week! How should we bully?

(They all laugh)

Lena That's what we are talking about here!

Ange What about next week?

(They all laugh)

Dan Yeah, what about the other 51 weeks of the year – back to normal?

Gabriel 52 isn't there?

Neal I done anti-bullying week.

Ange Ah. What does that mean then? What changes at school during anti-bullying week?

Neal No bullying.

Penny No bullying at all? So what happens when it's not anti-bullying week?

Gabriel Well, erm... You can bully all you want.

(They all laugh)

Dan That's dead funny.

[Part 2]

Gary First of all I just want to congratulate Tim on getting 'Bloch' in! Because you said there are two 'Blochs' in vulnerability.

Ange What's the block?

Dan That confused me as well

Gary I thought that was absolute genius. I thought that was fantastic. But what interests me about this situation now and the fact that it's being recorded which is very much on the forefront of my mind, is this sort of difficult idea that if we're interested in social justice and moving forward and building a better future, and we think that vulnerability can be a key feature – then it seems to me that vulnerability embodies something almost anti-rational, something that I don't quite know what to do with because all of the ways that I've been trained, all of the discourses that I've been trained in don't, don't prepare me for an encounter with vulnerability. Because there's something anti-rational or just non-rational about it. So I don't know how I can then speak about it, I have to feel it. And I can feel it really clearly exactly because I'm conscious that I'm being recorded and I'm conscious that you're here Maresa, and I'm conscious that... Sid's just farted.

(They all laugh)

Ange Smell radio coming to you soon!

(They all laugh)

Gary And I'm conscious that my kids are here who are sick of grown-ups talking like this

Gabriel

and Sid Yeah, I am!

Gary So I'm thinking if it's possible lads for us to make a better tomorrow then I have to stop talking this way don't I?

Gabriel Yeah! That'd be boss!

Lena How should we talk then?

Neal Use an easy language!

Gary I don't know

Neal Using the slang!

Gary Well Maresa you make me really conscious that the way that I talk is not the normal way to talk. You make me reflect on the fact that I'm not the 'normal' one. Because you remind me that there are other ways to talk.

Gabriel Yeah there is...

[Part 3]

Gary Sorry Lorena, I...

Lorena I just wanted to say something. I'm just thinking... which is that it's weird because I'm thinking that now I'm talking about vulnerability, but I'm really referring to strength on some level.

Tim It takes confidence to be vulnerable

Lorena Yeah, and it takes, it takes awareness. And it takes a lot of connection with the self to be vulnerable. And I'm just thinking now of Maresa in particular, I don't know if you Maresa are an exceptional case in your ability to be with your own vulnerability. Do you know what I mean?

Maresa I don't think I'm... I don't think I'm exceptional. I know other people like me in different ways. But I think the way we are isn't seen as ordinary. It's seen as a one-off or like that.

Lorena I didn't understand the last word.

Caroline One off, you understand that expression? 'One off'?

Lorena Ah, ok

Lena And how would we define it? Because Neal was asking, what is vulnerability? I mean just as a word? What does it mean?

Lorena To be vulnerable... To be exposed?

Dan In this piece of writing, Maresa, you seem to describe it as 'dependency'? Maybe more... you say when we're young or old, or unwell, or some of us are vulnerable all the time

Lena (*Explaining to a child a word he doesn't understand*) Interdependency. So when you need someone all the time. Like for example, Sid is vulnerable. Because we can't leave him alone, he needs someone all the time to take care of him.

Neal Like the dog always needs attention?

Lena Yeah, the dog always needs attention!

Tim There's something quite honest about it I think. That it's clearly stated. It's very clear that Sid needs someone all the time.

Ange It's because you can get hurt. I think it's about the possibility that you can get hurt by something or another thing.

Lena Yeah, for example: physical danger. But also, kind of I'm thinking also psychological danger, even worse. If I'm to just leave him and he's asleep and then he wakes up and there is no one there and then... you know, how will that impact him? So it is both, I think. You know like... we can't leave, or even... (*To one of the children*) Can we leave you alone? We did leave you once...

Neal Yeah! Only for a bit like an hour or so.

Gabriel And you left me!

Lena Yeah, you two together.

Gabriel And you left me alone with Sid on bonfire night!

Dan This is being recorded, you might end up in prison!

(They all laugh)

Lena It was completely Gary's idea!

Gary Eh, don't be passing the buck here girl!

Lena No, I was really moved by that piece of writing by Maresa where she's talking about dependency and this crazy drive for individuality and that's something which I feel that it's being... I don't know how to phrase this because I'm being recorded! Okay, say in feminist studies. What I found was women striving for individuality is linked with the ideas of consumer capitalism. And it links to this kind of 'Feminism on the telly'. Or these like great women that manage to do everything, businesswomen; you know, they can do it all. And, but also, I found it with some performance practitioners. It's all about individuality and kind of artists and if they can 'make it'. Some quite radical ones as well, never thinking in terms of actually being dependent on someone which is a radical thing to actually never let go! Always be together! All in a big bed together! *(Laughing)*.

Gabriel *(Chanting)* No ifs, no buts, no education cuts...

Dan That's why I was wondering before whether vulnerability relates to society. It seems to tie in a lot with this idea of a meritocracy and neo-liberal structures to do with 'success' and competition.

Penny Producing your own 'Self'.

Dan Yeah

Maresa I think it's sad that places like India and China have to become like the USA to be seen as powerful. It feels like the same stuff.

Gary I think that's a really good example. A global example or what we're trying to fish for on an individual scale. It's exactly the same problem, I agree. It's, we were talking about this a while ago Lena, this idea of a capitalistic subjectivity. That we have engrained in our very being, in a sense that we're trained, we're sort of trained to death to compete. And strive for... Why is it whenever I speak Sid farts?! Is he commenting on what I'm saying?

(They all laugh)

Dan It's the equivalent of the swearbox that Ange was talking about.

Gary Sid you're making me feel really vulnerable in this situation. It's a good example I think, because it tells us that the logic of success happens on a global scale with China and India. But also on an individual scale where we seek to better our lives. So we have to have a nice house or a good car or all that nonsense. And I think that's at the heart of this. I think we have to be able to notice how we've been trained, and then say 'no.'

Maresa I agree.

Lorena And can I ask a question, because just before thinking about 'What is vulnerability?' and

I was thinking about speaking. If vulnerability is about dependency, what happens when we're trying to articulate something and we can't? That's vulnerable, somehow. But then, that's a vulnerable position but is it a position? What kind of dependency implies that? It's a different kind of dependency to how I normally think 'dependency'.

'A PLACE OF THEIR OWN' -- MAY 2011

Five 3 minute conversations

1. Family and Art Making

Lena Hello. Here we are with one wonderful family.

(They all laugh)

Here we have Paula McCloskey and we have Sam Vardy and their two children are somewhere upstairs playing with our children. Well, the little one is asleep actually. And we are here today to talk about family and art making.

So I would like to ask Paula and Sam to talk a bit about their project that they set up which is called 'A Place of Their Own', which is based currently in Sheffield. So what does this project have to do with family and art making?

Paula Well, Lena, Sam and I, for a number of years, have been thinking about our work and our practice. He's an architect and I work as a social worker and I'm now working in the art world. We wanted to give a name to activities that we think are creative and critical, and that involve the family.

Sam Yeah, so we've set this practice up which is doing what Paula's just suggested and we thought it was absolutely crucial that our children were involved in it. So that when we describe the practice we are...

(Neal wonders in front of the camera. Lena indicates they are filming. They all laugh.)

Sam So we are Fionn, we are Oisín, we are Paula and we are Sam. So it's crucial for us to be thought of as a family. And that the family can actually be a place of art making.

Lena OK.

Sam So two things. One is that we make art in the home, we make sort of creative practice in the home. But then we also take the home out into the streets and out into the public sphere.

Lena Okay so for me this raises a question... Sorry just looking at the time now... oh we are fine... Children and criticality. Can children really be critical? I suppose is the question... Because I think, you know, with the school and the education system they're kind of producing them into these consumers and in a way they aren't very critical I don't think within that realm of school and upbringing. So, are children critical?

Paula For me that's a big driver - that they can be - but they're not given the opportunity to

be. And part of most state education, how I experienced it and how I think my children do, is that it just isn't catered for. And why would it be? It's a state education. And one place that you can develop critical thinking, and that I think we see with our nine year old, who from a very young age shows that you can develop it, it may be that the home - the activities you do - is a place to do that, rather than relying on some other outside body to do that.

Lena So in a way this project is about upbringing your children as well?

Paula Yeah, definitely. Definitely. As an experiment!

Lena As an experiment.

Paula Because we don't really know whether it's going to... You know, without trying to predetermine an outcome for our kids that they will be critical thinkers or be political. But to at least open up their thinking to that because I think otherwise it wouldn't be, it just wouldn't be there.

Sam The boundaries between when we do something... How we define what is us being artists or doing an art project or whether it's just being a family and spending time together on a Saturday morning... I don't know how we make that distinction.

Lena But is the distinction maybe made in this act of naming?

Sam Yeah, and that's multiple. So we'll name it one way and disseminate it as well. For the event, for the experience, for the important thing it's a family thing. But then when someone says 'what are you doing?' we actually answer in different ways even on the day. When we give out these gingerbread men to people, it was multiple how we described what that was: whether it was family or it was art or whether it was activism, or what it was. And even to the kids actually, I think it was different.

Lena That's all we have time for, I'm sorry we already ran over one minute. Thank you very much!

2. Friendship

Gary Hello and welcome back.

(They all laugh)

Okay, so now we're going to have a look at friendship. I think it follows on nicely, family and friendship. There's something probably discordant between family making and friendship making, when it seems to me that there shouldn't be sort of discordance between those two. Families are something where you wake up one day and you're in one; friendships are things that you work at and one day you find fully evolved. I'm

wondering what the relationship is or where can we put friendship in family? And is 'A Place of Their Own' a way of introducing friendship into family?

Paula

Erm, the short answer would be probably yes... but a particular type of friendship... One thing that I've found, and we talked about this over the weekend, is the idea of family that might start off within a certain family context, with shared values or shared experiences of family, but for me, as I've got older and my experiences have changed, I've become... my wider family... I don't feel the same... I've just gone on a really different path I suppose...

Gary

Yeah, yeah



- Paula** So my family, so I've now created my own family with Sam and the boys. And now I kind of want a wider family with people who I share experience with and shared values, but also people who I think will... well the things that you think of you know, having siblings... people who will challenge me in different ways or there'll be conflict and other things to work through. So yeah maybe it is, 'A Place of Their Own' is a way to start to develop those different friendships. And the ones that we maybe don't have at the moment, for me certainly...
- Sam** Yeah, exactly. Because I think we're definitely sort of identifying these as we develop our thinking and our practice – we're questioning what both things are all the time. We're questioning what friendships are with what have been long-term friends.
- Paula** Yeah, yeah definitely.
- Sam** And actually realizing through our actions and our thinking that our values and our ideas about the world and about family are actually quite different. Through the practice, through the family practice now, we're developing new friendships and almost new kind of family relationships so there's totally this very kind of complicated mix that's going on all the time.
- Paula** It's not that we're looking for, I feel it's important to say, that we're not looking for people who think the same as us so that we can affirm that we're right.
- Sam** No, no! In fact it's actually the conflict, dissensus if you like. If you accept that and work through it... because that's what's been happening within the family are moments of misunderstanding or kinds of conflicts...
- Lena** That are kind of productive...
- Paula** Yeah absolutely.
- Sam** That are productive, yeah.
- Lena** But for me also, in the positioning of your question there is kind of an assumption that friendship is good and family is bad. There is something there. But actually I think that family, for me, is about being connected to someone, whether that is, you know, your partner or your child, mother, father, sibling, but you know, there is always a sense of connection. Whereas friendship, for me, primarily, friendship is one to one. And in a way there is this difference. It's 'me and my friend'; it's much more exclusive I feel, this notion of friendship, as I have it than this more communal friendship that happens in the practice of the family.
- Gary** I understand that. What I was sort of thinking about though is: Is friendship a sort of mechanism to politicize individual relationships within families? And I sort of think it is.

Lena Is... Say it again.

Gary Is friendship a sort of tool to politicize individual relationships within a family? Because what happens when a mother becomes friends with her son? You know, apart from all the sort of difficult Freudian stuff that I tend to reject. That sort of politicizes that relationship, or it could do. It opens it up so that the relationship isn't just stuck into those, those sort of Oedipal frames. And it opens it up so that there can be, I don't know, modes of collaboration that are not necessarily respectful of the 'natural given'.

Paula Through having friendship you can reconfigure what those relationships are.

Gary Totally, I think that's really exciting.

Paula So it isn't just a paternalistic relationship that there are... (*motions an exchange*) And then maybe if you work with each other and you do other activities then that then changes the...

Gary I think so

Lena It changes the framework of the family. It's just that my point is that friendship as such, as I understand it, isn't that radical either. So I don't think it's for me the right framework. It's not as if I'm going to be friends with my son instead.

Sam Maybe it becomes more radical given the context. I mean, just from personal experience, as a Step Dad, you know which is a different kind of father relationship to Fionn, we do talk about being friends, really good friends, and that's really interesting. And I think that that will carry on with Oisín, our other kid. So that that friendship role, when it exists right within the family, it starts to question that basic understanding. So yeah, it's really interesting.

Gary I think with er...

(*Lena indicates towards camera*)

Oh, have we gone over?

Lena 6 minutes. Gary, you took a minute to even frame the question!

(*They all laugh*)

Gary Sorry... See you in a minute!

3. Community

Paula Here we are again, our third round and this one's about community; this leads on from a discussion we had late last night, we got to a point where we talked about community and someone threw in, 'what is community?' and 'what does it mean?' so maybe that's somewhere to start.

- Sam** I think the problem with the discussion is that you can't actually quantify it or narrow it down. When you try to do that it is really problematic. So there's stuff about in-operable community and it's pointless to actually try to quantify that. The question then becomes if you're going to be active, if you're going to do a project that's about operating in the public realm, which is a problematic term, but, you know, we'll use it for now, then how do you think through the ethics of that. When projects talk about community engagement we have to question that somehow, because if we don't accept the term 'community' being helpful there, then 'community engagement' as an idea becomes a problem.
- Paula** This is community as a location, as a particular area. Are there other ways to define it? Maybe the problem is that it's a default word. As we are thinking of community as a negative rather than a shared...
- Sam** There are other problematic uses like the 'gay community' which is equally non-existent. There are a number of possibilities. Its either location or it's something else, but, to be honest, probably all of them are not very helpful.
- Gary** They're dodgy things... sorry go on.
- Lena** No, I am just thinking there is a danger of being kind of enclosed. Community means 'common defence'. It's a space which becomes identified because it's in conflict with the space which is next to, or opposite it. So it becomes very closed and I think that's the problem. In a way I think that some of the work we've been making as artists or as activists tends to be with people who are quite similar to us. For me this has always been a problem. We are incapable of accepting true difference. Yes, of course, everyone is different but how can we actually engage with 'others, others, others' and I am not sure I know the answer.
- Gary** Yeah, I don't know the answer either. It seems to me that if community is based on what you've just suggested, which is that it's in conflict with something that's other than it, then it seems to me that the concept is just not useful at all. I don't know what use it could have. It pretends probably, or it's used in some sort of strategic way, maybe by government or someone else, finding ways 'to invest in that community'. You can understand it in a way. But if you pursue it philosophically it's quite useless.
- Sam** Yeah, yeah. That way of doing it is actually quite negative and has negative results. You end up with gated communities for example, which is the physical sort of manifestation of what you have just described. There is this idea of building this sort of area on what's in common, which isn't actually true, it's actually about shutting out difference. There is another way of understanding it which I think has been thought about, which is not

saying 'communities' but saying 'a condition of being in common'. So it's much more active and actually kind of qualifies for something I think maybe that's...

Paula The term 'community' is so loaded with ideas of local government and community centres and so on that maybe its not useful.

Sam Community as a word is not good - it's too loaded.

Lena We don't like the word community!

All We don't like the word community!

Gary No community!

All No community, No community!

Children (in background) No community!

4. Ownership

Sam OK. The fourth and final session today. We've just finished one on the idea of 'community'; we've talked about that and I think that leads on quite well to a question about ownership. And how that might be considered in a different way. What I'm really interested in is how, rather than just carrying on the crude idea that 'property is theft', we might sort of re-conceptualise it a little bit, or think it through at least in terms of how ownership can be broken down. Whether its ownership of buildings or land or of objects or of ideas even, but broken down and possibly used as a tactic to have more interesting, more critical outcomes.

Gary Absolutely.

Lena It fits in well with the discussion about The Free University of Liverpool and what we are trying to do...

Gary Also in terms of 'A Place of Their Own'. It's central in both.

Sam One thing that really fits well is the idea of 'the commons'. The commons is something that is very different to the idea of community. It is the idea of a shared resource that no single person or group or company has single ownership over. How might that operate, whether you operate in the commons or whether we are operating in a kind of non-commons...

Paula I suppose 'ownership' has connotations similar to 'community'. I have this, I own this, we own this and therefore you don't. And it all seems to be based on 'you are either in or you're out'. You're either one or the other and conceptions of this. It is not about connections or making connections. I suppose we are thinking of a different way to configure these ideas, that are so valued, in our own everyday use. So, yeah,

‘building’ ownership... I don’t know. We are still based on the ownership of land or the ownership of individual rights or ‘the individual’ as something to aspire to. Maybe the Free University is thinking about how another way to do that might be.

Lena Yes, absolutely. We are thinking now, in a way, that actually buying a property and owning it would make us more free to work within it. It is kind of paradoxical. Buying a property as the Free University of Liverpool...

Sid Dad! Daaaaaad! Daaaaaaaad! Daaaad-dyyyy!

Paula Shout louder!

Gary What mate?

Sid Neal’s been taking my shirts out.

Gary OK. Come down and let me see.

Sid What?

Gary Come down and bring something you own.

Sid What?

Gary Come down and see. Go on Lena.

Lena I have too many things in my head now.

Sid Neal, I told Daddy off you!

Lena One thing that I wanted to say before Paula asked this question was about The Free University of Liverpool and how we are thinking of buying a property AS The Free University of Liverpool with us as guarantors. We are currently in this position where we have £200 a month extra to pay a mortgage for it. It is quite a cheap property we are looking at. So we function not as people who own it, but just as guarantors. But the other thing I was thinking was ‘ownership’ and ‘authorship’ with the Institute. The idea of the Institute is to try to open up the family home to others. But there are still problems as we are the Institute! There was a point where we had a bit of a lull and we thought ‘what shall we do with it?’ ‘Shall we keep running it?’ ‘Why don’t we give it to someone?’ The idea was to give the Institute to someone. Which ok, in the end, we didn’t and we decided to kind of keep going with it. With the Free University of Liverpool it’s a kind of project which I wouldn’t mind kind of letting go of. I do feel that The Institute is mine, so there is a possessiveness around it.

Paula In order to give something, in order to let it go, does it have to be yours in the first place?

Sam And if that’s a collective ownership, for example, maybe not with the Institute but maybe with the Free University, then that kind of collective ownership changes as it goes. It is not fixed but is constantly changing. And maybe that’s an interesting state. The ownership isn’t fixed. It’s not just one way or the other.

All *Agreeing.*
Gary I think it's a question of beginnings as well. What sort of framework do you put in place when you begin something? For the Institute the framework that was put in place to begin this thing was a number of things. One of them was 'what do you do with kids?' 'How do we continue doing what we love, with kids as well?' That hasn't got anti-ownership built into it. But the Free University because of its beginnings, the framework within which it works, is that it definitely undermines those notions of ownership, so that is always-already giveaway-able. In a way I think that's what we are trying to manage anyway. Maybe with 'A Place Of Their Own' it's more sort of Institute-like.

All *Agreeing*
Gary But the fascinating thing, I think, is that at the heart of it all there is a question of ownership. We keep re-negotiating those questions which is what makes the work interesting.

Sam I think it might rear its position again in the project, because I think that a lot of projects that we end up doing will ask that question.

Lena OK. Should I stop now? I think that's been six minutes.

5. Kids

Neal We're going to bring down the government and we don't care who they are and what they do they are going down and I'm called Neal.

Fionn Don't talk in that voice.

Neal Why?

Fionn Because it's embarrassing.

Neal It's not! It's a typical Scouser voice.

Fionn Right wait, wait I've got a really good idea. (*Picking up Ferrero Roche foil wrapper.*)

Neal Oh wait, wait, wait. (*Taking the wrapper*) THIS is David Cameron. See that, that! That gold tin foil is David Cameron (*Rips wrapper in two*).

Fionn And this bit is Nick Clegg! This bit here. This bit. (*Rips another wrapper in two*)

Gabriel Yeah they've been cutting off us, why don't we rip them?

Fionn Yeah my Step Nan's job is NHS and she's getting, she's losing her job because of it.

Neal Damn them.

Fionn We want peace!

Gabriel Yeah ! Peace! (*shows the sign of peace*) Not the other way round

Neal When the world turned around. PEACE!

Gabriel God's ten commandments.

Fionn He can't see us. Look, come down. This is a guy that you might not...

Gabriel God's ten commandments. Bring peace, got that David Cameron? (*Gabriel moves hand in front of the camera*)

Neal There's his hand. There's the hand of God!

Fionn And this is David Cameron! This is David Cameron! (*Squashes hand*)
(*Argument over positioning of camera*)

Neal Si-i-i-i-id! What are you doing? He's an annoying little brother of ours, don't worry, don't let him get in the way.

Fionn Don't worry, he's not as worse as David Cameron.

Sid Yeah, silly boys.

Neal (*Singing*) Now we're in the light tunnel. We will succeed, we don't care who we are, we won't leave! We're in the light tunnel, it moves up and down, we go all around because of the light tunnel!

Gabriel The light. It only got six...

Neal It helps us with freedom, goes on uneven, we will not leave them behind!
(*They all say goodbye*)

Neal I am Neal, this is Fionn, this is Gabriel and we're not in the bin.

/a place of their own/ explores social inequalities and injustices through critical thinking and creative practices. We are Fionn (11), Oisín (3), Roma (1), Mala (0), Paula (38) and Sam (35). We live in Sheffield, South Yorkshire. Oisín has just started nursery and Roma is at home. Fionn is at school and Sam teaches architecture at Sheffield Hallam University. Sam's work in teaching, research and practice considers the politics of urban space and alternate forms of spatial practice. Paula's practice, which includes writing and drawing, explores subjectivity as an encounter; maternity; and autobiography. We started **/a place of their own/** in October 2010. The website acts as a place to document and disseminate our work and hopefully initiate conversations and collaborations with others.

CINDERELLA RESIDENCY - 2012

Call for expressions of interests

A family of five are tired of cleaning up the house. The whole domestic labour malarky is getting too much. They know that all the work that's done will soon be undone. The mother and father work full time as university lecturers, artists and cultural dissenters. The children are busy with schoolwork, homework, extra-curricula activity and Xbox. Nobody wants to spend their precious time cleaning! Therefore the house is a bit of a mess despite the fact that onerous maintenance tasks (washing up, laundry, sweeping and dish washing) are done on a daily basis.

The family are off on a well-deserved holiday in August. The family are very lucky and very privileged. They will spend the whole of August in Dubrovnik, Croatia. This means that their house in Everton, Liverpool will be empty.

The family have expressed a desire to return to a clean house post-August holiday.

You/artists/cultural workers/performance practitioners/activists/feminists/labourers/performers/cleaners are therefore invited to come and clean the house. The family want to know how you did it so you will also need to document your labour performance. Document it in any way you want.

What do you get?

You will get a three bedroom house with front and back gardens to live in for the whole of August. The house is situated in Everton, Liverpool and is within walking distance from the city centre (20 minutes at 3.5 miles per hour).

You will get 'Organic Direct' fruit and veg delivery to your door every Thursday.

You will get a fridge full of food upon arrival.

You will get £425 cash (10% of family's monthly income).

You will get to work at your own pace over August. Clean for a couple of days and leave or stay for the month and clean everyday all day long. Anything in between the two is fine with us.

What do the family get?

The family get a clean house upon their return.

What do we both get?

We both get to consider the performance of domestic labour.

We both get to have a conversation about the whole thing.

We both get a record of cleaning.

To apply please send one A4 outlining why you are the right person or the right collective for the job. You might want to emphasize your cleaning experience.

Deadline: 31th May 2012.

Email: theinstitute@twoaddthree.org

Founded in 2007 and situated in a council house in Everton, Liverpool, The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home are an art activist initiative run by a family of two adults and three children funded by 10% of the family's overall net income. This year the Institute are really, really interested in 'documentation, reproduction and ageing'.

www.twoaddthree.org

Cinderfella Residency: A Proposal

Skate across your newly brushed and mopped floors. Admire yourself in the mirror of your polished surfaces. Slide books off shelves without trails of dust. Create alchemy in your spick and span kitchen. Slip and slide in your newly buffed-up bath surrounded by scented candles.

Is there anything like the perfection of the household to make you feel at home in the world?

Please read on for why I am suitable for this month-long adventure in domestic labour.

The process of documenting everyday life is a chief fascination of mine

My record of domestic labour will be rich: I will write; I will take pictures, preferably low-fi ones with my phone (more real that way); and with my Flipcam I will record in moving images the choreography and gestures of cleaning

I will use a system of ‘Comparative Documentation’: emotions and sundry affects will be recorded as sensation-data on spreadsheets; times and other factual details will be realised in micro-narratives

HELL YEAH! I am an obsessive cleaner and sorter like you wouldn’t believe. Often I have considered cleaning as a part-time job. Sadly my dream has never been realised

Not a day goes by when I don’t think about the relationship between domestic labour and intellectual work. My Mum has made me neurotic: work naturally follows the perfection of the household (labour). ‘A tidy house is a tidy mind’: this maxim has made ‘nesting’ an ultimate necessity prior to bouts of academic work. (But are thinking and writing ascetic practices?)

My record of domestic performance will weave in and out of the following themes:

Cleaning is philosophical.

Domestic labour anticipates hospitality. Is the welcome you

extend to guests in your sparkling clean house pure and unconditional hospitality? Derrida amongst the Domestos?

Cleaning is psychoanalytic.

Domestic labour is about the pleasure principle even if it sometimes feels like the death drive. It separates life from death to sustain the feeling of being alive. Welcome, I have cleaned this space to allay your anxiety over bodily contamination and fear of the abject. In this house your gag reflex can relax.

Cleaning is literary.

From 'a clean conscience' through to 'sweeping it under the carpet' and even 'from dust to dust', domestic labour is rich in metaphors about metaphysics and psychic strategies of resistance and defence.

Cleaning is capital.

Row after supermarket row of cleaning products and equipment all designed to do roughly the same thing cast greedy eyes on your hard-earned cash. Domestic labour means money, and doesn't capitalism know it! Have I mentioned hire help...?

Cleaning is the social order.

Domestic labour makes way for free time. The perfection of the household holds rich rewards. Division of rights follows division of labour: class and gender follow equally in their wake

Cleaning is spiritual renewal.

Why 'spring cleaning' and not 'winter cleaning'? Could it be that nature's renewal is mirrored by our own?

Yours obligingly
Dr Per Silovsky

First things first

I arrived at approximately 14.45 having travelled by public transport (two buses). Though easy enough, the journey was overcast by a curious feeling of apprehension. I don't know why. Perhaps the reason lies in the first moments after I opened the front door and I was assailed by the uncanny sense that I had been here before. This is always the case with domestic houses and even more so with ones occupied by families. Nevertheless, there was more to it than this natural response on entering another's home. My imagination then went into overload as I felt I was trespassing space intensely imbued with the individuated lives of others, not to mention the interconnected lives of a family.

I walked around the house slowly to shake off this feeling of trespass (and to find out where needs cleaning first), introducing myself to the spaces and smiling warmly at the many personal ways in which my new-found friends had dressed their rooms in order to feel safe and sound living in them. Trespass modulated to respect as I eased into my role as an independent cleaner-scholar.

Why am I doing this?

I am not above, below, or beyond the hard graft of cleaning. It feels just right.

After reading the Institute's call it occurred to me that the terms of Cinderella Residency resonated with my life. The professional life of Mama Silovsky, who used to clean the house of two professors, is mirrored by my cleaning the house of two lecturers. What poetic symmetry this is! Yet there is irony in the fact that I am myself an academic, albeit one without tenure because of the instrumentalised world of higher education under neoliberalism. Hence my alienation as an unaffiliated scholar. Hence my application to become an independent cleaner-scholar. For me the call granted considerable autonomy, if only for a month, in a quiet and empty house. All I have to do is clean it and record the process.

Autonomy is a complex idea and for many an even more elusive condition. Cleaners and poor unaffiliated scholars in their different ways are equally denied autonomy by late-capitalism, hell-bent on protecting profit at the expense of human need. I will be working in solidarity with low-paid, precarious workers who clean for a living in the hope of living a life. How can we increase and sustain autonomy with domestic labour lurking in dusty corners?

Cinderella Residency will attempt to balance the writing life with the life of domestic labour. It will compare the nature of both endeavours not in an attempt to play one off against the other but to emphasise the ways in which they demand exactitude and relentless attention and mental effort.

But above all else the question remains whether it is possible to wear pink latex gloves while cleaning *and* writing...

Cinderella Bulletin #1

Domestic labour can pull you under like a swimmer in a whirlpool. Repetitive rituals spiral out of control. Spray once. Wet and rinse cloth. Wipe. Wet and rinse cloth. Wipe again. Wet and rinse cloth in readiness for the next round of wiping and rinsing. Same for sponges with abrasive pads. (For some reason I am reluctant to scour; too much harm to the thing being scoured.)

Decide which spot on the floor to collect dust and detritus. Brush floor in a dizzying variety of directions. And again. Tidy the grey mound of tufts, whorls and hairs you have created. (Witness increased agitation as the brush keeps tight hold of such matter.) Pull them out and try to forget immediately the nature of what you are doing and the abject horror of it. Remember that soon you will be clean yourself.

Physical irritation as dust settles into an invisible patina on skin or trapped in blonde downy. You nosedive into one task and emerge hours later having done nothing else. It's a morphine shot of reality that makes anything less hard-nosed – such as writing about it – seem flaky and pointless. Domestic labour leaves little room for reflection or writing. Three days of Cinderella Residency have passed, and cleaning and writing have organised themselves into distinct compartments of the day. Both activities draw out neuroses, but unless the Muse is by your side and there is little impediment to the process, writing requires the slow process of nesting for the writer to be clean and for the words to feel pristine and meaningful.

Preliminary cleaning has been done in order for me to feel comfortable living here. I clean to fulfil Cinderella Residency and wipe away traces of those who have been using the spaces before me. This is no mark of disrespect. It's what we do to claim space and make it liveable.

Cinderella Bulletin #7, in which Cinderella swears a bit

I must have got out of the wrong side of bed. A daemon hangs off me. On my way to make breakfast I snarled at all the spaces crying out for cleaning. But nothing – not even a malevolent spirit – will stop me from making coffee first thing in the morning.

After breakfast I lingered around the internet in order to avoid the inevitable. The daily question: what do I do now?

After some relaxed scholarly reading I tackled the front room shelves. I knew I didn't want to do this because I have left it until now, a week before the family returns, to make a dent in the task. I wiped furiously, moving videos, DVDs, books, and the usual dismembered plastic objects loitering everywhere in the family home and whose parts lie elsewhere in the universe.

Where do these plastic things go? I parked them on the floor as I gulped mouthfuls of Mr Sheen classic polish and a lungful of dust.

The more I worked that grubby yellow duster the more disgruntled I became. (You can probably tell because I didn't have the energy to engage with my neurosis around keeping cleaning utensils clean.) My indignation gushed. *Why am I doing this? Why am I documenting this? There isn't time! There's life to be lived beyond all this f***ing cleaning!*

Halfway through, just beyond the area where the telly is, I thought: f**k this! The rest of my day veered between pointless languor and depressive apathy. I slunk into the couch and for hours read interviews with Gayatri Spivak on the postcolonial critic before I resolved to watch a film. The film didn't happen (the mood dissipated). I phoned the same friend a number of times and ended up watching nothing in particular on telly until bedtime.

Days After

The smell of Bold 2-in-1 is still on my clothes. Around the cuffs of one cardigan is the aroma of the Nivea Intensive Moisturising cream I applied to the eczema on my hands. Bold 2-in-1 and Nivea harmonise well. The feeling of being in the spaces I cleaned for a month surfaces and lingers as I catch those domestic fragrances now and then and contemplate how Cinderella Residency is consigned to the past.

For the family, it's a different story: everything is fresh, bright and somehow new. As I moved away from their spaces and they return to them, their identities are imprinted again whereas I erased them to make the house clean. Things moved, footprints and scuff marks wiped away, long-standing smells kept at bay. Hairs and dead skin cells flushed down the plughole, sucked up by the vacuum cleaner – or, rather, displaced only to resettle in some other corner. I attempted to wage war with dead matter but really, as I've noted before, the dust always only resettles. No longer in the house, I scan my memory of the spaces to remember what I forgot to clean.

The horror of omission is like a loose thread casting its way through my sleeping and waking life, stunning me into recognition: ‘NO! How did I forget *that*? They will *see it* and think how crap I am!’

The guilt of the lowly worker. The guilt of those for whom caring and nurturing are paramount. The guilt of the misplaced maternal? (Throughout the Residency I struggled to conceive of caring and nurturing as anything but maternal, as constructed through or borne by some feminine principle. Perhaps this articulates what it means to be gender-queer, shifting between normative gender roles while existing within a gendered body. I tried and tried to shake off gendered notions of domestic labour, but my thoughts revolved around images and remembered sounds of the family’s mother. This was an odd thought process, for I know the family’s father is not concerned to occupy gendered roles. It certainly isn’t an accusation against him. And as for my own parents: while to an extent they operate under postwar working class gender norms, my parents do in fact practice late-twentieth century progressive attitudes to the division of labour. That said, though my father cleans and cooks, my mother has never fixed the vacuum cleaner or painted. In other words, I have not necessarily inherited gendered or even class-based conceptions of labour.)

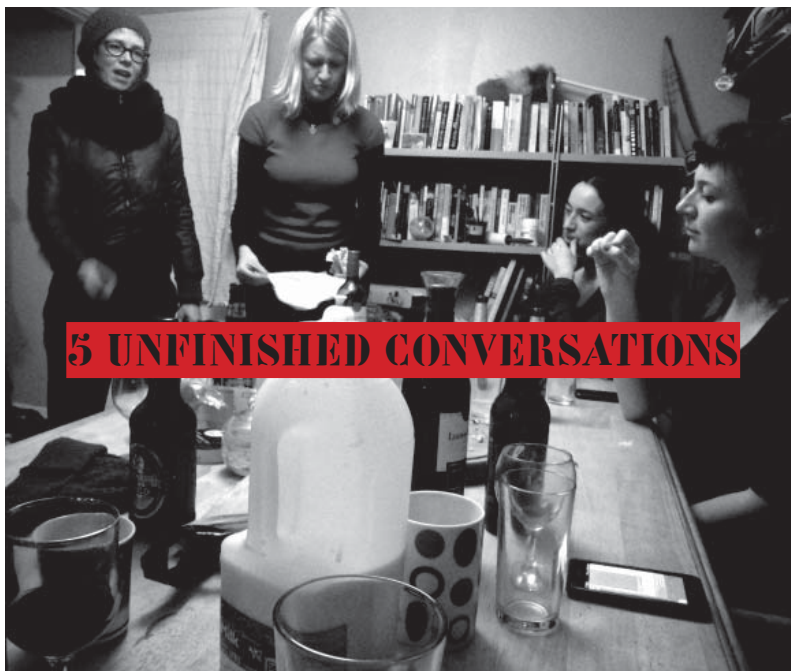
The family has been complimentary towards my efforts. Indications that my labour has prompted considerations of their own about what cleaning does and means have also been made.

At this moment in time I imagine the family are tackling their month-long holiday laundry, shopping for food, playing on the X-box (which didn’t tempt me at all), rearranging my rearrangements, looking for stuff I moved, or perhaps even fleeing the house to enjoy this beautifully sunny day – the last, really, of the summer.

Not even a shining bright, clean house can detain those who really do know that there is a life to be lived on the sunnier side of domestic labour...

Yours obligingly, Dr Per Silovsky.

Christopher Madden, aka **Dr Per Silovsky**, really is an independent scholar. Working on twentieth- and twenty-first literature and critical theory, his main interests are narrative time, queer theory, psychogeography, poetics of mourning and melancholia, and radical politics. Christopher is a member of Rose Howey Housing Co-operative in Toxteth, Liverpool, which is an affiliate of The Free University of Liverpool, of which he is also a member. Cinderella Residency was his first departure into critical arts practice. The next departure is a long-term project on the life and work of Rosa Luxemburg, focusing on radical politics, writing, and the body.



Five unfinished conversations are about critical art and activist futures in Liverpool. We gathered the people we've collaborated with the most over the past five years - especially those who have inspired us.

THE WOMEN

Jennifer Verson and Lena Simic

Lena So this is a conversation, an unfinished conversation, with Jennifer Verson taking place here at the Institute for the Art of Practice of Dissent at Home for our Institute publication. Jennifer is one of the people who is currently living in Liverpool and who has been to the Institute quite a few times, and with whom I have collaborated on a few projects, first starting as a part of the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group and then working on Becoming British workshops and Blood & Soil: we were always meant to meet... theatre performance. We will have a conversation about our collaboration and remember how we met one another and why we connected to one another, and why we decided to work together. But first of all I just wanted to ask you: how did you come across the Institute? How did you find out about it?

Jennifer I came to see the C Words exhibition at Arnolfini in Bristol. I had just moved back to the UK from Chicago with Ella who was one and I was really lost. I had contributed to a publication that was featured in the C Words exhibition. I came back to the UK as a mother and I found that the people I was meeting as a mother didn't really understand or respect me as an artist and the people who knew me as an artist and activist had then reduced me to just being a mother. It was Alice, who is one of my editors for DIY publication, who said: 'Oh you have to get in touch with Gary and Lena.' I sent you an email because I was really struggling and you invited us for dinner.

Lena Yes that's right... you sent us an email from Fulcrum Theatre address. When we met, you came with some herbs from the allotment that we then used in cooking. You came with Ella and Rob and we were in the garden and it was summertime or late spring. It was nice. This was around the time when you had first moved to Liverpool, wasn't it? When did you come to live in Liverpool?

Jennifer It might have been the year after I came to Liverpool. I had been involved in some art projects here before then; I was involved with the Mello Mello, which was a harsh introduction to Liverpool lesson. The way that property is run by the artists sort of reduced me to only being a mother. They didn't really respect me. When we met Ella was two so I think I had been here a year.

Lena So you worked with Mello Mello before we met? What we are trying to do with these conversations is to think about different kinds of critical arts practices in Liverpool. So what was your involvement with Mello Mello?

Jennifer *(Laughs/sighs)*

Lena Just briefly.

Jennifer *(Sarcastically)* It was really funny because that's where I first learned to take down a ceiling! I came to

it with this sort of 'Chicago style': you open up a theatre and you do what you want. I thought a lot about Brecht because as a live artist, space is always my canvass. I always needed a context to create, so I sort of entered into it saying (*Mocking voice*) 'Oh I'll just make some space to create.' And it was just never that easy because while they had a lot of space they didn't share.

Lena OK yeah, it's difficult with sharing spaces...

Jennifer And as s soon as you wanted something, somebody else was having it and yet they didn't end up using it.

(*Gary interrupts.*)

Lena Let's talk about Rose Howey, a new housing co-operative that you set up. In the beginning you lived in Dingle?

Jennifer Yes, the Dingle, the bread streets...

Lena What are the bread streets? One of the things that connects us is that we are both mothers. But then the other thing is that we are both migrants to the city. Could you tell me how do you feel in terms of belonging and Liverpool?

Jennifer I found my house before I left Chicago. I said to Rob if I am going to live on an island I want to see the water! It occurred to me, from my sort of Chicago perspective, that these properties were the most like high rent district in Chicago because they had a view of the river. But there were so many things I didn't understand like living in a culture of 'two up two down'. When you live in one of these houses you understand so much about the history of labour organising, the history of families, and the history of neighbours and what went wrong and what didn't go wrong because they're so small. If you look at why Liverpool has this radical history, it is because you could organise those streets so easily as they are sort of squashed together.

Lena Squashed together?

Jennifer It was very squashed in this house.

Lena Housing is one of the things that we are thinking about. I grew up in a flat in socialist Yugoslavia and it was my brother and me sharing a room up to the the age of sixteen. Gary and I have conversations about class and housing. I'm not really working class because of different class structures in socialist Yugoslavia and my parents were both educated: my father is an architect and my mum is a secondary school chemistry teacher. However, our living conditions were much worse than Gary's living conditions in terms of space. Gary defines himself as 'working class' and yet he grew up in a house. We always talk about that. Gary and I ended up living in flats. We actually set up the Institute in a flat which was 19 Livingston Court in South Liverpool near Sefton Park on an estate which was built in early to mid 1970s. I really liked living there. I always thought that living in a house would be lonely; I liked having neighbours in the same building. But the flat just got too small after we had our third child and we moved here. There was quite enough space for us all in this house in the beginning, but

again there isn't now anymore as the children are growing up and we are yet again in this terrible hunt for housing. And you, from your 'two up two down' (it's just such an interesting concept in British housing) you've got your housing co-op!

Jennifer Well it's very interesting; it's the way the toilets were built in these houses. There's no heater in our toilet and in the winter you can see your breath in the bathroom. You'd have to run the bath then throw Ella in; I didn't know about that before I came. There were no problems like that in Chicago nor I assume in socialist housing.

Lena Of course not, we didn't have issues with heating either. Most of my friends grew up in flats so to live in a house for me is a novelty. If you were considered wealthy or 'super-cool' you'd have these big city flats and my dream of perfect living was to live in one of these massive city flats. I'd prefer that than living in a house. But here it's much more about owning a house. The issue of property ownership is quite interesting. At the moment we are in social housing with Riverside, and before we were with Venture Housing Association. And we are in this kind of ecstasy: 'We are buying a house! Which kind of house shall we buy?' But you've got a housing co-op!

Jennifer We've got a housing co-op.

Lena How did that happen? I'd like you to think about that in relation to having a child.

Jennifer It's in this idea of permanence: where you stand, fight and put down your roots. My life as an activist hasn't been focused on my career. I haven't accumulated very much but I have accumulated so much because I am part of this alternative infrastructure. We have finally said: 'This is it. You can have stability inside of no-ownership. There is another way.'

Lena Yes, it's not kind of ownership in that capitalist sense that is your own property. It's a collective ownership.

Jennifer Yeah, the collective is your believing in the fact that things can be collectively owned. None of my own capital has gone in so I'll leave without capital but I believe in an infrastructure of a co-operative movement. So if I needed to leave this particular thing I know that I'd also have the support of the co-operative movement. We started this out by saying that there are not very many people who are parents who actually do this, so we framed this idea 'fit for purpose' because it's quite idiosyncratic trying to set-up: a co-operative is sort of like a commune, but not a commune, but actually it is a commune.

Lena So what's the difference? What do you mean by commune?

Jennifer Lots of traditional Radical Roots housing co-ops are student houses, but it's not suitable for a family to do that. However, it's not really clear about how that is unsuitable for families.

(Children can be heard in the background playing and laughing.)

Lena How is this going now?

Jennifer It's brilliant!

Lena Do you cook together? Do you have some 'together time'? You said there were seven adults and nine children. What are the children's ages?

Jennifer Nine to one, so the youngest is one and the oldest is nine.

Lena What things do you do together? What things do you apart?

Jennifer There's this thing about total self-organisation: meals are when we want dinner; dinner is self-organised so people who want to eat communally will have dinner together.

Lena How do you decide that?

Jennifer We self-organise. It is really unstructured. For example, the other night last week it was really late and no-one had made dinner and I just walked into the kitchen and opened the fridge...

Children (*Laughing*)

Lena Oh, here are the children interrupting. What's that?

Children A boat!

Lena OK wonderful! You two have made a boat! And where's the boat going?

Children Africa... Africa!

Lena To Africa?

Children It's a really fast boat...

Lena and Jennifer OK great.

Children It's a speed boat! (*Making speedboat sounds*)

Lena Kiddies, why don't you go and build us a house, a perfect house out of mega blocks? That's a really good plan.

Jennifer Go. That's a good plan... can it be purple?
(*Background noise with Gary and children building a house*)

Lena So there is this non- structure?

Jennifer I am really pro-structure and then after a couple of weeks I realised I needed to self-organise myself to have more space because I was getting annoyed. So I thought I just needed to create more space and so I created more space for myself. And most of the people who have families, also have this consciousness: am I giving enough? So there's this thought: if I haven't cooked dinner, I will try harder. People are sort of monitoring their behaviour.

Lena That's interesting with monitoring your behaviour. Do most people who live there have children?

Jennifer Yeah, but there's a member of the Free University of Liverpool who has a Writer's Room there. It's going really well and people respect the space and (I hate to reduce somebody) a 'single adult woman without children' who does yoga with the kids and is really good at closing her door when she needs to!

Lena OK great.

Jennifer Shocking.

Lena The other thing that I wanted to address was the time I lived in that area in South Liverpool in L17 near Sefton Park when Neal and Gabriel were little. We came back from Thailand from half a year of teaching English and that's when we got involved in toddler groups. It was an interesting life to be a part of two toddler groups: Unitarian Church on Ullet Road and Lark Lane Community Centre. These were both running two times a week so I was effectively going to toddler groups four times a week. It was a big part of my life and I met various mothers there. We were all living in this interesting time when the children are really small and then you have more time to hang out. I did a few arts projects around the themes of arts and mothering. I am thinking of one in particular, Contemplation Time. Even though you are completely exhausted (as there is this particular energy that you need to spend when you have small children) at the same time you really start considering life as such, and what is life about and what it means to procreate and have children and take care of them and socialise around kids. I met a few people like Anstey, who is now part of your co-op and Netty, who is now living in a different co-op in Shropshire and Rochelle who's moved to Yorkshire. We've always talked about ideas of alternative living. We never pushed it so far as to start organising something but there was always this kind of desire with a question of how do you live in a new way now that you are beyond being a student (because there was something you could do if you were a student). Now that you have kids, you wonder how is that different living possible. Some of those people that I met in Ullet Road toddler group ended up flexi schooling or home schooling the kids, some moved, we set up the Institute in Everton. In a way, I also see the Institute as a kind of alternative education structure for the children: our engagement in various institutions, meeting people and talking politics, and children being much more politically aware and understanding the world in a different way than they are just being served in school as consumers. How do you see your housing co-op in relation to child upbringing? It's an alternative way of life for a child.

Jennifer It is completely. It makes you reflect on yourself as an artist and a mother. Children are like a socialising or normalising force, so I'll say to Ella: 'We have to brush your hair because the social services are going to take you away if I don't brush your hair!' (*Laughs*) You have an anti-capitalist framework of living your life, you have a creative framework of your production that you want to produce outside of capitalism, but with your child it takes so much courage when you're really making alternative choices. It's easy to say 'OK I'm gonna home school my kid and remove myself completely', but when you are engaging with the system, it makes you come out and say: 'Listen, I am living in a sort of squat commune' because I wanna have Ella's friends around.

Lena Yes absolutely. Whom did you have to come out to?

Jennifer I had to come out at the synagogue actually. I said: 'Listen, I am living in a commune!' (*Laughs*) And then I actually used the Hebrew word for the semi-communal social organisation called *Mushav*. My freak synagogue is part of my life and I didn't want to feel like I couldn't have them round so I had to

be really honest.

Lena And how was it received?

Jennifer Great! People are so supportive, really supportive.

Lena OK great. I just remembered how you went to that zombie party with Ella?

Jennifer The protest.

Lena The protest around the royal wedding.

Jennifer That was great...

Lena ...and also our other friends, that were here at the Institute, Helena and Kevin and Ella, they were there at the protest as well. The two little Ellas were involved in a protest against princesses, right?

Jennifer Yeah.

Lena So how was that for you? I know you edited a feminist edition of the Nerve magazine and that you mentioned these issues, especially because you have a daughter. I have sons so maybe I don't really think as much about the upbringing of a daughter. With you being a feminist, with having a little girl and with all this kind of a fluffiness that exists around the creation of young girls, all in pink being princesses etc., how do you as a mother engage with all that?

Jennifer (*Laughs*) I have assessed it clearly now because I was at Anna's house and I was asked if Ella could play with the make-up that her daughter had. Anna grew up in a communist country and so she doesn't have a similar baggage about gender and childhood. She has an opposite baggage because she wasn't allowed to play with those things.

Lena She's from the East Germany?

Jennifer Yes. I thought about it quite a bit and I've been quite relaxed since last year because I realised three things. One: there's the area of childhood where they can't make choices for themselves. Before the age of three or two if you are providing all their toys and they are not able to express choices and you are only giving them gender toys... they're stuffed! Two: by the time they are actually able to make choices, they have been influenced by your things, your ideas and your aesthetics. You give them the information and they see you as a woman. At the same time, they are also seeing lots of different types of women, making lots of different types of choices. Three: they might rebel. So, if I am hard-line I think that she will really rebel so I am trying to improve and give her some space to make her own choices and then participate in the dialogue about the gendering of girlhood which is dangerous for boys and girls.

Lena I remember when Neal first started school (at the time of this incident he was maybe five or six) and he got, because he did well in school, a toy at the school assembly. This toy was a tank, an army toy. It was a toy which involved you building a tank, not Lego but similar. I actually wanted to go to school and say: 'I don't really want him to have army toys because I've been through the war.' However, Gary said not to do that because of the fear of how Neal is going to be perceived. Mind you, he is now

playing on COD (Call of Duty), so we haven't kept that hard-line at all. I think there are moments when you suddenly feel you have to react. My first reaction was 'No, we'll just return the toy. I am really glad he's got the achievement but I don't really like this toy.' He never had any of the guns or army toys up to that point. But, no, we didn't return it. I remember Gabriel was still not in school at that time and I was probably talking about this incident with my fellow mothers from the toddler group. So, from this experience, you feel like you identify yourself as someone who has chosen to live in a more politically aware way, whether that means identifying myself as an anarchist or a socialist, but definitely not in a capitalist way. And then, you still need to draw that line: whether you are completely going to be alternative to such a degree to say no completely or not. Where do you let the system in and how do you negotiate the system? You know, the machine.

Jennifer I might not have told you how horrible it was what happened when we were doing Cartographies of Justice and when Ella wasn't in her school nativity. I was treated so badly by the school.

Lena Which school was this? Primary school?

Jennifer Names names! (*Laughs*) St Michael's in the Hamlet. I said I can't be a hypocrite: their Christmas song was really, really Evangelical which was the opposite of the Cartographies of Justice project that we were engaged in. So my kid was at school and they said to her that she had to sing 'Christmas is for everyone, Jesus came for you too.' It was like the thing with the tank, but so much higher. I went to talk to my religious professional who said that it seemed like I had really thought it through myself.

Lena Who did you talk to?

Jennifer Well, at my Synagogue there's no Rabbi, there's a lay leader.

Lena OK, but how did you talk to school?

Jennifer I said no.

Lena To whom?

Jennifer To the teacher.

Lena What did the teacher say?

Jennifer The teacher just didn't engage with me. I remember on the third night of Canukkah I said: 'It's Canukkah, we can bring in some candles.' She snorted at me! They are really rude. They think it's fine for Ella, but they give no provision for saying no. It wasn't even about celebrating the life of Jesus, which is completely appropriate, it was about everybody should be Christian.

Lena That kind of mentality, yeah.

Jennifer It's over now.

Lena I wanted to move onto talking about migration. One of the things which for me was quite surprising was when I found out that you had decided to set up this housing co-operative. 'Oh my god Jen, you're really moving into Liverpool.' I couldn't believe it. You're a migrant, without permanent roof, a travelling nomad, you've travelled throughout your life, you've studied here and there and now

suddenly you've kind of settled in this housing space in Liverpool. So is there a commitment to Liverpool? Do you see yourself going back to Chicago, or going back to the US? Are you here now?

Jennifer That's it.

Lena That's it, you are here?

Jennifer We've landed, we have a view of the river Mersey from the top of the house. Ella's in school; we are done moving. I'll go and visit but that's it. It's the first time I've unpacked in ten years.

Lena I find it difficult to settle somewhere. Often times I think of Slaven Tolj (I probably told you this before) who set up an alternative, radical space in Dubrovnik. He is an artist but he also set up Art Workshop Lazareti arts centre in Dubrovnik. I always think about how he studied elsewhere, in Sarajevo, but then came back home. And I, as someone who has left, always have this kind of a guilt trip that I'm not back home making a difference there. I know this is ridiculous because you are where you are and you make your connections and you are spreading yourself elsewhere and it's fine, but there is something in me that is also longing to do something, to be engaged more politically back home in Dubrovnik. I'm here because of Gary; Gary is from Liverpool and that's why we ended up here. Particularly now when my three children are in school (and moreover Neal is in secondary school) I do feel I am in Liverpool for good, well at least until children finish schools. It does feel strange that lots of my creative and political energy, as a mother, as a migrant, as a being, has gone into Liverpool, or Everton.

Jennifer Through the last bit of work I wrote, my migrant story slam, around the sea, migrations and books about the way women have migrated and the way men have migrated, I understood through that piece of writing, to which degree Liverpool is a port. And Dubrovnik is a port too. I feel I've been here before. I think that all America has a different attitude about place, quintessentially because it has this framework of no one is from there. There are native people, but otherwise no one is from there. This is a cultural shift really; it's very different from coming from a country like Croatia, for example.

Lena That's so interesting in relation to your migrant slam. Of course if you were to go and dig further and further you would then relocate yourself to where your parents came, to where your grandparents came and so on and where would you go then. What are the origins? It's a kind of a ridiculous concept. The project we engaged with Blood & Soil: we were always meant to meet... performance was about looking into citizenship and really critiquing it and trying to think beyond citizenship, of how can we be as 'transnational migrants'. We did a project which involved the audiences taking 'Life in the UK' test and at the same time, whilst having this exam experience, being distracted by our stories, one coming from Chicago, one coming from Dubrovnik, two migrant stories on our being here in Liverpool. Our performance was back in 2011, wasn't it?

Jennifer April 2011.

Lena Now we are in 2013, and since then you have set up Migrant Artist Mutual Aid. During our project,

we were talking a lot about migration. When I got funding from the Arts Council, for me one of the important things to do with the money I got, was to disseminate it amongst the migrants that I knew in Liverpool, to try to help them out somehow and share the resources. And with Cartographies of Justice creative event that I organised at Liverpool Hope University, again one of the big reasons for me to do the project was again to try to get the institutional money and share it amongst fellow migrants. Those are my aims. Tell me a little about Migrant Artist Mutual Aid which came about in 2011.

Jennifer November 2011.

Lena Yes, November 2011 which was after our Blood & Soil.

Jennifer It is directly related to Blood & Soil because it was this idea of helping other people and then not just sort of drawing a line under the feeling: 'OK I can relax now because I'm safe.'

Lena Absolutely yeah.

Jennifer Ultimately it happened because of Anna's friendship with Fatoumata and the two of them not having the feeling of indignation when Fatoumata's asylum claim was turned down, but a feeling that you can stand up after being battered and not feel isolated and not give up in the face of being harassed, but find the support that you deserve. I was coming out of Chicago anarchist tradition where people would throw dinner parties to raise money. All different cultures have this sort of function of saying: 'OK if a member of our community needs help, we just do this.' And that's what you did for me.

Lena OK it was about carrying on this kind of mutual aid through Migrant Artists Mutual Aid network. What was for me really wonderful in my ties to Migrant Artist Mutual Aid which connected back to the theme of the maternal, was the fight against FGM for the little girl Fatima, and us performing Vagina Monologues in Ullet Road toddler group. I have always felt Ullet Road toddler group in the Unitarian Church as a radical space. This is where I engaged with the conversations about alternatives back in 2004. I also made arts project Medea/Mothers' Clothes which had to do with mothers from that toddler group. I was thinking about what it means to be a mother and what it means to be a migrant and the connections between those. One of the things I noticed was that when you become a mother, all the attention is placed on the child. You suddenly lose yourself. Going back into toddler group after so many years, after eight years, and doing the Vagina Monologues, was so interesting. Those spaces, like toddler groups, you don't really know about because they are almost under the radar. Unless you have a toddler and you are a mother, you don't know about toddler groups. Same is with the place we were doing the workshops in: MRANG (Merseyside Refugee and Asylum Seekers Pre and Post Natal Group) which was St Patrick's Church in Dingle. That is another space which in a way you don't know exists, but it does a lot of good work and it actually helps people. I did enjoy those workshops; they were quite moving because we were engaging with people who were in real trouble, who had suffered terrible traumas. Some don't have much money either, nothing to live on

here in the UK. I feel quite privileged as a migrant because I have a job, but then when I meet some people who are in real trouble, who are under threat of deportation or have suffered really profoundly, through their experiences in migration, I have such a humbling experience. I felt that when working with MRANG.

Jennifer I think it's interesting because the things that you share create an opening up to other people because you've been transplanted. It's so important to keep perspective.

Lena Yes definitely, but I find it really exhausting to be a migrant... (*Jennifer laughs*) because we both have accents, so the moment we speak... you are caught out!

Jennifer Well it's so funny because with you people would be like: 'Oh you're blonde, but you're from Eastern Europe.'

Lena Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer Or I might be dark and a bit grim (*Laughs*) but I've got the light key because I am not a threat to them. People hear your voice, and you're in a targeted group. I don't have to deal with that.

Lena You don't have to deal with that. With you it's about: 'How come you're here? You are American? Why are you here?'

Jennifer They like me... (*Laughs*). I first came during the First Gulf War to the South of England and people were really mean to me every time I opened my voice. And it's the same thing with being Jewish because as soon as they ask why are you dark, you have to explain the history of Zionism.

Lena But still, here we are! And you know it seems final or indefinite at the moment!

Jennifer (*Laughs*) ...err I am looking at your tree!

Lena (*Jovial*) You know there is no end to it, at least not in foresight which is a bit concerning!

Jennifer Are you concerned? I wanna travel and make plans... Do you know what I was thinking about? Do you remember when we decided to do Cartographies of Justice... We've got to get ready for our next trip! Remember we were supposed to go to Jerusalem in April?

Lena Oh god, those were the plans. Yeah, yeah in April. But I am going home now, I am going to Dubrovnik. I have to take the children, just me and the kids. But I think we can finish it here with plans to get to Jerusalem, one day...

Jennifer (*Laughs*) Or California, Or California!

THE COUPLES

Daniel Simpkins and Penny Whitehead, Ben Phillips and Lorena Rivero de Beer, Tim Jeeves and Britt Jurgensen, Gary Anderson and Lena Simic

7th Feb 2013.

Part One

Lena Right, so here we are having an unfinished conversation.

Gary Unfinishable...

Lena OK... With our friends and couples that are here in Liverpool. And the first thing I would like to ask them is how did you come across the Institute? That's the first question. I'll ask Penny and Dan first

Dan Do you want to start Penny?

Penny I am just trying to remember how I actually found out about the Institute... I can't quite remember.

Dan I remember the first time we came round was early in 2008.

Penny Wasn't it in 2007 when we just moved here?

Dan Possibly. It was around the start of your critique of the Capital of Culture. And I think you were inviting people to come to the Institute to have a conversation. Just welcoming people into the home. I think we just heard about that and didn't really know what to make of it. And actually, I still don't know to this day if this was a performance or not but Gary was struggling with a hose pipe in the garden.

Gary I was. I remember.

Dan And you enlisted me into some macho task to get the hose pipe to work.

(Room Laughs)

Penny *(laughing)* It was a test.

Dan Yeah, it failed. They never invited me back.

Lena I remember the grass was new. We'd just put the grass in and it was all fresh and new and it all looked very suburban.

Dan I remember we got incredibly drunk.

Penny I was gonna say that, and I think we stayed over.

Lena First night?

Penny Maybe, in the Institute.

Gary Yeah, you did.

Dan Yeah.

Penny Because I had to work at the museum the next day.

Lena Oh!

(Room laughs)

Lena Oh I remember. We were sitting outside in the garden and it was sunny.

Penny Oh?

Lena Wasn't it summer?

Dan We came here quite a lot during that year, I think, because we all had quite a lot of angry energy and there weren't many outlets and the Institute was one of the few places to come and vent anger about the Capital of Culture year. And just a good place to come and get really drunk and have a good chat. All those visits blur into one really. I don't think we did stay the first time we came, I don't think you did have to work in the museum.

(Laughter)

Dan I don't think it was summer either but all those things happened throughout the course of the year

Gary Why would I be trying to fix the hose pipe if it wasn't summer?

Penny It was, yeah!

Gary Or it was just a really hot spring.

Lena There was a newness about everything because we'd just had the garden done. It was full of new grass

Gary It was, but it hadn't taken by then.

Lena No, and we needed to do the garden thing. I remember.

Dan And Sid was like a new-born baby.

Lena Yes he was very little. I will move onto Lorena. I remember meeting Lorena after you two. How did you come across the Institute?

Lorena I came across the Institute because I was living in London and planning to move to Liverpool. I went to the Live Art Development Agency and I was talking to Lois Keidan. I was asking what was going on in Liverpool that was interesting? And she told me about Gary and Lena - who is this great, crazy Croatian.

(Group laughs)

Lorena And this proper Scouse man and they have this project. And I was like 'OK great'. So then I contacted you by email and I remember I came one weekend to see Ben while I was still living in London, and you were doing an event, in which Dan and Penny were also taking part, about cycling?

Lena Ruth Beale and Karen Breneman and the round-table discussion. They cycled from London to The Institute.

(Group laughs)

Lorena I remember when I came you were about to do the DIY 5 residence and I asked you could I take

part and you were like 'Yes, great!' So that was the first time. The next time was at the DIY 5. And I remember being really surprised. 'Oh wow what's going on here?', this is not like being in a home. And there was all this critical discussion and artists and it was in a house. And I remember being in the garden and I think I remember you wearing a military jacket in the garden, with the kids and I was like. 'Oh wow, what's that?!' But I remember feeling quite excited because I saw something was going on in Liverpool. I was quite apprehensive about leaving London and moving to Liverpool. What about you Ben? I remember seeing Ben walking down the street, School Lane, in front of Bluecoat and you Lorena introduced us to Ben. There was some event on at the Bluecoat. Maybe there was a bus outside?

Lena

Oh that was when there was a guy doing a show on a double-decker bus.

Ben

Lena

Yes.

Ben

The one about the birthday party. It was the bus driver, and then his story sort of unravels.

Lena

Yeah that's what I remember.

Penny

I went to that as well!

Ben

Was that when you organised the DIY thing about the sculptures? Do you remember?

Lorena

Yeah.

Ben

You two came along to that event.

Lena

Yeah we did.

Ben

That was when I was on top of the statue, not Nelson's column, the other one. I was doing a speech in a suit.

Gary

At the back of the Town Hall.

Ben

And we went to the pub afterwards. Was that the first time we spoke? Or was it before then? I am really confused.

Gary

It was before then because I remember you two turned up at DIY 6 really spotless. Really, really well dressed. Really performatively dressed. Really neat and clean. I was like 'Oh wow, what are they up to?'

(Ben and Lorena laugh)

Gary

And then Ben, you were doing all that 'Yes Men' stuff.

Lena

That's right! 'Yes Men' stuff. Yes, yes!

Ben

So when was the first time I came here? When was that?

Gary

That's your job! Did you not get the email? You're supposed to have done a bit of homework for this conversation.

(All laugh)

Ben

It's all a blur of long, intense experiences.

Gary

No I don't remember either, it's funny. For me it's one of the values of this conversation. I was flicking

through the Free University of Liverpool book today. And I was looking at the time-line at the beginning and just really enjoying it because there are actual dates that actual things happened on. And I never remember stuff like that really and I am so glad it's there.

Lena I remember Ben playing with Engels, the dog.

Gary Oh yeah, that's right.

Lena And training Engels. That was in 2009.

Ben That was when you had three kids and a dog, in the house.

(Group laughs)

Lena It was the perfect family! But it didn't quite work out between us and the dog.

Ben I remember there being lots of newspaper all over the floor.

Gary Oh god.

Lena Yeah, that was a dark, dark time.

(Group laughs)

Ben Engels insisting on leaving his mark everywhere. I do remember, I can't perhaps remember the first time I came round, but I remember coming round and that being a very intense, long discussion with a lot of alcohol.

(Group laughs)

Gary There's the theme.

(Group laughs)

Ben And I think the reason I can't remember the first time is because, almost as a theme, this thing of coming round and talking long into the night and drinking a shit load of alcohol... it was definitely a theme.

Lena Yes. Socialising and alcohol.

Lorena I remember a lot about us coming together here. Because we were a new couple then I moved to Liverpool and we were negotiating our relationship.

Ben That's one way to put it.

(Laughter from the room)

Lorena And we were very different, you know, as people.

Ben Very different. Different spaces.

Lorena I think there were lots of negotiations about our positions, and I think it happened a lot through those dinners and getting drunk.

Lena And taking photos. I have some drunken photos of you two definitely. Like from very early on when we first met.

Gary There was one photo shoot we did with you Ben when we were so drunk. And then we decided that we were all going to take a 'good' picture of each other.

Ben Yeah, you couldn't take one of me though, could you?

Lena No, that was in Dubrovnik.

Gary No, that was part two, part two was in Dubrovnik.

Lena Ok, let's move on. Let's move onto Britt and Tim.

Ben I would just like to say, before we move on, that I think the Institute and you and Gary were very important to Lorena being able to settle in Liverpool. It sort of provided her with a link and allowed. And that sort of developed later into the making of the Free University of Liverpool.

Lena Yes.

Lena Which we will elaborate on. But before that was the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group. I feel that was probably our first in-depth collaboration with Lorena. Of course there were DIY things that we were doing but I think the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group was more in-depth.

Lorena Yes.

Lena Thinking things through together, I suppose.

Gary We'll come back to that one.

Lena Yeah we'll come back to that. Now we have Tim and Britt. When did you first come to the Institute? Was it already as part of the reading group?

Tim I think so.

Britt I think so. But I can't remember the first time I came here actually.

Tim No, I can't.

Britt I can remember the first time Lorena talked about you which was during the second visit. It would have been the DIY weekend and I even think she mentioned the military jacket.

(Group laughs)

Britt I have a memory of a woman that I didn't know in a military jacket with lots of children!

(Group laughs again)

Lena Yes, in 2008.

Lorena For DIY5.

Tim Was that in 2008?

Lena Yes, because I had a military jacket that I was using for my performance of Masha but also for Joan Trial. It was a leftover from my costume.

Lorena Yes.

Lena That's why I had that military jacket. Whenever I performed something I was very much thinking 'I love Bobby Baker' who has the same clothes for each performance. That's what I was trying to get into but it didn't work in the end.

Tim I think it did because everyone remembered.

(Group laughs)

Tim I can't remember the first time.

Britt I can remember the first time I saw you Lena. It was the same day I met Tim for the first time which was Lorena's 'Internationalism Workshop' and you gave a speech or a talk about the Institute. I remember hearing about the Institute and I could never remember the name. It was like the Institute something-something at home.

(Group laughs)

Britt I remember it was something clever but I didn't know what it was.

Tim I remember the first time I heard about you guys was probably the first time you put out a call for Residencies. It was really nice to hear Lena talk about it. And then, we talked about this the other week, didn't we Gary? The first time we crossed in the corridor and said hello.

Gary Yeah, at the Bluecoat.

Tim That was very significant!

Britt Yes.

Lena The beginning of men's collaboration! What was really important for me in terms of creating collective criticism or collective arts practice in Liverpool was the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group. In a way it was the Institute going beyond the family and beyond the idea of incoming residencies; people who came in for a few days and left. But more of the idea of having a sustainable, critical arts practice, in Liverpool with the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group. Also, what I really enjoyed with the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group was this movement between homes and the socialising aspect. There was alcohol involved as well.

(Group laugh)

Lena There was no end, and that was quite important. It was maybe somewhere in between critical thinking and socialising.

Tim With food as well!

Lena With food yes, sometimes.

Gary Snackie stuff.

Tim Mainly at Carmel's.

Gray Yeah Carmel cooked.

Lena Carmel cooked!

Gary That's right. So what are people's memories of the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group then? My first memory of it is Lorena coming round one day and saying shall we do a Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group? I think you already had the name, Lorena.

Lorena It was based on Ranciere's book of Politics and Aesthetics.

Britt I remember the Insurrection night.

Tim The Coming Insurrection.

Britt The Coming Insurrection. That was really hot.

Lena Yeah, and going to Lincoln.

Britt Yeah, that led to Lincoln. We didn't go in the end, but the whole movement, the excitement of it.

Ben Was that in your flat that we read that text? I think that was the first time I met Tim and Mike.

Britt Tim didn't live here yet, he came to visit.

Tim I think that was the first time I met you properly Gary.

Britt Mike was there.

Tim And there was a lot of energy around the fact that it was new. And then the text was really energising as well. So, we all felt compelled to do something and take some sort of action.

Ben That was the second meeting though, wasn't it?

Lena What for me was quite interesting when we decided to do Macbethmachine was that it had to do with a hetero-normative violence and 'coupling' and the idea of ambition. It was also that we had come to realise that we were socialising and becoming friends with all these couples that are quite similar. There was this point where you are bringing together people, but you know you are not necessarily taking any risks. I wanted to explore that with Macbethmachine project. Theoretically we were very much inspired when thinking about difference and otherness and trying to embrace that otherness. Then at the same time I felt like there was a lot of sameness going on in-terms of hetero-normative coupling.

Lorena What I remember was the idea to radicalise people. My mind was like 'OK, so can we?' I feel it started when I first arrived and met you two and started having these interesting conversations. How can we expand that? How can it grow in a more consistent way with people who are maybe on the periphery of that? There was an ambition for the radicalisation of people. To create a community of people. I guess there was some element of risk in that.

Gary It straddles some funny, on paper, not very risky lines, but in terms of lived experiences it was quite risky. With the Institute I think we were trying to make, or trying to dissolve, what being a family is; dissolving that into friendship. Maybe we have different views on that, Lena, but that's something for me that has been quite strong. The things that have grown around the Institute are characterisable in that way. On paper that doesn't sound very risky at all. You know: 'You need to make friendships' - it just sound like 'Oh, anyone can do that'. Everyone does it anyway. But actually making those friendships within the frame of a project of humanisation or radicalisation or something like that, is actually an extremely difficult thing to juggle. And there's been tensions and it's been up and down and all the rest of it. I don't think it's been a roller-coaster by any means. It's been risky in a lived experience way where it doesn't sound like a risky thing. I suppose that's what I'm trying to say.

Lena OK.

Tim I was thinking that it always seems to come down to couples, and the fact that there have been quite

a few single people involved. Some people more regularly than others but, I'm guessing, in terms of challenging yourself collectively, there's the agency of being in a group. But then there's also the agency of being in a couple and I think that the fact that it was set up to try and challenge people through critical theory is something that's easier to face in a pair as well as within the wider group. I don't know. Either that or the fact that we are all in couples really puts single people off.

(Group laughs)

Tim That we've all got loads of really bad in-jokes.

(Group laughs)

Lena I agree with that. There's something about being in a couple and that being great in order to engage in a critical arts practice.

Tim It is really interesting in terms of what you're exploring with the family. A strange scenario has arisen where core couples are involved, but it was never intended that way, just sort of happened.

Gary I often worry about that. That, if in a way the Institute or all of the different projects that we are involved in, are 'just about radical enough' for us to now be able to relax and enjoy our privileges. We can have a family now because we have intervened in familial constructions. We can all be in couples now because we all have questioned our hetero-normativity. Do you know what I mean?

Lena Definitely. There is energy in the couple. And ambition as well. I am going back to Macbethmachine because that's when we were together and started explicitly drawing strength from each other, pushing one another. Going back to the time when we were thinking about Macbethmachine it was very much 'us two'; we can rule the world! And then realising that we are surrounded with people who have an enormous amount of energy. I think there's so much energy in the couple to sustain working in the arts world if you want to. If 'arts' is a good word. Quite an ordeal you know! And also I think it's amazing that we are all still together since Macbethmachine, since we met.

Lorena Yeah, all this energy and all the ability! I feel I am more productive on some level since I met Ben. But before, in terms of producing stuff, it was more of an expansion of myself. How many spaces could I exist in at any one time? How many spaces could I occupy? How many relationships could I hold? And relationships with different groups of people. Now that has really changed quite dramatically and it's quite scary. It is quite OK. It's alright or almost alright because there are all these couples that are all quite radical!

(Group laughs)

Gary Is there something structuring about coupling that does that?

Ben Yeah I think so. I think it's a preventative in a way. You are not able to diversify to the same degree with your relationships or your experiences or the spaces you enter into. Despite what you learn from the other person your spaces and your relationships become narrower, don't they?

Gary For me that's the most interesting thing about being in a couple or being in a family and then being motivated to blur boundaries between family and friendships. Because there's a logic to it that will tell you 'you just can't'. You just can't. You're not allowed. Additions are not possible. You can't engineer things in such a way that you would be able to expand fully, individually and grow as a couple. They do seem almost diametrically opposed. It seems tragic somehow.

Lena The idea of friendship was very important for the relationships within the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group. I remember saying 'Oh you know, well, we are not really friends!' And then we went on to read Derrida and this idea of theoretical conceptions around friendship. What I understood from that book was that there was a certain exclusivity about who could be in the grouping, which maybe was more of an idea of collectivity and solidarity. But then my understanding of friendship always had to do with a certain exclusivity. We talked about this in the Deleuze session on fidelity, which turned into a friendship discussion. I find it difficult to be friends with individual people who are also friends with Gary. Obviously I can be friends but there is a certain degree of friendship that I can't have because basically I can't trust you. I can't actually trust either one of you because of Gary. For me that's quite an interesting position. There are other avenues that we, as friends, can go down together which are probably more interesting than simply whining about Gary.

Gary Which you've no reason to!

(Group laughs)

Lena But I do think it's quite an interesting situation that I find myself in. I remember Tim and Britt were talking about that because they were both in Liverpool and most of the people you both knew you knew as 'together' rather than individually. So where do you actually find spaces for yourself that are exclusive, outside this couple thing?

Lorena I remember the other day Ben wanted to meet my course-mates. I said no. Sorry, but one of the things that's really great about it is that I can go to the pub with them, just me, not Ben.

Lena Absolutely.

Lorena You don't know them, Ben, and they don't know you.

Ben I'll find them!

(Group laughs)

Dan I remember having really bad, guilty feelings whenever I got in touch with Ben, for about the first year and a half, knowing you Lorena were like 'No, these are my friends'.

(Group laughs)

Dan I've got Ben in my phone as 'Ben of Lorena'.

(Group laughs)

Lena I've got Ben in my phone as 'Ben Lorena'.

Dan Which is my way of making sure you are first Ben.

Ben You didn't get me first.
Dan We wouldn't dare.
Gary It says Ben Phillips in my phone.
Ben Good guy. Thank you.
Gary Because I know so many other Bens. Though otherwise you'd just be Ben, because for me you are THE Ben. Oh actually, no, there's another big Ben as well.
Britt I've had Ben in my phone a long time. I just lost my phone and I had to pick up my old phone and there were none of your numbers in my old phone, but Ben was.
Ben But I think there is a value in having friends that don't cross-pollinate. The other way round is much more difficult and it requires much more trust. It's not that you don't trust us, it's just that we know your partner. So then it's a question of separation. How could I separate things out and have a relationship over here and a relationship over there. With the two of you, Lena and Gary, I was trying to think about it. That's very difficult I guess.
Lena Yeah, because there's the ethical question of whenever I talk to you I think about Gary; that you know Gary so I am always limiting myself to a degree. How far can I go?
Tim When me and Gary have a beer ethics goes out the window!
(Group laughs)
Dan Whose ethics?
(Group laughs)
Dan I think we just need to watch this recorder because of that little battery light.
Gary Oh, is it flashing?
Dan Yeah.
Gary OK, shall we pause? Is this end of round one?
Lena Yes.
Gary Ding, ding. Do you wanna burp just to close it off?
(Group laughs)

Part Two

Lena Yes Gary?
Gary Well, I've just started recording.
Lena Do I need to speak?
Gary Part Two.
Lena You need me to speak?
(Group laughs)

Ben We certainly need some introduction to know where to go...

Lena You need me to speak?

Gary Yes, I need you to speak.

Lena Why can't you speak?

Gary I don't know... Are you performing now?

Lena I just...

(Group laughs)

Lena Why can't you speak? Why do I have to frame it? I feel I framed a lot.

Ben You're doing such a good job.

Gary Exactly, I just thought you'd been doing really well. And more importantly, I thought you were enjoying it.

Lena Not really.

Gary So, part two...

(Group laughs)

Gary Okay so, we had a little moment – off camera as it were – complaining or lamenting about how awkward this conversation is. So we thought we'd let bygones be bygones and move onto the present. What are we doing? What are we doing now that relates to where we've been? What's happening now?

Lena And I suppose also in relationship to Liverpool.

Gary Well framed!

Lena I think that's important. It's what are we doing now, in relationship to the location we live in, or the location we all live in – so in relationship to Liverpool?

Dan Not enough, I think.

Lena OK.

Dan Generally. It felt like there was a lot of activist energy in Liverpool in 2011.

Lena Right

Dan And particularly around education activism. And not just us. Generally a lot of that seems like it's tailed off a bit as people have come to accept their fate a little bit. And that coincided maybe with me seeing you lot less. Gasp! Maybe that was the cause of it? No! *(Laughter)*. But I don't know if you're still as active as a group – perhaps you are.

Lena You mean as the Free University of Liverpool?

Dan I suppose there's the Deleuze group as well, which sort of spans reading group and Free Uni. I don't know how other people feel about that? But it feels like a really important time for there to be a massive force of resistance and that doesn't really seem like it's happening. But it felt like it was happening at one point.

Gary In terms of what Dan, in terms of frequency of activities?

Lena Resistance towards changes in education in particular, thinking about education?

Dan Yeah, and just in general. I guess when there was a change in government and it felt like that acted as a massive impetus for resistance. But now that's become normalized. It seems that initial energy has died off a little.

Lena Absolutely, I think that that's the case as well.

Gary I think that's probably the most interesting thing we could talk about now. What does that consist of then? Or how do you recognise that? Do you recognize it with a lowering of enthusiasm in yourself for it? Or is there – not to put you on the spot, Dan, because I'm asking the question to myself as well. I'm struggling with it.

Dan Yeah. I feel less active personally. As well recognizing that there is maybe less of that sort of activity going on generally. Maybe it's just me personally I don't know. I don't know if anyone else sort of noticed this?

Tim If you think back to 2011 that was the year of 'Occupy' wasn't it? And that was such a media baby.

Dan But there was a lot going on.

Tim Yeah, that gave a sense of there being something in the air. I'm not saying we're all media suckers but it does give you that feeling of something.

Dan There was a lot in the air though, I think. Even in Liverpool there were weekly student protests. There was a lot of trade union protests. There were the riots, Occupy. It seems like a lot of that energy has died down.

Tim I think that's one of the things that I quite like about UK UNCUT. It's that they do seem to have maintained quite a steady presence. They seem to have carried on over from that time and it was probably around that time they started up. There's something quite nice about just that particular activism that is in the media and does play with that a little bit. But yeah, something has definitely changed.

Lorena I don't know if the energy has changed or the level of commitment. It's a bit like a river that goes underwater, like it's still. So the flow is still going like it's just undercover. It's like movements that become visible or invisible at moments because the group and the energy are there. The relationships are there, and anything could make it spark, become visible and fiery again. So I don't feel it has gone.

Lena When we were thinking about setting up this conversation we were also thinking 'Oh we could set it up across Liverpool because we are in Everton, you are in Tuebrook, you are in Anfield, you are in Wavertree.' So, when I think about you two, Lorena and Ben, I do think about Tuebrook Transnational and, obviously, you've been doing quite a lot in relation to Tuebrook and your belonging there. With you, especially Britt, I'm not sure with Tim, your involvement with the Anfield Bakery and being part of the local community. I feel like lots of my activities recently have had to do

with Everton. Not necessarily anything visible in terms of arts projects but belonging to Friends of Everton Park. I'm still trying to work through my own locality somehow, more locally than Liverpool. I think that's where my energy is at the moment in relationship to Liverpool.

Britt When we talked about that 'comfort' before, how it is really not being radical enough. For me, sometimes, this group is much more comfortable than the way I spend most of my time working because we are more similar than the people that I work with. Day to day, and we are less precarious; we're less fragile as individuals. I think there's more safety in that people are not gonna just break, which is maybe the same thing as being boring but it's also quite important. It's a fuelling system that I find quite important and also a system, or like a reminder of thinking about things. I think the last years of being in the Free Uni have taught me a lot about thinking. Or about the base that lies underneath certain things. Questioning, more than thinking. Questioning. Maybe.

Lorena Thinking about what you said just now, I feel that this group, just to go back to the origin: it feels like the Institute was the origin, the origin of loads of incentives that springs out. It was like a spark of critical thinking that allowed thinking to spread. Are things really stopping? I feel we are more mature. We can go as individuals and do projects that actually go deep into the roots of social problems and... and be there! Without putting all the energy into 'let's activate critical thinking' because somehow our critical thinking is already there. There is something more shiny about the act of sparking, of starting the spark that makes it more like 'Wow! Something is happening'. Like a demonstration or a movement, social movement. But then, what happens when that's accepted?

Britt That's less sexy than being at work all night drinking and discussing.

(Laughter)

Ben I think it's interesting what Dan was saying about this idea that somehow the visible protest has become more fragile, less virulent. In our own ways we are going into our communities and trying to run projects, trying to change things from within those projects. I wonder about this as the cuts come in; whether somehow the idea of protest becomes a more fragile entity. For people who are less capacitated the protest itself has become a less capacitated, more fragile thing. Just the idea that these cuts are now in place and getting worse is something to do with the active de-organizing of groups, separating or pulling them down. Everyone is now concerned about their own future. The power to organize has had the power knocked out of it somehow.

Lorena And it's still very urgent on some level, to keep the protest going.

Ben It's something about the austerity now that people are fighting against. Groups of people radicalizing themselves in a demonstration; which you could argue is effective or not. But now it seems to have got to a point where there's something nefariously slow or a slowing down of everybody somehow. That feels quite dark. In my own life, as artists or activists whatever, we start to feel less secure, more worried about money. More 'this is getting risky now'. And we're incredibly privileged, quite

capacitated people. And if we're starting to feel insecure and scared for our own futures then how are people less privileged gonna organize?

Lena That's a real point. How are people gonna organize?

Gary Can I say one little thing?

Lena Yeah, absolutely.

Gary If we look though the history of social struggles wherever they were and whatever they were about, people were always scared, weren't they? I don't know. It's the maintenance that's the hard work. The flash points, the storming of the winter palace and all that stuff, that's easy, innit? The hard stuff is the maintenance, maintaining these... What?

Lorena No, no... I'm just listening to you and thinking about something...

Gary And no one quite knows you know, because there's no real school for it. There's a school that you can go to in History or, or more experienced activists and you can talk to them and learn loads of stuff from them. And they can tell you or you can work out with them how to organize and how to make something really 'boom, boom, boom!' and how to raise the money and get the stuff and all the rest of it. But isn't the most important work a sort of foundational maintenance work that is about maintaining... I don't know what to call it, 'inspiring relationships' maybe or something that's largely invisible.

Ben Absolutely.

Gary That is actually the hardest work of all I think.

Lorena I'm thinking also of fear. I was listening to Ben about our existence with fear and I'm thinking okay, what was the process? I felt a lot of fear when I arrived to Liverpool. I needed to liberate myself from that fear. I'm also thinking about when we were in this Deleuze session and he was talking about art as a form of liberation from fear. Liberating life from fear and oppression. And in that sense we go through those processes that imply we are really afraid. That means we have to have something done about it. Then we start getting comfortable and lose the fear or lose the awareness of that fear and then, you know, suddenly somebody speaks and we are really afraid again. What the fuck do we do? And then the energy comes back because then we need to liberate ourselves from this fear and oppressive. I don't want to be afraid.

Lena For me that's important, but also I think I need to keep the anger somehow. What is it that I'm angry about? And sometimes I do get comfortable and in a way nothing bothers me except some silly things you know. But I'm thinking about a political anger. Political, collective anger from which you get the energy to do stuff. We do lose it sometimes but I guess it's an important thing to keep being angry. Bothered. Keep being bothered about injustice in the world. That's very complicated.

Gary Yeah, it's how you use it then though, isn't it? Because you can use it short-term for quick, flashy stuff. That's good. Or you can really let it live in you and turn yourself into an anger factory! That's also

good. It's risky though, coz you can turn yourself into an anger factory and just waste it by kicking a wall or getting angry with a friend or whatever. I suppose what I'm saying is that you can engage with pain and anger but try your best to make sure that the way you work with that pain or anger is affirmative. That's the key, innit? Because anger's good. Pain's good.

Lena What bothers you? I think that's the question for me. I was at some conference ages ago and there was this person who asked this question: 'what actually bothers you?' And I thought that was such a good question. What actually bothers me?

Ben It won't be very good for the interview if we don't answer the question though.

Lena Well it's unfinished...

Gary Right now, what bothers me is the artifice of this conversation. It's really difficult for me. And this sort of three-quarters-spoken glorification of the Institute is really uncomfortable for me. Argh!

Lena Yeah!

Gary But, fuck it, we decided, didn't we, that documentation is really important. And that we're not getting any younger!

(Group laughs)

Gary We need to put things down even if sometimes we feel a little shame in that. So that's what bothers me right now.

Lena Ben's bothered by the money. That was a visual expression which...

Ben Erm, I'd just say it's all about the money.

Lena Oh, It's all about the money. Mmm, OK.

Lorena I think I'm finding this really useful actually. I'm finding it uncomfortable but it's helping me think. There's something about this conversation that is breaking the comfort of the relationships we are in. Suddenly I'm listening to Dan or Ben and I see that something is emerging which demands fear and maybe demands that we experience some form of violation of comfort. I'm too comfy here drinking while eating and feeling 'Oh, I'm so protected and safe with my friends.'

(Sounds of children playing in the background)

Lena And kids, screaming obviously! Interruptions. The fact that they haven't gone to bed and it's already 9.20pm on a school night. That bothers me.

Gary I'll go up and settle them.

Lena No! No!

Gary No, no, no, I'll do it.

Lena No! It's much more uncomfortable here! That's much easier.

(Pause)

Gary Anyone else for what bothers them now?

Dan Everything bothers me. I can't bring myself to watch the news anymore because it just makes me so

full of rage. Every single part of it. You just end up like seething for the rest of the night.

Ben There's no questions on Question Time. Is the conclusion we came to yesterday.

Dan There's no questions?

Tim There's no real questions on Question Time.

Dan You mean everyone's talking around the real issues?

Ben It's just interrogation, interrogation. There's no question. That bothers me. A lot.

Dan Are you getting what you want out of this, Gary, do you think?

Gary I don't think so. I might have to wipe it.

Ben Do you feel prostituted? Dan?

Dan No! What? No. I actually said that I was just gonna sing the praises of the Institute all night. Then they just censored everything I said out of the transcription. Because I knew they'd feel really uncomfortable with people saying anything nice!

(Group laughs)

Gary That's really clever double-thinking. Because there's no way that we can edit that back in. That's like Nixon and the Watergate tapes. Scrubbing out the swear words and stuff.

Lorena But now in the Institute, for me, isn't what it used to be.

Ben It's an institution, these days!

Lorena No, no. In a sense it is the opposite. It was more of an Institution when I first came in contact with it. Now I don't know. It's much more. It's familiar. It's like family – the Institute. It doesn't have the effect of breaking things so much. But then again I'm thinking maybe it does but in a more familial way. For me, it's not the Institute anymore; it's not just you two anymore. It's more complex now. It's as much everybody's as it is the Institute's.

Lena There is something interesting about how we perceive something to be happening by its 'level of activity'. So for instance are there any protests going on? What's going on with the Free University of Liverpool? Are we having any sessions? Or with the Institute you can ask what's actually happening? What are we actually doing? We are measuring energy by the level of activity. Maybe it's okay but I keep going over this idea of maybe doing nothing. Thinking, contemplating things is just as affective? But I think the idea of documentation is important for us. I guess we realized that there is so much we've already done but we've forgotten. We've been going through old stuff and listening to some conversations that we had and it's like 'Oh my god! Wow, wow!' that's interesting that we were thinking those things back in 2010 or whatever. And we forgot them and, I don't know, I don't know where to go with that. But I think the idea of documenting the activity of life in general is useful. Yes we maybe do it sometimes in an arts practice. You think of your life and you remember the projects you did and the period you were in. But I mean, I haven't had much engagement in trying to document things through books and writing to the same degree so I guess for me that's an interesting

activity at the moment.

Dan I think it's really important and it's often the afterthought isn't it? In terms of sharing, not only with each other, but outside of the group too. To give yourself a way of reflecting on what you've done I think recording things is really important. I suppose it seems like you're having a big push towards documentation and reflecting.

Lena Yes.

Dan I think that's not only useful for you, but hopefully for other people.

Lena I hope so. We've started doing more things outside the home. The idea of the Institute is more in line with travelling elsewhere at the moment. We've always done that as part of the Institute; bringing the activities home. The other part of the Institute was us, as a family, doing performances in different locations. I don't know, what does it then become? I'm not sure, What's its location? Is it just like a family without location? I'm thinking thoughts that aren't totally clear. I think also with the loss of the space of the Institute (because Neal needed a room of course) we had all this stuff around. So then I'm thinking 'where is the Institute now?' Is it just in the stuff that we do outside the location of our home?

Dan The Institute for me, I don't know if this is the same for everyone else, but it was never the box room. The Institute was never that physical space. I know we occasionally used to go in there and get pissed but, the Institute was just always the whole house and you and all the activities. I don't know if that physical space is important.

Lena Yes, but then I do think about having the perfect house and what that would be. We're reluctant to move from Everton but here there is nothing to buy or rent. It's a problem actually. Where do we go? My imagination of a perfect house would have a communal space that would be bigger than a family house somehow. That would allow people to come and sleep and stay which would be something extra. I think that's missing. And I think that's the same problem with the Free University of Liverpool. If we did get a space I think it would turn into a completely different thing. With a space comes a certain energy that's about being together.

Lorena I was just thinking if part of the reason why the Institute has changed, I don't know if this is true, but my sense was that when I met you a few years ago you didn't have this community in Liverpool. So it was really necessary for you, no? There was a real need to create a space where you could meet people and now it seems there is a certain community that is coming through the Free University and...

Lena But I do think we did have that, because that was through the toddler group in Ullett Road, through this mothering experience.

Gary We were always trying to build though. Always, always.

Lena Yes, and there were always people in our flat. We were always having similar conversations and so on. It's just that we never named it as an Institute or whatever. We never named it as an arts activist

practice. But we were having these parties and meetings and we wanted to try to expand it so we could meet people we didn't know. Like Dan and Penny when we first met them. The question for us was how to expand that network of people that we had.

Gary I think there's something lurking underneath this bit of the conversation about whether the Institute has become less active or whether it's changed? I think what's lurking in there is the question of novelty. When we first kicked off the Institute it came across to many people as a joke. It was and it wasn't a joke to us. That was deliberate. It was supposed to be stupid in a way. Like, the stupidest thing you could do. The name was ridiculously long etc. . . but since that first moment all of that stupidity started becoming less novel and therefore more normalised. Things start becoming less surprising, less off-the-wall. Then things started becoming more embedded in relationships with each other. I feel that the Institute, I mean just calling it the Institute is the stupidest thing in the world, is much more interesting than it has ever been. For me. I can't speak for anyone else. Because it isn't even a thing sometimes. It feels to me that my relationship with the Institute is like a cartoon character who can drink a drink and as they drink it you can see what level it's reached in them. For me the Institute has now reached my nose. There! [gestures with hand]. Do you know what I mean? It seems to me that an insistence on what's novel or surprising or headline grabbing is something to be happily moved away from. It constitutes part of the beginning of a process to have it novel or surprising but then actually, you know, you wouldn't want that to last.

Lena The consistent bother that I have is the idea of family. The children are growing up with their radical education (or not!) in relationship to the environment. Having children means you are pulled in to think about the future, about children growing up into that future. It is an ongoing preoccupation. How sustainable are we? As a family but also as this human species. It's the same questions almost. I am in the construction of a family. But what would happen if we broke up?

Gary What, like, me and you?

Lena Yeah, obviously. Then what? (Sid calls) Yeah?

Dan Are we talking about the future now?

Gary Seamless that, wasn't it!

Dan I only went for a wee! Can't get a word in edgeways here.

Lorena I'm thinking, Gary, when you were talking about those levels that go up to your nose whether that's about an embodiment of something that becomes naturalized. You ARE that thing. So you don't need to anymore. There is a part of you that is aware of, so aware of, patriarchy that it is present every time you do something. And then that spreads to our relationships in a sense and develops a level of commonality. I don't need to be saying to any of you 'capitalism is bad' or the institutions are our problem. It is known. For example when somebody's engaging with an institution they do it with the awareness that it is a problem. In doing that they are moving beyond it. That's great! That's completely

amazing! But I guess it generates some issues around access. The Institute was great in its origin as a way of opening things up because you had to open yourself up to that problem too. By opening yourselves up to that you were opening other people up to that and now it's just there. You know, hidden to some, but clear to others.

Gary There are still instances where we have to assume people know nothing about the Institute; what it is, how it works and what we're fighting against. It's the same with the Free Uni. For example with the people at the Bluecoat you have to tell them everything all over again. The question is with what genuine enthusiasm can that be undertaken? And then that impacts everything. But I think the Sphinx is a perfect example of that embodied critique that can work with and within institutions. The only reason I'm saying that is because while you were talking I was thinking of the The Sphinx and the books.

Lena Which takes us to Oedipus!

Gary Ah!

Lorena Does it? How?

Lena Well it does, absolutely!

Lena I've been really wanting to do a project about Oedipus in relation to Anti-Oedipus by Deleuze and Guattari. The idea of an anti-Oedipal family. That's the idea.

Gary And especially within the context of, I can't remember who cracked it first, Penny I think, I first heard it from you, that the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group has become the Politics and Aesthetics Breeding Group!

(Group laughs)

Gary And anti-Oedipus is a wonderful little frame to think that through!

Lena Yeah... Isn't it time to end?

Gary Wow, you jump from one thing to another and now you say it's the end! I don't understand it.

Lena I need a drink!

Gary Well let's get drinks out and continue, no?

Lena Oh, OK.

Gary There's been something really unnaturally sober about that conversation.

Lorena I'm enjoying it!

(Group laughs)

Lena But because of the time limit. What are we on now? 40 minutes again! That's the second lot, isn't it?

Gary I know, who's gonna transcribe all that? And you know, we didn't let everyone speak either. And it felt awkward being like 'Oh, will you now say something?' Pfft... Disaster.

Lorena Can we talk a little bit about the future? And can we hear everybody say something? Is that a bit too formal?

Gary Sort of 'round the table?

Lorena Yeah

Tim No, no. Let's just bear in mind that everyone can speak and we make sure everyone has the chance to speak.

(Group laughs)

Dan Let's not go round in a circle, it's not AA is it!

Ben Yeah, cause you might not have something to say...

Lorena Okay.

Gary Yeah so then it gets to your point, and you say 'Fuck off, I don't wanna speak!' That's fine.

Ben Alright, I'll keep taking them drugs.

Gary Okay, so where do we start? Alright, let's start with Dan.

Dan Erm... because we're at the point where we're soon going to be a family ourselves, knowing the Institute has just been a refreshing experience of a family.

Penny That's what I was gonna say. You've stolen my one!

(Group laughs)

Dan You were gonna say that about anything I said.

Britt I second that!

Dan Go on, what you were going to say?

Penny I suppose we always had this underlying fear that having kids and growing older would make us more conservative. And that we'd have less friends. And that we would do less interesting stuff and that we would become this home-owning family; White British. But I think knowing the Institute has been quite inspiring for us, in terms of how to negotiate that.

Dan Mmm. That's what I was gonna say.

(Group laughs)

Britt Ha! Yes! I said so.

Lena *(re-enters the room)* What's the task here?

Gary We're going round the table talking about the future. We're going round the circle. And if you don't want to speak, you have to say fuck off.

Dan Just say fuck off to be told to say fuck off.

Ben So, we gonna wait until everyone's spoken and then have a drink?

Gary Let's drink now! There'll be drink in the future though won't there? Can I do a performative future where I open the bottle and glug?

Dan But it will make us all faster! If we know we've got the pressure of us all waiting to have a drink.

Penny Yeah, true!

Gary Oh OK, and that's a good thing, you think?

Dan And we can all celebrate then!

Gary Cool, I'm into it.

Ben If you're transcribing you can start drinking at this point.

(Group laughs)

Ben Share this luminous time.

(Group laughs)

Gary So who just went, was it Dan or Penny?

Tim That was Dan and then Penny.

Lena Both! Both!

Gary So, where do we go next? Because we were going round this way, weren't we?

Lena I am not ready for the future.

Gary Okay, Tim?

Tim Ah, fuck off.

Gary The future. I want us all to live together.

Dan BASTARD!

(Group laughs)

Penny Because you wanted to say that?

Dan Yeah, I was gonna say that! Argh!

Lena So there's no end to that sentence? That's it?

Gary No, I was just interrupted!

Dan Sorry Gary.

Gary I've always felt that, structurally, all of our relationships with each other and with our supposed radical practices or however you name them, are curtailed by the fact that we all spend most of our time away from each other. So, I think that the future will never be, but should be, us all living together. Probably even in the same room. Because why would we ever need to be apart?

(Group laughs)

Gary I mean of course if somebody needs to go the toilet or whatever, okay. That's fine. Or if someone needs to clear their head or get a bit of fresh air. Okay! That's fine.

Dan Would the whole thing be recorded, though? Broadcast?

Gary Well you know, that's up for debate. We could if you wanted to.

Ben Got to pay the interns more!

Britt The endless amount of transcriptions those interns would have to do. Their entire lives in the room next door.

Dan Those interns are set for life!

(Group laughs)

Gary I think that the future should be that, but I know it won't be. And so my struggle continues.

(Group laughs)

Ben I'd like to second the thought of us all living together - in a big house though. I won't be in the same room as everybody. But I think in a big house with a big garden.

(Group laughs)

Ben I like the image of all our babies and children growing up together, in the same space. I was quite touched by that thought the other day. Thinking about invisibility and in the face of these nefariously oppressive, difficult to pin down, sense that's coming with these cuts. Perhaps invisibility is the most effective way to fight, now. I guess the question is how to share that? How do you share invisibility with people? How do you make the invisible visible, but still be invisible?

Gary Imperceptible. Relations with imperceptible people.

Ben Yes. I've been thinking a lot about that imperceptibility. There's a lot in that. Interns, if you're stuck for something to do...er... what was that in?

(Group laughs)

Gary This is Ben flirting!

(Group laughs)

Lena OK, let's move on!

Ben Which Deleuze was it? It wasn't Q for Question. R for Resistance?

Lorena Was it Q for Question? The impossibility of... No, it was R for Resistance.

Ben Deleuze 'R for Resistance' - check it out!

Penny Did you just say half a resistance?

Ben No, I said R for Resistance. I don't know what I said, I'm talking a load of crap.

(Group laughs)

Tim It's 'cause he's started drinking now!

Ben I'll move on in my incoherent manner.

Lena Are these your last words?

Ben Yes.

Lena Good, Okay.

Britt Yeah I'm not ready for my last words. I might never be ready today for my last words.

Lena OK, is it my turn?

Gary Yeah if Dan feels that he's had his go.

Dan Yeah, yeah.

Penny Even though I stole your clever idea!

Dan I was just thinking that most peoples last words are 'I wish I worked less.'

Tim Oh that's what they say, yes.

Dan 'I wish I'd worked less.'

Britt Actually... Oh fuck the transcription. So, the 'Breeding Group' right, makes me feel stressed. It makes me feel absolutely stressed out of my mind. I'm like 'Oh my god, this gulf opening up' and actually, I don't really know if I want to be part of the party. So that's my comment about the future. Particularly today, it makes me feel like death. I'm like 'oh my god, it's all gonna be over. My entire life!' Even though I see you with your amazing family and the Institute and all of the amazingness of it, to be really honest, I still feel like that. I still feel like: 'Shit! If I do that, that's it. That's it!' Just making a little positive comment about the future.

Gary Excellent, nice one.

Ben Well put.

Lena I am scared about the future in Liverpool. The idea that I might die in Liverpool does scare me and I do not see a way out. I genuinely do not see a way out of Liverpool. That doesn't mean that I don't like living in Liverpool I really do love living in Liverpool actually. And I don't want to move so I don't have a desire to move. But the idea of, what's the word, undetermined? Indetermined?

Dan Indeterminate?

Lena Yeah, indeterminate. Is that the word? What is this word that's like without...?

Ben Neverending.

Lena Neverending!

Tim Eternal?

Lena Eternal! Perpetual! Eternal! Neverending life of Lena in Liverpool!

(Group laughs)

Lena Or in Everton. It does fill me with dread. Even if we had this amazing Gary house.

Gary And that we all live in the same communal house?

Lena Yeah.

(Group laughs)

Ben The Gary house. Where does Lena want to go?

Lena I don't know but... I don't have a Plan B, that's the problem, I really don't. But I do feel a bit stuck here. You know, I am here.

Gary We had a tacit contract - only spoken - years ago, that we'd both die in Dubrovnik.

Lena OK. Thank you for recording that.

(Group laughs)

Lena Lorena, I think you are the last one?

Lorena Yeah. I think I share that dread of 'Fuck! 'Liverpool?!' And I feel the contradiction between that side of myself that is very much trying to root myself in Liverpool with a new baby. And the other side of myself that is fantasizing of escape and imagining living as a single mother in Mexico!

(Group laughs)

Ben I'm going... Steal my fantasy!

Gary So cool, a little Zapatista baby!

Lorena So I know now this baby is for good but there are other alternatives in which I could still live. I need to know that there are alternatives.

Dan I just want to say, I've had that fantasy.

Ben About being a single mother in Mexico?

Lena Okay, slow down, because they won't be able to transcribe!

(Group laughs)

Lorena But I feel that I always need to have alternatives in my head. The moment I feel there are no alternatives I'm like 'huh!?' For instance, doing this show in North Liverpool I suddenly felt I was digging a hole, digging my grave. It means I am stopping myself engaging in other projects that are more about openness. I'm all for openness, but I'm also oppressed you know. I am what I am and always will be.

Ben Oppressed!

(Group laughs)

Lorena No it's true because it's me, you know.

(Group laughs)

Ben Lorena's perpetual sense of oppression.

Lorena No it's true, it is me who is oppressing myself. So, my desire for the future would be to feel less oppressed.

Gary On that note, could we refer to the money? Because this carries a fee of £50. And we've spoken about the big future. What about the future of the £50 that you've all earned by speaking those words?

Lena There are some ideas already via email. One is give it to the Free University of Liverpool another was to gamble it through lottery tickets. There was also the idea that we go for a meal somewhere and spend it like that? Am I missing anyone out?

Ben I thought if we went for a meal it should be a Valentines Day meal as well. Like the couples theme.

Lena Wow! Okay.

Gary That's great. We better book somewhere quick though.

Dan Yeah, or just go somewhere really shit!

(Group laughs)

Lena Me and Gary went to Sahara for the first time two or three years ago. It's a wonderful place and very cheap. And it was Valentine's Day, do you remember?

Gary It was.

Lena Yeah

Ben It's a date!

Lena Yeah!

Gary It's slightly cheesy on Valentines Day but you can bring your own drinks.

Lena And £50 is enough money for most of the bill, I think.

Gary Okay, but we keep that conversation going. . .

Ben Yeah, I'm happy with that or I think we should gamble it on a Liverpool football game.

Tim Argh, if only they were playing Luton.

Gary You're too good for us, Tim. You're still in the competition.

Britt I'm happy with the gambling. You know in the spirit of future, and not knowing.

Gary Wow. Because when we say gamble the breadth of what we could gamble on is potentially infinite isn't it. Are you thinking about a dog or a horse?

Penny Yeah, I have an ethical problem here but really it should be on a dog, or a horse. It should be in that really seedy betting shop.

Dan A horse isn't seedy, you gotta go the dogs.

Penny Yeah, something seedy.

Gary We go to the dogs for our future!

Britt Or the betting shop. I don't know. I'm thinking of Mark's performance and Dead Fred.

Tim Could we link it with the Valentines thing and bet on a couple?

Britt Oh that's getting dark! How long are they going to stay together sort of thing?

Tim I was just thinking get them to run round the dog track, but...

(Group laughs)

Ben How about we go to the greyhound racing on Valentines day? And we just use that – and see how far we get with it.

Tim Do a few bets?

Ben Yeah.

Gary Where's the track?

Ben I've no idea. There will be one, won't there? That'd be good fun.

Dan Or the horse racing. Although that £50 won't get us very far.

Lena In terms of practicality, I'm already thinking ahead, the 14th is a Thursday and I'm working all day, teaching. So maybe we can go to a betting shop rather than some race course? Maybe.

Gary Wasn't that the first thing we ever collaborated on with you Dan and Penny? The Lottery Fund?

Dan and Penny Yeah.

Lena Because if we bet the money... We might even win! And then go for a meal!

(Laughter and mutterings of agreement)

Lena OK!

Ben I think there's something about going to the dog track and trying to explain why we're there with this money and how this money came into play. That would be interesting in terms of the conversations about invisibility and non-invisibility.

Lorena And could we maybe say that if we don't win, if we lose all the money we should leave ten pounds to buy frozen food that we all have to eat in the house. A really dark meal.

Tim Fish and chips? Fish and chips! Not dark.

Lorena Do you know what I mean? Really cheap.

Lena Those horse burgers!

Ben Horse burgers. Tesco burgers.

Gary Oh wow...

Ben Horse lasagne it is tonight.

Lorena And if we win we can be very organic.

Dan We can go to a posh restaurant and eat like french horse!

Tim I like it.

(Group laughs)

Lena OK! Fine, I am cutting us off!

Ste Higginson and Gary Anderson

Gary Ok, I'm recording. I'm here with Ste Higginson on the 11th Feb 2013 at The Institute. I want talk to Ste about where The Institute fits in terms of the different histories of Liverpool. We know that you've been engaged for a while now with what we could call 'the secret histories of Liverpool' or alternative histories of Liverpool; histories of Liverpool that get covered over by more dominant histories. For example the history of the left in Liverpool tends to cover or bury the history of some of the anarchist foundations in Liverpool. And when you look back at the history of the general strike or 1911, you tend to get a sort of homogenized view of history; a few union leaders working everything out, when actually the situation was much more grassroots activism on the ground with anarchist thought and practice. So I wonder, Ste, where the 'Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home' fits into that history or does it fit into that history? How would you characterize the Institute in relation to those histories?

Ste What appeals to me is looking at the actual wordage. 'Dissent', I have always tried to argue, is what makes Liverpool different. Dissent. Refusal. To say 'No'. And actually once you start unpacking all the micro-histories of Liverpool trade unionism and the Liverpool labour movement, central to those histories is this word dissent. Refusal. 'No. We're not having it.' It's a very explosive history as well because what those words denote, not just to my mind, but the work that I've tried to do over the years, is this refusal to accept authority. Now that has always manifested itself in a whole range of different guises across the labour and trade union movement but it's actually central to it. The explosive nature of the history of the labour movement. The number of unofficial disputes for instance, the fact that trade unions could not control large amounts of their members. I became more and more aware of this when I became an official, a local official, with the post office workers. Probably the third biggest work force in Liverpool, 4,500. At its peak around about 5,000 people. In the late 70's there was a group of us who all became basically shop stewards at the same time and even though we could flirt with Marxism, Leninism, Trotskyism, whether that be militant socialist workers party or the international Marxist group, none of that, none of those groupings ever gave us any real answers. In fact, all of those groupings, all tended to keep the respective work forces at arms-length. The reason for that was because their authority was challenged. The authority of a political grouping even though it was on the left or the far left was based on a philosophy of ending of Capitalism and the like. The respective workforce, all of us as we became fulltime officials, couldn't control the men either. That's not to say that we had any desire to control them, but you realize, as you said 'bye bye'

to all those groupings, by the early 80's, that all you were left with was, what we came to realize, was Anarcho-syndicalism. So in a way we were all Syndicalists ourselves. Now, at that time we thought anarcho-syndicalism didn't have any history in Liverpool. I remember Billy Hayes was the General Secretary of the post office workers. We went to Spain around about 1982 to track and trace the history of anarchist resistance from the Spanish civil war. We didn't follow Orwell's route, we were far more interested in the anarchist collectives who were central to resisting Franco in the Spanish civil war. But we didn't think of ourselves: 'Oh! We are Anarcho-syndicalists in the post office.' We didn't label ourselves like that, but looking back on it that's what we were. It's only years later that I've gone away and done research on Anarcho-syndicalism, and, in fact, instead of us thinking that it had no history, it was central to Liverpool trade unionism. Ultimately your thoughts are guided by this rejection of authority. Now whether that authority is with the company/higher arms of management/higher arms of the trade union, that authority always came under pressure from our respective work forces.

A lot of it was a laugh! Funny, you know. I can remember a Royal visit to the office in Copperas Hill and a group of workers walked out and went and sat in the canteen. Totally unplanned, totally spontaneous. The employer went absolutely ballistic but it taught the employer a lesson. For weeks and months before the employer basically refused to accept the negotiating facilities, the negotiating machinery and tried to sideline the local trade union and the local officials. That one act, when the Duke of Edinburgh appeared, within a matter of days, brought them back round the table.

Gary
Ste

Interesting.

Totally unplanned, totally spontaneous and improvised, and wonderful to behold. And that was just part of that history. We would always say about our workforce that even if you went back to with an agreement where we'd secured a hundred percent of what they asked for, there would still be a group there putting their hands up and saying "No, we're not having it." Why? 'We fucking want 110%'

Laughing

So it could have its moments! But a very, very rich history. And that's why I position those groups of workers with the workers that formed in the 60s and the 70s, the Seafarers and Dockers stretching back over a hundred years. It's refusing. This refusal, this right to say 'no'. Dissent. Rejection of authority, wherever that authority sat. So I see the Institute as being very much a continuation if you like, of those practices.

Gary

Thanks Ste. In my head at the moment are two questions: why is the rejection of authority specific or common in Liverpool and its history? That's one question, and the other is what specific examples are there of Anarcho-syndicalism in Liverpool? How can someone who came to the city have a chance to understand this particular hidden history. So, why is it specific to Liverpool or why is it common in Liverpool? What is it about Liverpool that lends itself to Anarcho-syndicalism? And what particular

examples are there historically that the Institute can look back to and feed off?

The main influence would have to be the port and the nature of the port. The open ended nature of the city. From probably around about 1850 onwards this huge wave of immigration, to sit alongside previous swathes of Irish immigration from 1850 onwards, you then start looking at Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe, immigration from the Caribbean and so on and so on. So, the city becomes this melting pot, but, you see, people are never silent. People fleeing whatever oppression they are fleeing will carry stories with them. Not just stories but ideas and those ideas, when I've studied these swathes of immigration, you can see that whatever oppression people are fleeing from that oppression will be governed by an authority of some description. To reject that oppression, means also you'll be rejecting that authority. Now I don't think, consciously, people sat down and said 'I don't like those forms of authority so therefore i'm going to become an anarchist'. It doesn't happen like that. What they were bringing with them is this sense of rejection of oppression and authority. That reaches Liverpool. And then there are these whole ranges of debates that begin to take place, multi-layered debates. So for instance seafarers who've jumped ship in New York in 1905 will be bringing back the story of The Wobblies. The industrial workers of the world. They were formed in 1905. Liverpool seafarers were present at the time of the signing, James Connolly was one of the founders, 'cause that's where Connolly was at the time. That's being brought back to Liverpool with a history of mass Jewish immigration and Caribbean immigration as well. And add to that the Irish side you really have got a melting pot of volatility. And within that we then arrive at Francisco Ferrer and new ideas about education. You can follow this movement of people and peoples from Spain. Wonderful. The institution Libre de Students. Free institution, free school of Spain. And that was predominantly Ferrer. One of his fellow philosophers Lorenzo Portet also ends up in Liverpool. But later on, that becomes home to Lorca, Dali and Luis Bunuel. Unbelievable! Those ideas are central in Liverpool as well. Then Jim and Nelly Dick, and they're coming together, and The Anarchist Communist Sunday School. Then the school children strike, the only one that's ever taken place took place in Liverpool. Huge influences, and then they go off to America. It's unfortunate you have to dig deep for these histories because, for whatever reason, you could be speaking to someone who was a member of Militant in the 80s who will say the history of Liverpool is the history of Trotskyism. You could interview someone from the communist party in the 20s and 30s and say the history of Liverpool is Marxist-Leninism. I think they're both wrong. The real history in Liverpool is Anarcho-syndicalism and there are some memorable quotes that I've got a hold of. For example members of the communist party in the 30s and 40s described Liverpool as a communist organizers graveyard.

Laughing

Or this: 'Rather than commit themselves through party discipline, workers are far more interested in the flamboyant, emotional gesture'.

Gary Beautifully put!

Ste That was in an internal communist party report.

Gary There's the refusal of authority.

Ste Back to the Institute; my belief is that the Institute will develop the history, the Anarcho-syndicalist histories of that period. You could also feed into this year's James Larkin anniversary. Larkin's influence was significant. Looking at the history of the Dublin Lock-out there's one word that is used constantly, whether it's employers of the government, the English government, UK Government, there's one word that is continually linked with Larkin, that's 'anarchical'.

Gary That's what he keeps being called?

Ste Yes. He sails to America in 1914 and jailed in 1919. And what's he jailed for? Criminal anarchy. Once you start unpacking that terminology you begin to see what it's about. What the Dublin employers, but not just the Dublin employers but employers all over Britain, were terrified of was Anarchism. The reason they used the word Anarchic is because of the desire and the demand to unionize Dublin; to get trade union recognition. Larkin challenged the all-encompassing authority and discipline of the employers and the government. The Institute, as I see it, is the catalyst for reclaiming those histories, restoring them and then putting them out there in the public domain.

Gary Our conversation is a bit of history, a bit of present and a bit of future. Have you got some more history, Ste? There's an awful lot of the stuff you've got there. Part of the project of the Institute is reclaiming those histories for current use. I am happy to listen some more about the history. Like where's 'News From Nowhere' from, for example? What's the story with them?

Ste Mid-1970s. 1977 I think. Swishing around, we started looking at all these different groupings within Liverpool. We might have flirted with the old I.N.G or the old international socialists, but we always ended up within a group of anarchists. One of them was Bob Dent who was determined to set up a radical bookshop in Liverpool. And he did. The first book shop was on Whitechapel opposite St. John's gardens. By 1980 we used to go down there every Saturday because it was continually under threat from the national front at that time. Bob Dent had a very clear idea about the book shop. At the other end of the city there was a communist party book shop, near Chinatown. You had a book shop off Dale street run by the workers revolutionary party. You had another book shop that was predominantly Maoist at the back of Chinatown. Bob was very, very clear. All those bookshops were very narrow, and when I say narrow I mean their list of reading was what the party said they could read. Bob wanted to open all that out and that's why he opened News From Nowhere - still going today - whereas all the others have fallen by the wayside. That in itself, I think is tribute to the ethos behind it. Because it is very, very eclectic. You hardly ever get anyone saying to you 'Oh no, don't read that'. A lot of the groups would have said that. It's very Monty Python: the People's Front of Ideas and the Ideas People's Front. I can remember people saying 'What are you doing in there, you were

spotted in News from Nowhere?! You bought and read books to expand, not to narrow. At that time you could pay a monthly amount as a supporter to keep it going. Within the Post Office workers union we made sure there was about a core of about 30 or 40 people who would pay a monthly amount. Then other trade unions came in. Wonderful, wonderful space. It then gave us not just an education but a theoretical understanding of anarchism because it was such an eclectic space. I first read about the Kronstadt Revolt there, the Russian Revolution. I first read about The Wobblies there, Big Bill Haywood who was the leader of The Wobblies and who was a constant visitor to Liverpool. So all that form of anarchist and syndicalist literature was hugely influential for me and other people as well. And then of course Larkin and Connolly fit into that. That came later on for me studying the life of James Larkin. Conventional trade union books will talk about Larkin as a labour leader, as a Syndicalist. What's been fascinating over the last few years is that once you move into Irish literature you find out this 'other' history of Larkin where he's introduced to Sean O'Casey and to the works of Eugene O'Neill. And you think 'where?' Larkin was central within New York and Chicago to this outpouring of Modernism. Whether it was art or literature or architecture or music Larkin was central to it. So that's been a fascinating journey for me, uncovering all this cultural history which I'm now looking at. Where did Larkin and O'Neill meet? Where was the coming together there? Charlie Chaplin enters into things here. Frank Harris - the first publisher of Oscar Wilde and great friend of Oscar Wilde. He enters into things here too. Then you've got Paul Robeson and then Gandhi. Wonderfully rich, rich history but you don't find it in conventional books on labour or trade unionism... So, where were we?

Gary I think, erm... a little bit more about the present. The James Larkin society, that you're now secretary of, what are the plans for that? Have you got any plans that fit into what you've been saying about reclaiming histories?

Ste Well every year there's a James Larkin commemorative march in July, every year. And for the last five years I've spoken at the end of the march, placing Larkin in a historical period of, say, a hundred years. Last year the march came under huge pressure. There was a huge mobilization of the far right who poured into Liverpool for the event. People panicked and worried but it was no different to the national front in the late 70s and 80s really. In the run up this year, for 'writing on the wall' a cultural festival, we've got the centenary of the Dublin Lock-Out. We'll be doing that in the Casa. Sheila Cole, one of the Hillsborough Justice campaigners will be chairing it. But we will be looking at the whole period in Dublin through the lens of women and the women's movement. Larkin's sister in particular, Delia Larkin, and the setting up of the Irish Women's union. First one of its kind, culture aside. That will be in May. Then in June we're hoping to do a night of celebration of Larkin through culture, this links to O'Casey and O'Neill. How were those links forged? How were those friendships forged? And again, that brings us back to Liverpool as a port. Larkin ran away to sea as a young man and sailed

around Latin America when we was about 15,16. Eugene O'Neill did exactly the same. So yes, they were employed as seafarers but there was that sense of adventure and opening up the world. Which in a way is no different to Nelly Dick arriving on the shores of Liverpool. We described it last week Liverpool being defined by the irregular movements of people, ideas, and philosophies. That ties in nicely with Jim and Nelly Dick. They knew Larkin before they went to America and they met Larkin in America. It's wonderfully rich.

Gary Totally.

Ste Wonderfully rich stories there in terms of what is going on with this cultural revolution in terms of art, music and education as well.

Gary Yeah, in terms of education, it totally freaked us out! I remember Lena and me and Lorena – it was you who told us – when we found out that the Liverpool Anarchist Communist Sunday School, was set up by a couple Jim and Nelly under the influence of a Spanish radical. Lorena's a Spanish radical and me and Lena are a couple. Me and Jim from Liverpool, Lena and Nelly from 'Eastern' Europe. Although it's a little spooky, there's something historically determined about it. Epochs don't repeat themselves, but come again in different flavours, textures. I wonder if we can explore that when we do the Liverpool Anarchist Communist Sunday School. We can explore how those uncanny coincidences keep happening. You know, you look through history and part of an historian's job in a sense is to find those coincidences and correlations that make specific historical sense. I suppose what I'm trying to say is that the Institute comes out of a history even though we knew nothing of that history when we set it up. We were, nevertheless compelled by political forces to set it up. Those forces are not unrelated to the forces that Jim and Nelly and Ferrer or Portet were under about a hundred years before.

Ste Yet, in a way you're living that history!

Gary Yeah, it is... go ahead...

Ste Nelly and Ferrer arrived in Liverpool, migrant bodies, meets Jim. Lena arrives in Liverpool meets Gary. Jim and Nelly set up the Liverpool Anarchist-Communist Sunday school. You set up the Institute. At that time you had no concept or idea about Jim and Nelly. Ferrer's Spanish, Lorena's Spanish. I gave this a lot of thought last week after the session we did at the burnt out church [Ste is referring to this: <http://www.twoaddthree.org/anarchistschool/>]. I'm bouncing some ideas around from Ferrer to Freire and reflecting on that session last week. For the past 18 months I've been arguing about young people and young peoples' lives. Not my life as a young person, but in terms of politics, the family, the neighbourhood, the community and trade unionism. Once upon a time it was everywhere. I was thinking of the birth of the teenager to the death of the teenager. I was arguing this time last year that I didn't think you could go marching into young peoples' lives today with a theory of Marxist, Leninist, Trotskyist, whatever-ist dogma. What if you went in and

started discussing equality issues or social justice? And then last week in the session at Liverpool Hope that's basically what every group were doing their project on. A lot of it linked to what was called identity politics. I just found that fascinating. I'm interested in using an Italian autonomist Marxist but now an anarchist, Christian Marazzi and his theory of what he calls Cognitive Capitalism about something that we've never ever lived through before. It's never been before. We know Marx never wrote about financial capitalism, the world of the instantaneous but I, I just thought to myself: where does that leave us with radical pedagogical practice? Which as we did last week at Liverpool Hope, we sat there and discussed and debated. I think it went on for the best part of two hours. Where does that fit in with a society that more and more is driven by the instantaneous, the here and now? When actually there's an argument to say that peoples' memory is being replaced by something machinic. I wanna try and throw that into the mix using Freire's 'the exile of words'. I think it's quite beautiful. Have you ever read Ranciere's – The Ignorant Schoolmaster?

Gary Yeah, we had it as a reading group for the Free University of Liverpool. We had Jane Trowell on Skype joining in as well. We had a great time.

Ste 'Cause I think it would be great and correct me here if I'm being presumptuous but the ignorant schoolmaster, where we become the pupils and Sid. . .

Gary Sid, head of research becomes the. . .

Ste . . .they become the 'masters'. That's basically what the anarchist communist Sunday schools were all about. The adults take a back seat and it was the kids who developed things. I just think that'd be a very interesting concept, really, to develop, where it's the kids who do twenty minutes reading with us or tell us what we should be doing. So you stand the lot on its head. Do we have access to camera equipment?

Gary Yeah, we could get access.

Ste Just a short series performance pieces. Lorena as Ferrer talking in Spanish. . .

Gary Yeah, it's great I am really looking forward to this project.

Ste I think you're sort of living it you see.

Gary It's the source of the Institute's energy. Blurring the boundary between art and life is something that energizes us rather than, at the end of the day, makes us think 'Oh fuck it! There's no such thing as art!'. It doesn't matter if there's any such thing as art or not, what matters is that you're living your life reflectively, critically, engaged in the world that you're in.

Ring tone

Gary Take that if you want to.

Ste No, no, go on.

Gary I think it is about being present. In the now. Being critically engaged with the context that you're already in. That's the fuel and the juice of the Institute really. I think everything you do has to be

imbued with a sense of critical integrity. That also comes with history though, you know, there's a history with that mode of being, or that mode of becoming. I think it's crucial and it's one of the things that excites me so much about the Liverpool Anarchist Communist Sunday school. A history that is uncannily close. That's powerful for me, personally. But more than anything else it's another foundation for the thinking and the practicing and the becoming that we've been trying at the Institute since we started. It doesn't always work. In fact most of the time we've failed but that history is beautiful to have. The neo-liberal movement has its history too, it's on BBC all the time, we're saturated with that conservative, neo-liberal history. It's all really clear, it's all clear. For us, it's more difficult to find our own history. You've been a blessing to us because you've opened my eyes to a history I want to discover more about. It's a joy to have a history. The Liverpool Anarchist Communist Sunday school is an opportunity for me to think through that history. It provides a mode of becoming that has integrity and that is about being present alongside that radical history. What the fuck else is worth doing?

Ste Well that is the beauty of unearthing hidden history, isn't it? When you created the Institute nothing in your head was saying right we're gonna follow what James and Nelly Dick did here.

Gary Nothing.

Ste Nothing at all. Yet, whether you see it as a historical cycle or whether you see it as a compression of time and space, right next to their history – it's yours! And in fact they are interlocked which is exciting isn't it?

Gary It is. It is, absolutely.

Ste I remember a radical historian saying that the search for the meaning of history is a never-ending process. And you just keep unearthing and the fact that you can apply it today gives it a far richer meaning. The thought of having to research the history of the communist party or the history of Trotskyism in Liverpool is appalling to me... no, I don't think so. We're only scratching the surface with this, there'll be other stuff out there as well, I'm sure of that.

Gary The future then Ste, what's the future for you and the Institute? We'll work on this project – the Liverpool Anarchist Communist Sunday school. And this residency will be great as well.

Ste Yeah brilliant that, I would love that. Because that then nails me to start getting all this down and all the research done into some kind of concept which through a Sunday school setting or...

Laughing

... The kids anarchist theory, anarchist living, Syndicalist trade union you know it's, we can bring it into you, so it becomes this major web or practice and thought you know. That's what I would love to do.

Gary I think that's the key, web-making, or web-spinning. Other people call it networks and other people

call constellations, but they are all webs in the end.

Ste Well it's funny it's erm. . . another philosopher here. . . have you come across Virilio, Paul Virilio, The Great Accelerator?

Gary I've not read that one.

Ste It's his latest book about the insecurity of history, The Great Accelerator. Nano-technology or market trading. I started looking at this having read the work by Marazzi about trading on Wall Street. They are more or less at a point where it'll be quicker than the speed of light, which means Einstein's theory could become defunct. Another work that I was looking at were memoirs of a group of women who were on 24 hour call to the crème de la crème of the Wall Street and who said on average the actual length of time for ejaculation was about 45 seconds.

Laughing

Brilliant critique of it all. I was thinking of James and Nelly and Gary and Lena and the compression of time and space and this acceleration of time and what that means? What that means in education? Freire has made the point that he could speak to, no matter what part of Latin America he was in, he could speak to someone who was illiterate. But within 40 hours if you got them talking or reading one or two words about their day to day existence they would be on the road to literacy. So that's 40 hours. This nano-technology, where does that leave that 40 hours? What if you need to wait for 40 hours? That's something else that I want to explore you know. A slow reflective practice.

Gary Yeah, where's the time for humanization?

Ste That's right. I'm reading about the Google Bus in San Francisco to Silicone Valley, where Google and Apple, instead of having their groups of workers travel into these places they use this bus. On the bus is everything they need. You get on the bus, and for about a hundred and twenty miles no one speaks. This rogue driver last year drove them right into the desert and said right get off! And they didn't know what to do. Because they didn't know how to communicate. They were asking him to give them his web address. It's like a total anesthetic. And of course what it means is that by picking up their own groups of workers – Apple and Google – they don't want them to use public transport so therefore they don't give a toss about public infrastructure either. But it's back to this question of the art of being human. And being able to humanize. That is what Virilio said.

Gary Shall we end it there, Ste?

Ste That's great

Gary That's an hour.

Ste That okay?

Gary That's great that mate, thanks a million!

THE ADULTS

Gary Anderson and Lena Simic

On the 15th of July 2013, Gary and Lena held a 45 minute-long conversation between 9:18pm to 10:03pm in the front room of 7 Bright Street. They decided not to record it, but to reflect on it through a writing up the five things which came up whilst thinking about the future.

** Everton to Anfield*

The Institute will be relocating from Everton to Anfield. We are buying a new-build, with help to buy 20% equity loan from the government. Our monthly mortgage repayments will be £482 a month for the first five years. After that we will need to either repay the equity loan, start paying for loan fees or remortgage the house. The house has three storeys, 4 bedrooms, 2 lounges, integrated kitchen with dining area, 1 toilet, 1 bathroom and 1 shower. The whole house will be carpeted. We will also have a front and back garden as well as a garage and two parking spaces. We anticipate that the Institute will be situated in the second lounge on the first floor, at least for the next year or two. Gary's thinking about putting it in the loft, or the garage.

We thought about the borders between Everton and Anfield and different areas of Liverpool. We thought about creating a walk between 7 Bright Street and 55 Kemp Avenue, and marking the border between Everton and Anfield. We wondered if we would ever call ourselves North Liverpool. How North can North Liverpool get? We wondered about different districts in Liverpool. Anfield and Everton both speak for themselves. It's only recently that we started bothering about the locale of Everton. We were preoccupied with it when living in L17 near Sefton Park and Lark Lane. The local suffocated us. Now we are looking forward to painting the wall in Everton Park, we have come to accept the local and engage with it. We are still very near to Everton Park. We are not moving far. We are only on the other side of Everton Park. We are also very close to the Anfield stadium.

** Places and their Energies*

We wondered about the generation of energies in a new place. When we first started the Institute, we ran numerous events, we hosted numerous residencies, we created a network of people, a kind of community for critical arts practice. We were buzzing... It is difficult to sustain such levels of energy. We worked in and outside the Institute. Bringing the Institute to a new place, albeit the same place but from a different angle, will bring energy. But how would we like that energy spent? Events, residencies, public events? Where will we get our

energy from? Places are things that have energies, that's why they are places, that's what a place is. What kind of place is tied to what kind of energy is available or is released there, made to be released there. The Doctor's Surgery (the house we never bought due to structural damage) was going to be an anarchist cafe - it had that kind of energy, but this new-build doesn't have the same kind. We need to find out, investigate what kind of energy is there in this new place. We might be stuck in the beautiful form of domestic spaces initiatives like 25SG, but then again, there is Anfield Bakery nearby anyway... We will need to bite into regeneration politics and break a few teeth and without the Biennial's help.

**New Baby*

We are 41 and 38. Fingers crossed, Lena will be 39 when the new baby is born. Children will be 13, 11 and 6. This will be the biggest age gap amongst the children in the family. Everyone is excited. What else is there in life to do? Is there anything better? We are giving ourselves a burst of reinvigoration. We are starting again. We don't want to let go of the idea that we are a young family. We thought about having a new baby on Fuerteventura in El Cotillo. We imagined a little toddler on white sand. This was one of those beautiful moments on the beach when the adults were relaxing on the beach, in some shade, whilst the kids were playing with big rocks in the sand. It wasn't too hot, it was utter bliss. How ambitious are we? Do we really wanna be pushing through with academic careers, the endless line towards Professorship. Ah! Are we really that bothered to continue to produce an innovative arts practice, non stop, on demand. This is the time to end twoaddthree and start a new life... twoaddthreeaddone?

**Are we the norm?*

Everyone seems to think they are the standard, the norm. I know people won't self-identify as such, but no matter where they sit on all the social, cultural and political scales the judgements we make are often AS IF from a place where things are best viewed. Being the norm is a spatial thing. It's about from where you are looking. We've been trading on being the norm (heteronormative nuclear family) since the beginning. Now, buying a new house, having a new baby, moving to a new house in the area are all things that could qualify as the norm. There's an enormous privileging here that is really hard to keep an eye on, but that privilege makes Gary a little Evangelical; he wants all of our friends to be like him in the sense that he wants all of our friends to have the privileges he has, the same job, house, garden, car, money, holidays. Gary spends a lot of his energy worrying about how his friends don't have as much as him, even though he knows fully that they may not want what he has and are perfectly content without any of Gary's stuff. But Gary persists. Lena knows that is not normal!!! Lena is also convinced that both Gary and Lena work too much and are therefore slaves to the system and can't imagine who else would want to do that. Full time jobs, three kids, arts practice which involves both art world

and academic contexts. Now, how do we get out? We are not the norm!

**What bothers you at the moment?*

Lena is actually rather content at the moment. It is summer. There isn't much to do. The university work has finished, just a few more REF forms to finalise... There is this Institute publication and immersive performance paper for TaPRA, but this is all pleasant work. With the autumn, new courses and re-rehearsing of 1994 solo performance will start, but that seems so far away now... Lena will be going to maternity leave in early January: new baby, new house, a break from work, happy children in happy schools. Lena is the happiest on Saturday morning, when after a sleep in, she gets the children to do their homework. It's 11am, and all the homework is done, ah!

Now, the world is still messed up, there are terrible injustices, social and ecological, all around us. What bothers Lena right now? Gary feels the same, and wonders if it's something to do with having been successful at combining the privileges of life with a gentle accepting questioning that finally justifies those privileges. Gary is bothered about how Lena is. How the kids are, will be, but also and always feels like he's already about 87 and with not long to go and , finally, is greeted by a sort of angel or fairy or something who asks Gary to chose a time to go back to and relive. Gary's answer is always wherever he is at the moment, always right here right now. He's so boring sometimes!

THE CHILDREN

Neal, Gabriel and Sid. This is from a video interview with the children.

What Does the Institute Mean to You?

Gabriel What does the Institute mean to me? Personally I love performing. I get to see different places. Loads of people in our school just go to the Isle of Man for a holiday. Now I just feel so lucky to be part of this. Now, that's me.

Neal I think the Institute gives us an opportunity to meet different people and go to different places around the world, for example, we went to Bristol...

Sid Croatia.

Neal No, no to Croatia, Siddy boy.

Gabriel Neal calls himself an anarchist and this is because of the Institute. We are so lucky as I have just said. Sid?

Sid That Institute, we just need to stick to it like Sellotape and glue. We just love it and have a heart to it. I just love it. Thanks God for my life.

Gabriel These are the three boys from the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home.

Neal We have Sid, Head of Research, Gabriel, Head of..

Gabriel Security.

Neal No, no. Head of Drama and Performances, and we have me, Head of..

Gabriel Anarchism.

Neal No...

Gabriel Whatever. This was the free anarchist voice. Over to you Shelly...

How do you imagine the Future of the Institute?

Gabriel What I imagine in the future when it comes to the Institute is that... Well, the future is its own reward. You can change it, you can do what you want with it, the only thing you can't do with the future is undo it. And when I imagine myself in the future, I imagine myself in a big mansion thinking 'how the heck have I got here?'

Neal The future of the Institute. There are many variables as to what might happen. For example, by 2100 climate change may have taken its toll. Hang on, wait. The Institute won't be there in 2100. OK, OK, well, there will be a new house. This will be a brand new Institute. Brand new life. Also Sid may

move school which is very, very hard overall. And then of course there is the coming of the new baby. Will it be two plus four or two plus three plus one or three plus three or five plus one?

Gabriel What are you on about?

Neal It is infinite, the amount of variables. Now over to you Sid.

Sid Of course it is. Oh, that Institute, you have to love it. To continue to give us...

Lena What's going to happen to the Institute in the future Sid, when we move?

Sid A bandit. Probably.

Lena We will abandon it?

Neal No, a bandit.

Gabriel We will abandon it when it has served its purpose.

Lena Good. OK, Sid are you looking forward to moving to a new house?

Sid Yes, I can't wait to see the baby.

Neal Well the baby will not be just lying there in the house alone.

Sid I know. It's in mummy's tummy.

Gabriel So she ate it?

Sid No.

Gabriel So why is it in mummy's tummy then?

Sid Mum and Dad kissed on the lips and that is how they got the baby.

Neal Of course Sid.

Gabriel We are cutting that bit out, aren't we?

Lena OK, thank you very much.

Sid Thank you very much!

Neal We are the three Anderson brothers. Sid is the Head of Research, Gabriel is the Head of Fine Arts and Neal is the Head of the...

Sid Army.

Neal The head of ...

Gabriel We can make a difference in the future and in the Institute but that decision is up to you.

Sid The end.

OTHER STUFF

Artist Talks and Presentations

Arnolfini Bristol, Artsadmin London, Birkbeck University London, the Bluecoat Liverpool, University of Cambridge, Chelsea Theatre London, Chester University, University of Copenhagen, University of East London, East Street Arts Leeds, Exeter Phoenix, the FACT Liverpool, greenroom Manchester, Live Art Development Agency London, Liverpool Hope University, Loughborough University, The New Art Gallery Walsall, University of Plymouth, Stanley Picker Gallery at Kingston University, Tobacco Factory Bristol, Queen Mary University of London, Wysing Arts Centre Cambridge, York St John University, University of Zagreb.

Publications

the Ashden Directory, The Concept Store journal, Contemporary Theatre Review journal, C-Words newspaper, Culture and Agency: Contemporary Culture and Urban Change book, Intimacy Across visceral and Digital Performance book, IN TIME: A Collection of Live Art Case Studies, Meta Mute magazine, Liverpool Art Journal, Nerve grassroots Merseyside magazine, Newspaper! Future Visions of History, Not If But When: Culture Beyond Oil publication, Nutopia: A Critical View of Future Cities book, Salon revolucije catalogue, Studies in the Maternal journal, Research in Drama Education journal.

Videos on dissentathome You Tube Channel

Miss Julie in Utopia (2008)
The Hazardous Family at HAZARD08 (2008)
I Came to Liverpool to Build a City by Tom Robinson, Neal and Gabriel (2008)
Clowns Have the Last Laugh (2009)
Financial Fools Day (2009)
A Promising Family Picnic (2009)
The Institute at C Words (2009)
The Institute - Dealing with Distractions at COP15 (2009)
Bed In (2010)
Sid Globalize Resistance (2011)
Great Western Motel Near Nashville (2011)
Not With So Much Ham On (2011)

Quad Riding in Louisiana Swamps (2011)
Happy Birthday ZZ (2011)
To West Ship Island 1 (2011)
To West Ship Island 2 (2011)
To West Ship Island 3 (2011)
Sid's 4th Bday (2011)
Anti-BP Song (2011)
Excess Causeway (2011)
Little Ones Dancing at St Paul's (2011)
Gabriel Dancing at St Paul's (2011)
Little Girl Giant and Her Dog Xolo Wake Up in Everton (2012)
Three Minutes of Japanese Knot Weed (2012)
Gary's 40th Birthday Panoramic Shot (2012)
Gary's 40th Birthday Drinking Shot (2012)

Other Activities

Workshop Facilitators for DIY5: First Retreat Then Advance (2008)
Numerous conversations with visitors (2008 – 2012)
Slow Travel between UK and Croatia and UK and Denmark for COP15 (2009)
The Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group (2010 – 2012)
The Institute in the Empire travel blog (2011)

Reading List for the Politics and Aesthetics Reading Group

2010

The Distribution of the Sensible by Jacques Ranciere
The Coming Insurrection by the Invisible Committee
Reclaim the Game: Boom or Bust by John Reid Postsecularism (video) text by Rosi Braidotti
For May's general election RG staged a day of reading and actions
Erasing Iraq chapter from Shock Doctrine by Naomi Klein
Free Manifesto For a Counter-Hegemonic Art by FREEE
In Praise of Psychoanalysis conversation from For What Tomorrow by Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco
Sentences on Littoral Art by Bruce Barber – a public event for Nerve Centre Performance at The Cooperative

event at the Liverpool Biennial

Maresa MacKeith writings on Inclusion and Vulnerability + The True Architect in The Principle of Hope,
Volume 3 by Ernst Bloch

Introduction from Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste by Pierre Bourdieu

2011

Shadow Feminisms: Queer Negativity/Radical Passivity by Judith Halberstam

Plas Caerdeon retreat weekend: walking, being silent, being interrupted, watching films, reading...

The Politics of Friendship by Jacques Derrida

Pedagogy of Freedom by Paulo Friere

Landscape/Space/Politics: An Essay by Doreen Massey

Animals as Persons by David Sztybel

Mourning and Melancholia by Sigmund Freud + Santa Sangre film

The Accursed Share by Georges Bataille

Violence by Slavoj Žižek

A Story of an Eye by Georges Bataille

How to be A Woman by Caitlin Moran + Xmas party

2012

An Essay on Liberation by Herbert Marcuse

If This is A Man by Primo Levi

Manifesto for Cyborgs by Donna Haraway

Gary's 40th Bday Party at Plas Caerdeon



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