Instituting with Care

How Might Art Institutions Care *Well*?

Lucy Lopez

Birmingham School of Art & Eastside Projects
Birmingham City University

Submitted in partial fulfilment of a PhD in Art

Abstract

The field of care, ranging from community care to ecology, from labour conditions to anti-racism, has been increasingly used as a source of programme content for UK art institutions. I argue that this proliferation of programming on the topic of care functions as a 'care fix' as described by Dowling (2021): it has the tendency to displace, rather than resolve, the issues at hand. While practices of care are central to how we organise our lives, we are living through a care crisis, made more visible through the impacts of the global Covid-19 pandemic (Dowling, 2021; Care Collective, 2020; Bunting, 2020). My positive aim is to examine ways to move from the care fix, to instead care *well*, or, as well as possible in this context. I define caring well in terms of art institutions, drawing on Fisher and Tronto's seminal definition of care as maintaining our world (1990) and the updated definition posed by Puig de la Bellacasa (2017), moving towards more-than-human and as-well-as-possible worlds.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 draw a connection and a narrative thread between the concepts of publics, of instituting, and of care, framing a crisis of care within art institutions characterised by widespread ruptures which make visible discrepancies between programming and public statements on one hand, and internal workings on the other. I argue for the reconciliation of these two aspects as a Foucauldian practice of *parrhesia*, or care of the self. Looking at care work and theory across the themes of our bodies, our selves, and our environments, I make connections to the field of curatorial research and practice, drawing some preliminary conclusions as to how art institutions might care well, and avoid the care fix, through instituting with integrity, and caring in ways that are are abundant, equitable, and long-lasting. Chapters 4 and 5 present and analyse material from my partner organisation Eastside Projects, an artist-led NPO in Birmingham, UK, where I co-curated the project *Policy Show*, 2017, with director Gavin Wade. Using *Policy Show* as a case study, I argue that instituent practices enable environments of care to the extent that they are able to make meaningful connections between the *logos* and *bios* of the institution. Analysing the project outcomes, I argue that, while practising with care in the current crisis might be impossible, it is imperative both to care as well as possible in the circumstances, and to perform care *as if* it were possible, thus enacting as-well-as-possible worlds.

Preface

Practices of care are central to our existence and how we organise our lives. The field of care, covering research into healthcare provision, community care, ecology, labour conditions, social reproduction, accessibility, and anti-racism, has increasingly been used as a source of programme content for art organisations in the UK over the course of the last decade. This is most notable in the years since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, as the impact of prolonged austerity measures, a disparity in who could access care, and funding cuts to care provisions proliferated. In the summer of 2020, this was heightened by renewed attention to the Black Lives Matter movement (which first gained widespread visibility in response to a fatal shooting in Ferguson, St Louis in 2014) after the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin. In the wake of this incident and the mass protests in response to it, there was a call across social media for art institutions (along with other institutions of public life, notably universities) to make explicit statements of anti-racism (Greenberger, 2020). This in turn sparked responses calling out the hypocrisy of certain institutions in making statements of anti-racism whilst their programming and staff teams were overwhelmingly white (Dafoe and Goldstein, 2020).

The response to the Black Lives Matter movement by UK art institutions has become emblematic of a wider discrepancy between the visible face of institutions and their internal workings, with anti-racism as one aspect of how the art sector might practise care, along with considerations of access, sustainability, mental health and burnout among employees. Care within the art institution has and continues to be an active field of research, but—as I will argue—this expansion of care as a topic of programming has not been matched by an expansion of the practice of care. Moreover, the discrepancy between outward claims and the inward workings of art institutions points to a crisis of care within the institutions of art, a failure to institute with integrity. The question of how art institutions might instead care *well* is the topic of this thesis.

A core part of the research presented in this thesis took place in partnership with Eastside Projects, an artist-led NPO (National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England) in Birmingham, UK, where I co-curated the exhibition *Policy Show* in 2017 with director Gavin Wade, testing out some

initial ideas of publics, care, and instituent practice. My initial proposal, and so the beginning point of this research, was made whilst I was in post as Curator of Exhibitions and Research at BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, in Utrecht, and drew on my curatorial research towards the programme *Instituting Otherwise* (2016-17), co-curated with Maria Hlavajova, and the intended volume *Instituting for the Contemporary*, co-edited with Hlavajova and Tom Clark. These two projects gave me an introduction to thinking around new municipalisms and forms of political organisation which might centre care, through the writing of Gerald Raunig, Isabel Lorey, pantxo ramas (Francesco Salvini), and Simon Sheikh, all of whom feature in this thesis. Discrepancies in how many art institutions presented radical ideals and imaginaries in their programmes and the number of workers at all levels of such institutions experiencing burnout and other stress-related health conditions, was the driving force behind a research project examining how art institutions might better practise care, for both their workers and their publics.

Acknowledgements

As Mariame Kaba tells us: 'everything worthwhile is done with other people' (Kaba, 2019). As befits this research, I have undertaken it surrounded by care.

I am grateful to my supervisors for their huge support and patience: to Prof. Jonathan Harris for some early challenges which pushed forward my thinking; to Gavin Wade, for the generosity which facilitated this view of Eastside Projects, and for your energy, positivity, and belief in the project; to Dr Simon Sheikh for joining at a late stage, providing reassurance, and for continuing to push my work forwards. The biggest of thanks to Dr Sian Vaughan: there have been a great many points at which, without your patience, generosity, and understanding, this thesis would not have been possible.

I am grateful to Birmingham City University for funding my research with a STEAM scholarship, and for their flexibility with regards to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Thanks also to Dr Ele Carpenter for sharing the initial opportunity with me at a very timely moment, and for your support in making the application.

Thank you to all staff of Eastside Projects between 2016–2023, particularly those involved in *Policy Show*, for their willingness to participate in this study, their openness, and their trust. Thanks and gratitude also to the artists and other practitioners involved in *Policy Show*, Teresa Cisneros, Rehana Zaman, Christian Nyampeta, Rosalie Schweiker, and Ciara Phillips, as well as Kathrin Böhm and Ain Bailey.

I am grateful to my dear friend and collaborator Alba Colomo, in whom I found a kindred spirit, for our conversations around one table or another, which helped me to think through many of the ideas included here.

Thank you to Amelia Hawk and Zoe Sawyer for sharing time, ideas, and friendship while navigating our own care labour. To Jamila Prowse for conversations about institutional harm and access intimacy. To Tom Clark for our shared experience, and for being a friend on the other side of it. To the many friends and colleagues who have inspired this work in various ways, to name a few here: Katy Hawkins, Sean Elder, Jo Capper, Andrea Francke, Hanna Laura Kaljo, Anna Santomauro, Pantxo Ramas, participants of the 2017 Vessel Curatorial Workshop, Louise Shelley, Teresa Cisneros, Amahra Spence, Roo Dhissou, Hannah Wallis, Tereza Stejskalova, Manual Labours, Helena Reckitt, and James McAnally.

To Imogen and Damian Clarke for all of your support and many hours of grandparental care. To my dearly missed non-human friend H.L. for her boundless love.

I am forever grateful to my parents, Sara and Tony Lopez, for their endless support and love, which means the world.

To Henry Clarke, for everything, from your astute editorial eye to your unending patience, and particularly for the weeks and months of unequal reproductive labour. You have kept us all going.

Finally to my son, Kit Lopez Clarke: that you may live in the world as well as possible.

Contents

List of Illustrations

Introduction

Instituting with Care

How might art institutions care *well*?

This thesis addresses the question of how art institutions might practise with care. The field of care research within the art institution is not new, but has shifted from being primarily the domain of feminist, queer, and crip theory, studies of arts and healthcare, and public programming departments, into the more mainstream side of arts programming. It is widely recognised that, during the period leading up to this shift (since at least the 2008 financial crash and subsequent adoption of austerity measures by successive Conservative governments), the United Kingdom has experienced an on-going care crisis (Dowling, 2021; The Care Collective, 2020; Bunting, 2020). Against this background, the proliferation of programming on the topic of care seems to be what Emma Dowling (2021) describes as a 'care fix'—a sort of sticking plaster, a temporary obfuscation—in the same way that capitalism reorganises itself to maintain profitability with a series of spatial fixes, displacing rather than addressing the core issue of overaccumulation (Harvey, 2001). My aim is to highlight the gap between institutional claims and institutional realities, and to draw a connection between the fields of publics, institutional critique, and care. This will provide a new understanding of what it would mean for an art institution to care *well*.

0.1 A Note on Context

In the first months of 2020, the Covid-19 outbreak became a global pandemic, altering the social, political, and cultural landscape of the UK, already impacted by the consequences of Brexit and a decade of austerity. As well as being disruptive to research in the sense that the pandemic was disruptive to all aspects of work, the pandemic changed the field of care research entirely. From a somewhat leftfield area of artistic and curatorial research, programming around care has grown exponentially, with institutions of all scales programming exhibitions, event series and study groups, and numerous books and articles being published on the topics of care and its intersection with art, curating, and institutional practice. The topic of care work in feminist discourse and

exhibition making has been long-standing: Mierle Laderman Ukeles' 1969 *Manifesto for Maintenance Art*, a proposal for an exhibition made up of domestic tasks, is an early example. From conferences and symposiums (such as Tate's *Curating, Care and Community*, 2020), to podcasts (BALTIC and The Wellcome Collection's *For All I Care,* 2020–21; Manual Labours' *The Global Staffroom,* 2020), to numerous exhibitions and programmes (*Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy* at Somerset House, 2020; *An Ecology of Care* at Open Eye Gallery, 2022; *Sick Time, Sleepy Time, Crip Time* curated by Taraneh Fazeli at The Luminary, St Louis, 2018; *Take Care* at Blackwood Gallery, Toronto, 2018; *Care + Repair* curated by Angelika Fitz and Elke Krasny for the 2017 Vienna Biennale; *Practising Care* curated by Karen Archey at the Stedelijk Museum, 2018), to publications (such as Whitechapel Gallery's *Health,* 2020; *Radicalizing Care: Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating,* edited by Elke Krasny, Sophie Lingg, Lena Fritsch, Birgit Bosold and Vera Hofmann, 2021; e-flux journal's 2017 *What's Love (or Care, Intimacy, Warmth, Affection) Got to Do with It?*; *Curating with Care*, edited by Elke Krasny and Lara Perry, 2023), care has been at the forefront of artistic programming in recent years, and in particular in the years following the onset of the pandemic.

This thesis is shaped by the experience of thinking about care before and during Covid-19: being primed to think about institutional facades, and how they differ from institutional workings, ready for the proliferation of online-only activity and social media based statements of care; connecting care to citizenship and political organisation just as it became brutally clear how much the work of care underpins our ability to live our lives and organise society. I was also afforded, through this unprecedented time, another view of Eastside Projects: how they outwardly responded to such a crisis, and how their programme has unfolded since.

Of course, part of what the pandemic did was to make visible what was already there, or rather, *not* there: it showed us the extent to which our healthcare system had already been dismantled (The Care Collective, 2021). Indeed, many of the publications of the past few years (which I will review later in this thesis) were in the works before the pandemic hit; responses to an already present care crisis. The widespread redundancies seen in the arts at this time (Brown, 2020) had their roots in already strained budgets; the proliferation of call-outs and open letters the result of many years of

overwork and underpay (Reyburn, 2023), buoyed by that particular common-feeling experienced in the spring of 2020. Writing in 2017, Morgan Quaintance defined what he terms 'the new conservatism' in the art world, referring to the

> identification with and capitulation to private finance; the reinforcement and creation of an ideologically and demographically homogeneous art world; and a sector tacitly in step with state power's agenda of using culture as a decoration for and tactic to divert attention from the human fallout of destructive government policy. (Quaintance, 2017, n.p.)

Quaintance categorises this new conservatism (as opposed to more traditionalist forms) as '[advancing] its agenda surreptitiously by presenting itself as forward thinking, inclusive and socially conscious' (Quaintance, 2017, n.p.), and going unnoticed purely due to our assumptions that the arts is altruistic and progressive. With a little scrutiny, he writes, we find processes and structures which benefit from the oppressive and exploitative structures which artists and arts professionals are fighting against (Quaintance, 2017, n.p) often put in place to minimise risk and maximise profit. Against the setting of new conservatism, then, all is not as it seems.

It is in the context of this cognitive dissonance that this research is situated: stemming from a need for art institutions to be more transparent and, more than this, to stand by the politics that they perform. Writing in the wake of the 2016 US presidential elections, in his text *Art After Trump*, Simon Sheikh poses the question of how we (art workers) might find solidarity and forms of mobilisation in what he terms 'a democracy under siege'; how we might 'act institutionally' (Sheikh, 2016, n.p.). Sheikh's proposal is the reorientation of artistic institutions 'towards a resurgent left' (Sheikh, 2016, n.p.). It is the related question, of how the institutions in which we work can be made more equitable, more sustainable, more accessible, more *caring*—in other words, how the infrastructures of institutions might echo the politics they present through their programmes—that this thesis addresses.

0.2 Research Structure

How might art institutions care well? I structure my investigation of this research question across five chapters. The first three chapters provide a framework by drawing a connection between the idea that institutions, in addressing and forming publics, have the capacity to engage in world-building, and that they institute through not only their programme but also their structure; the Foucauldian concept of *parrhesia* as care of the self; and a widespread care crisis, which is also experienced within the art institution. The final two chapters apply this framework to an instance of curatorial research, specifically the project *Policy Show* at Eastside Projects, in order to analyse the capacity of art institutions to practise care. My research question can therefore be broken down into the following four parts.

> (a) How does the address of an art institution (and the publics it forms) relate to its capacity to practise with care?

In order to examine how an art institution might practise care at all (and for whom), we first need to understand how institutions relate to their publics, as an essential function of the work of any public institution. Beginning with publics, and understanding *what* and *how* institutions institute, allows me to both frame a critical point (a contradiction between programming and working practices) and to articulate a positive proposal (that an institution institutes both its programme and its structure, and reconciling the two would go some way towards its capacity to practise with care). In Chapter 1, 'Thinking Through Publics', I set out a starting premise of the formation of publics, following Michael Warner's (2005) concept of publics as formed by their attention to what he terms an 'address'—a form of world-making—and of counterpublics, those publics organised against a dominant narrative. Following Simon Sheikh's question, concerning what can be put in place of the public sphere (2008), and accepting that there is no singular public sphere, nor overarching public, it becomes pertinent to ask: what actions are taken *in the name of* the public? Indeed, what policies are put in place *in the name of* care towards a unified public that does not, in fact, exist? Egbert Alejandro Martina asks, in the context of surveillance, 'what happens when we position care as the principal lens through which we analyse surveillance practices? Care is a policing power that rarely registers as such' (2015, n.p.). This question reminds us that *care* is often

invoked in the same way as *security*: a justification of acts of violence towards those not considered part of the public in question.

I address how theories of publics relate to political organisation, and ultimately to care, via explorations of a variety of forms of political activity: democratic assembly (Lorey, 2015); the performativity of assembly (Butler, 2015); acts of citizenship (Salvini, 2015); and collective forms of governance and community care (Dowling, 2021; Raunig, 2016; Salvini, 2013). I question the insistence in many of these forms of political activity on putting the body on the line, instead recognising with Hedva (2016) that there is similar significance held by those bodies unable to assemble.

I conclude this first chapter with the concept of prefigurative institutions (McAnally, 2017), as institutions which embed their politics in their working structures. I argue that the address of the organisation is in its internal workings as well as its public programme: that its forms of instituting are part of how it forms publics, and that forming publics in intentional and care-forward ways is one way that art institutions can contribute to building more equitable futures.

Following on from the conclusion in Chapter 1, that the infrastructures and working dynamics of art institutions are part of how they form publics and engage in world building, in Chapter 2, 'Instituent Imaginaries and the Care Fix', I look at the literature around instituting and instituent practice in order to examine more closely the relation between the internal workings and outwards statements of art institutions. This thesis, and the wider field of research around instituting within which it sits, owe a debt to the legacy of institutional critique: both its first wave, enacted by artists from outside the institution, and its second wave, coming from within the institution itself, and indeed identifying wholly with the institution ('the institution is inside of us, and we can't get outside of ourselves' [Fraser, 2005]). The concept of instituting, however, moves away from this division between the institutions of art and the institutions of life, instead adopting Julia Bryan-Wilson's expanded understanding of the (art) institution as 'not merely a physical set of walls and rooms, but the labyrinthine procedures of capitalism itself... bound with corporate interests, fraught with ideological agendas, but also vibrant with real moments of pleasure, knowledge, and

resistance' (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 106). I set out the proposal that institutional critique, via Sheikh and Bryan-Wilson, could be seen as a tool to be applied not only within the art world, but with a wider remit, to institutions in general (Sheikh, 2006: n.p.).

I go on to detail Gerald Raunig's concepts of instituent practice and the institution of the common. Raunig takes issue with both the historical, elitist form of the art institution, and the more contemporary, market-driven version, arguing that we are living through a crisis of state and of market, and that this time of crisis makes possible a process of restructure of both our institutions and the state itself. I outline Raunig's definition of the institution of the common; among other things, it is one which directs its resources to social and political activity, and rethinks attitudes to work (and overwork). I then go on to detail his concept of instituent practice, as a process of ongoing instituting. In this, Raunig is referring to Negri's work on constituent power—a power which constitutes itself—thinking of instituent practice as instituting itself, always in a state of becoming (Raunig, 2013).

Following Raunig, I connect instituent practice to Foucault's writing on *parrhesia* as a form of uncompromising truth-telling, detailed in his lecture series 'The Courage of Truth', given at the Collège de France in 1983–84. To practise *parrhesia* is to speak frankly from a position of exposed vulnerability, to speak truth to power and in so doing to practise a kind of radical care of the self. Sheikh (2016) applies this idea to the art institution: how could the institution practice care of the self? In order to speak the truth of itself, the institution would need to reconcile its *logos* and its *bios*: its statements and its ways of living. I describe a crisis of care, characterized by a series of ruptures in those art institutions whose *logos* and *bios* are at odds: whose internal workings are at odds with the ways they present themselves publicly. I demonstrate this by articulating a number of forms that these ruptures take. I outline Sara Ahmed's writing on complaint (how the institution is built to swallow and silence complaints [Ahmed, 2021]) and make reference to the work of research group Manual Labours (2013, 2018) on the complaining body (when unheard grievances manifest as bodily complaints). I conclude the chapter by detailing what Emma Dowling (2021) defines as the 'care fix', and how this helps us to understand how the art sector responds to ideas of care. In Dowling's writing, the care fix represents an inadequate response to the care crisis,

illustrating the need for a more critical approach which addresses the crisis in genuine ways. I argue that similar is needed in art institutions—a genuine rethinking of care practices, rather than a performative fix.

Following the conclusions of these first two chapters, I argue that it is necessary to look more closely at the field of care in order both to define a crisis of care in art institutions, and to understand how this might be addressed. This is articulated in the second part of my research question:

(b) What does it mean to care *well,* and why does it matter?

In Chapter 3, I propose an answer to this question through connecting the field of care to the work of art institutions. Care forms an essential part of the bios of the art institution, its maintenance of itself as a persisting human collective effort; in the present economic, political, and cultural context, work on care forms an urgent part of its logos, in the form of programming and pronouncements. There is therefore a need to focus on care both as an imperative of the contemporary context, and as part of the broader question of how institutions can persist at all. I begin by outlining the seminal text by Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher, *Towards a Feminist Theory of Caring*, in which they define care as 'a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our "world" so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990). This idea of living—and caring—*as well as possible* is a thread that continues through the thesis.

Using Fisher and Tronto's framework of our bodies, our selves, and our environments, I structure a review of some relevant work on care pertaining to each of these three fields. Beginning with *bodies*, I look at key literature defining a care crisis (Dowling, 2021; Bunting, 2020; The Care Collective, 2020) and proposals for collective approaches to health care and elder care, including Julian Siravo's work for Autonomy UK (a think-tank focusing on the future of work) proposing an infrastructure for long term community care in the Valencia region of Spain, and researcher and activist Francesco

Salvini's research into the radical practices of institutional destruction and reinvention realised within the Trieste psychiatric asylum, Italy. I also make reference here to the 2013 Serpentine publication *Art + Care: A Future* (Graham, 2013) which documented a project on possible alliances between art and elderly care, and the *Hologram* project, a collective virtual health care project by artist Cassie Thornton and The Feminist Economics Department (Thornton, 2020).

Moving to the second part of our world as defined by Fisher and Tronto, our *selves*, I look at self-care both as an example of a care fix (according to Dowling) and in the Foucauldian sense, as *parrhesia*. I examine some conflicting understandings of self-care, from self-care as warfare (Lorde, 1988; Ahmed, 2014) to self-care as working for capitalism (Jacques, 2019) to a collective rethinking of self-care which centres kinship (The Care Collective, 2020). As the final part of Fisher and Tronto's world, our *environments*, I look to Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's proposal of an ethics of care for more than human worlds (2017) and her reframing of Fisher and Tronto's definition of care. Puig de la Bellacasa focuses on the idea of as well as possible worlds, acknowledging the impossibility of an ethics of care to be totally transformative within a present which is in many ways toxic and anti-ecological (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017). I also turn to another understanding of environments, as the political and social contexts in which we live, with reference to Raunig (2016) and Salvini (2019) as well as Tronto's concept of caring with, as a reciprocal relation of care as a democratic ideal (2015).

Connecting these forms of care to the art institution, I note how care in the curatorial (apart from the oft-made remark, that the etymology of curating stems from *cura*, to care) has also been until fairly recently the domain of feminist and queer study. More recently, as alluded to earlier in the thesis, projects on the topic of care within the work of art institutions have abounded, some of which I expand on in this chapter, alongside the writing of Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, who in 2017 called for curators to 'imagine new ecologies of care as a continuous practice of support' (Petrešin-Bachelez, 2017) through working to make institutions porous, ani-patriarchal, and anti-racist. I argue for attention to accessibility policy as a direct demonstration of genuine care towards the bodies that engage with the art institution, via the writing of Mia Mingus (2011), Hedva (2016, 2020), Jamila Prowse (2020, 2021) and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018). I

conclude the chapter with a reflection on what it might mean for the art institution to care *well*, or as well as possible.

This brings me to the third part of my research question,

(c) Do instituent practices enable environments of care?

Chapter 4 addresses this question via the case study of *Policy Show* at Eastside Projects. I contextualise the project through introducing EP's ongoing *User's Manuals*, and their 2011 *Public Evaluation Event*, as two precursors to Policy Show. I look at some examples of projects focused on the topic of policy which were concurrent with Policy Show, in particular the work of Future of the Left (Andrea Francke and Ross Jardine) on evaluating the London art institution Gasworks' Participatory Residency Programme. I introduce the temporary loss of the building in June 2017, both as a traumatic event for EP staff, and as a moment of rupture which facilitated an opportunity to experiment with instituent practice. I then outline our intentions for *Policy Show*, and our selection of artists, before providing an outline of how the project unfolded.

Analysing interviews with EP staff and Policy Show artists, I then examine whether the rupture presented by the loss of EP's building, and by *Policy Show* itself insofar as it afforded an internal view of the organisation, made visible a crisis of care in the organisation, and whether *Policy Show* as an instituent practice was successful in facilitating an environment of care, using the frameworks I have introduced, of caring well versus the care fix. It's important to note here that the internal view of Eastside Projects afforded by *Policy Show* and the loss of the building is not, as in other examples, the result of a crisis of management, a case of moral harassment, or a process of staff complaint; rather it is a choice of the organisation, together with myself, to make these conversations about policy public. The process of thinking about care and policy within Eastside Projects brought up uncomfortable situations, new and old grievances, and was in many ways a difficult experience. I hold that this is all part of the process of *caring with* the institution. As Dowling writes, 'worry and stress can be just as much a part of care as feelings of love and affection... tasks performed as part of caring labour may at times feel like anything but care'

(Dowling, 2021: 22). I problematize my earlier conclusion that a disconnection between logos and bios always represents a care fix, rather finding that in an institution engaged in a process of instituting, these might be meaningfully held apart. It is in the process of addressing such a discrepancy that instituent practice enables environments of care.

I begin Chapter 5 building on the conclusion of Chapter 4—that instituent practices enable environments of care to the extent that they engage in real reckonings with institutional forms—through looking at the potential of critique to actually change how institutions work. I approach this through a Foucauldian understanding of critique as having the capacity to change the arts of governance, looking at *Policy Show* as an instance of critique, and reflecting on its outcomes. These outcomes, according to staff interviews, include the implementation of a care package policy, an improvement in staff dynamics, and a diversification of the organisation and its programming. I add to this my own reflections on more recent developments within the organisation which owe a debt to *Policy Show*. I ask to what extent Eastside Projects' governance was changed through this process, before returning to McAnally's idea of the prefigurative institution, through the example of Isola Art Centre in Milan. I then turn to the final part of my research question,

(d) How, if at all, might an art institution practise with care (as well as possible)?

I answer this through a focus on the idea of 'as well as possible' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017) as both a practical consideration, and one of radical imagination, drawing on Athena Athanasiou's concept of performing the institution. I then propose some shifts in practice at Eastside Projects, and in the wider sector, that would move towards practising care as well as possible. My conclusion returns to and summarises my proposed answers to the guiding questions of this thesis, as revealed through my research.

0.3 The Curatorial (as Unbounded Methodology)

In undertaking the research for this thesis, I have reviewed and analysed the literature on care, publics and instituting; and conducted and presented research into related art organisations (of a similar scale, and either experiencing significant rupture/crisis or programming around care and policy). I have tested out and reflected on forms of instituent practice through a co-authored project (Policy Show) with my partner organisation (Eastside Projects). I have also conducted and drawn upon research interviews with Eastside Projects team members who worked with the organisation between 2016–2019.

This thesis contributes to the field of research which frames the activities of curating exhibitions (and other things), and curating-as-research, known as *the curatorial*. The curatorial was first defined by the curator Maria Lind:

> Is there something that we could call the curatorial? A way of linking objects, images, processes, people, locations, histories, and discourses in physical space? An endeavor that encourages you to start from the artwork but not stay there, to think with it but also away from and against it? I believe so. (Lind, 2009)

The concept was later notably taken up by Irit Rogoff and Jean-Paul Martinon as the basis for their Curatorial/Knowledge PhD programme at Goldsmiths:

> For some time now we have been differentiating between 'curating', the practice of putting on exhibitions and the various professional expertises it involves and 'the curatorial' , the possibility of framing those activities through series of principles and possibilities' (Rogoff, 2006: 3)

The curatorial is, by its nature, many things. As Jean-Paul Martinon writes, the curatorial can be, for example, 'a strategy for inventing new points of departure', 'a way of caring for humanity', 'a political tool outside of politics', and 'a procedure to maintain a community together' (Martinon 2013: 4). Indeed, its overriding faculty is this ability to shape-shift, to alter entirely our understanding of research by, as Sheikh puts it, 'avoiding solidification and codification, remaining

unwieldy and uncertain' (Sheikh 2015: 46). Lind's definition of the curatorial parallels Chantal Mouffe's concept of the political: 'an aspect of life that cannot be separated from divergence and dissent, a set of practices that disturbs existing power relations' (Lind, 2009). Despite or because of this uncomfortable positioning vis-à-vis the existing conditions of academic research, the curatorial as both methodology and field of research has its place within the academy, just as institutional critique has a place within (and outwith) the walls of the institution.

The idea of unbounded knowledge is useful here, from Jack Halberstam's 'unbounded forms of speculation' (2011: 10) which stem from anti-canonical knowledge practices, to Rogoff's 'unbounded space, unbounded practice, unbounded knowledge' as a way of thinking the curatorial (Rogoff, 2006: 4). Rogoff uses the idea of smuggling, as a model for curatorial thought and activity, to describe the unbounded: 'ideas that are not really at home within a given structure of knowledge, and thrive in the movement between things, and do not settle into a legitimating frame or environment' (Rogoff, 2006: 4). The smuggler—with whom we might associate the illegal movement of people and things across borders, real and imagined—as curator? Rogoff draws connection not only in the sense of the transfer of things (perhaps concepts) from one field to another, but also reminds us that 'the passage of contraband from here to there is not sanctioned and does not have visible and available protocols to follow' (Rogoff, 2006: 4). This lack of existent protocols or, we might say, an unboundedness, characterises the curatorial in both its relative newness and its ability, or need, to redefine its protocols and methods depending on the subject in question. It is this porosity which, as I will understand and use it, defines the curatorial as methodology: its ability to avoid formalising, to stay with the problem(s) at hand, 'until they point us in some direction we might have not been able to predict' (Rogoff, 2006: 3).

It is in this spirit of openness to the problem at hand, and the methods it may require, that I have approached the study of Eastside Projects which makes up a core part of this research. Eastside Projects is an artist-run, mid-scale art organisation, which has been funded as an Arts Council England NPO in partnership with Birmingham City University since its founding in 2008 by artist Gavin Wade and a committee of artist directors whom he invited to collaborate on the project: Ruth Claxton (current associate director), Simon and Tom Bloor, Celine Condorelli and James

Langdon.[1] This thesis is the result of a collaboration with Eastside Projects and Gavin Wade specifically. It uses the organisation as a primary case study, drawing on two years of embedded practice within the organisation. In thinking about art institutions in the abstract, I am using Eastside Projects as example and as testing ground, at the same time as having been supported by the organisation as effectively a co-worker between 2016–18. I also draw on literature from the fields of curating, care theory, political and cultural theory, and feminism, alongside exhibition histories, institutional policy documents, and research interviews.

My researcher relationship with Eastside Projects was defined by the decision (taken both by myself and Wade) to work collaboratively on a co-authored project (*Policy Show*), which would also be the subject of my research. As an embedded researcher, I worked closely with the Eastside Projects team, co-producing rather than simply observing. This resulted in a number of challenges to my research: from a strong sense of identification with the organisation, and my being implicated in my own criticism of *Policy Show*, to friendships (and so much off-record conversation and anecdotal knowledge) with colleagues who I would later need to interview. Led by this entanglement with the organisation, I made the decision in mid-2018 (when the active elements of *Policy Show* had taken place) to take as much distance as possible, in order to have space to reflect on the work we had done together. From early 2020 I conducted research interviews with EP staff and Policy Show artists. This combination of embedded, and more distanced, research allowed me to care *with* the organisation (as I will detail in Chapter 4), testing out instituent practices and modes of address.

This collaborative approach is akin to participatory action research (PAR) (Breton, Cornish, et al., 2023), in that I worked with colleagues at Eastside Projects to collectively reimagine their working policies, in the form of a public project. PAR holds that research be done with people, not on or for them. It draws on Paulo Friere's pedagogy of the oppressed, in which the learner is co-creator of knowledge. The process of being embedded in Eastside Projects could also be described as a form of research *through* practice (Frayling, 1993); though this upholds an unnecessary distinction between research and practice, which becomes less defined in the concept of practice-*based* research.

[1] At the time of writing, Condorelli and Langdon are no longer acting directors of Eastside Projects, having stepped down in 2018.

Considerably more work has been done on artistic practice-based research and its methodologies than on curatorial research, but much of it is transferable. Rogoff writes that the potential of practice-based research is that 'materials, associations, narratives, methodologies [might] pursue one another in unconventional modes, invite each other to dance as it were – art history and astro physics for example might develop some conversation, not just as bodies of knowledge but as the narrative structures they are recounted in' (Rogoff, 2010: 42). This allowance for forms of knowledge to be sampled, deterritorialized, unbounded from their context temporarily—before being re-territorialised and grounded with all the rigour required of academia—makes possible new forms of knowledge. To return to the idea of smuggling, the space of art and of curating is often one in which political ideas (and ideals) are smuggled in, in which propositions can be made for policy and social change outside of the usual structures and languages that such work inhabits. Just as the field of art allows for a certain expressive permissibility, so the field of curating can allow for a particularly open space for proposals about how to live in the world differently.

The curatorial-as-methodology requires, Rogoff writes, for a project 'to be excavated in detail until its subject and its methodology emerge organically from its concerns and its position' (Rogoff, 2010: 39). As such, I have allowed a (curatorial) methodology to emerge from the concerns of this research. It is one of caring-with Eastside Projects (and attempting to care well); of engaging in instituent practice (Raunig, 2013); of befriending ideas (Condorelli, 2013) and writing in friendship, or in love, as in the love-relation of militant research: a shared experience, which converts 'own' into 'common' (Colectivo Situaciones, 2003), as I draw from the experiences shared with Eastside Projects to propose a common approach to caring well.

1

Thinking Through Publics

Why begin with publics? Understanding how institutions relate to their publics—and understanding this relation as a way of thinking about what institutional practice *is*—achieves two important tasks in my analysis. First, it allows me to frame the critical point: that there is a crisis of care within art institutions indicated by widespread ruptures stemming from the discrepancy between programming and working practices (for example, extracting maximum value from their workers while proclaiming the opposite in how they communicate to publics). I will return to this tension in Chapter 2 with a series of examples. Second, focusing on this essential function of the art institution—addressing publics—is useful as a means to articulate a positive proposal: situating the address within the institution itself, not only in its outward statements, allows us to see how reconciling these elements would (a) make for a more coherent address and (b) go some way towards a constructive proposal for how institutions might practise with care.

The question of how (and whether) an institution cares is related to how it addresses publics. My focus in this research is the difference between progressive aims and policy around care (addressed to publics), and how an institution institutes social and economic relations. The fields of publics and care also affect each other on a broader level. On the one hand, as Emma Dowling writes, 'the propensity to care and the work of caring are the lifeblood of our social and economic system [...] without care, life could not be sustained' (Dowling, 2021: 21). Care is or should be at the centre of how we organise society, part of how publics are formed socially and politically. On the other, as so astutely put by Egbert Alejandro Martina, 'care is a policing power which rarely registers as such' (Martina, 2015, n.p.): it is invoked as a means to control, surveil, and suppress publics. In this entangled relation, understanding how art institutions might effectively practise care (as their statements imply that they wish to) would make possible instituent practices which address and form new publics, new future imaginaries, in a hostile world. In this chapter, I particularly focus on the question: how does the address of an art institution (and the publics it forms) relate to its capacity to practise with care?

1.1 Away from the Public Sphere

In this thesis, I use the term 'publics', as opposed, for example, to audiences, the general public, or the people. The concept of publics as plural—rather than *the* public (as in, the citizens of a particular nation state)—has been long a matter of debate, as is evidenced in the writings of Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge (1972/2016), Nancy Fraser (1990), and Michael Warner (2005), and has been taken up in the work of several writers to whom I will make reference here. In this chapter, I begin with Warner's pivotal framing of publics as formed by address, before looking to how the organisation of publics is conceptualised in the work of political theorists including Judith Butler and Isabell Lorey.

Talking about publics in the plural is a critical development away from Jürgen Habermas' classical conception of the bourgeois public sphere (1989/1992), as a sphere emerging in the coffee houses, debate clubs, and newspapers of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. This conception has been much criticised over the past twenty years primarily for its exclusions and oversights (for example, of women and sub/counter-cultures), and its presentation of the patriarchal white male as the normative subject (Kwon, 2005). An early critique of Habermas by Negt and Kluge (1972/1993) in their book *Public Sphere and Experience* makes the argument that 'public' spaces are inherently unequal due to their being changeable depending on the subject's experience: they hold that there is not one, fixed public sphere, as there is also not one, unified public, and therefore so-called public space is different to each person who experiences it. This is evident, for example, when it comes to accessibility: our ability to traverse the space that is called public differs radically depending on our ability to walk, climb stairs, or navigate narrow streets with walking aids or reduced vision. This is built into the design of our cities; further experiential differences are more immaterial but also more aggressive, such as the racial profiling inherent in stop and search procedures in the UK (Rhoden-Paul, 2022, n.p.).

Simon Sheikh notes that the concept of the *blueprint* in Habermas' work is fitting, being something which produces specific social relations: 'a blueprint does not emerge organically from social structures, but is imposed upon them in order to configure or, possibly, reconfigure them'

(Sheikh, 2008: 30). The imposition of a theoretical blueprint such as Habermas' is not neutral: it works to prevent certain kinds of speech from entering the public arena, or codes them as not-of-note in such a context. As Negt and Kluge write, Habermas' theory of the public sphere prevents 'even the mere expressions of social criticism, of a counterpublic sphere, and of the emancipation of the majority of the population' (Negt and Kluge, 1993: xlvii). In preventing these expressions of divergence by blocking and depoliticizing certain experiences and actions, and in removing forms of production and reproduction from the public sphere, what comes to be presented is a unified public sphere, which has an affinity with the idea of a unified and general public. In fact, according to Sheikh, what is created by this theory of the public sphere is a 'buffer zone' (Sheikh, 2008: 31), a separation between the sectors of government and policing on one side, and between the personal and so-called private on the other. This has the function of allowing and disallowing political speech: 'the buffer is not only a location for politics, but rather for rendering certain things, emotions and economies, political and others decidedly non-political' (Sheikh, 2008: 32). Any labour taking place in the home or the factory, in this reading, is stripped of the potential to have public meaning.

In Habermas' public sphere, there is no place for care however we understand it: for child or elderly care, for social reproduction, for domestic labour, for relationality. Care is depoliticised. Silvia Federici, in her seminal text 'Wages Against Housework' (1974) writes: 'to say we want wages for housework is to expose the fact that housework is already money for capital', that is, it underpins capitalist society. As Emma Dowling observes, this analysis of social reproduction in the 1970s was at its heart concerned with power, 'the power that resides within the sphere of social reproduction, given its importance for the functioning of the economy', and its ability to create and maintain 'the conditions for the production of value in the capitalist economy' (Dowling, 2021: 33). Federici was not calling for domestic labour and other forms of care work to be subsumed into the terms of capitalist labour, but rather using the demand for a wage as a means to a refusal of this labour (hence wages *against* housework) and to politicise its terrains. If we call for care to be at the heart of how we think about publics, this is not to say that care, in how it is currently understood and enacted, is something that we wish to hold up as exemplary, but rather that acknowledging its importance in public life allows us to make demands on how it is organised.

The discounting of so many politicised terrains where labour takes place, and capital is exchanged (such as the domestic, the digital, the workspace), performs a fiction of a unified and general public sphere, and, it follows, a unified and general public. If we accept that there is not one, but rather multiple publics, which are organised and enacted differently, this makes possible a potential shift for the art institution in terms of how we programme, and what we might be able to model.

1.2 Forming Publics and Counterpublics

Accepting that publics exist in the plural allows us to discuss them in more detail and, as is the focus here, to examine how they relate to both the art institution and the field of care. How do these publics come into being? Who are their members? What kind of challenges might they pose to dominant public narratives?

In *Publics and Counterpublics*, Michael Warner notes some divergent uses of the term 'public'; the public, meaning 'a kind of social totality', a public, the 'concrete audience' or 'crowd witnessing itself in visible space', and a third sense of public: 'the kind of public that comes into being only in relation to texts and their circulation' (Warner, 2005: 66). It is this third, self-organised, discursive public which Warner in the main part of his text is concerned with, and which I will primarily make reference to in this thesis, as the publics of art organisations are those formed through interest; this is the topic of this section.

Warner's concern is with the formation of publics *through an address.*. The address in question may be a 'text', but equally anything to which a group can have a shared attention (Warner, 2005: 66). To take an expansive view, we can see how the address could be political speech, a seminal essay, an artwork, or an exhibition, for example. It could be the manner in which a public is created around an art institution: through their shared attention to its programming. For Warner, 'a public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself' (Warner, 2005: 67). Warner uses the example of the public of a text (perhaps his own) that is brought together precisely through being readers of the text. This public is self-organised. To use the art institution as an

example, we can see that its publics have ultimately chosen to engage through their interest in the discourse; for example, they attend an exhibition or event, read a publication, or view a website. Whilst publics might be invited to take part in events or visit the gallery, their sustained interest is what makes them a member of this public, and they can freely choose to join or leave—they are self-organised into the form of a public.

Warner further notes that a public is 'constituted through mere attention' (Warner, 2005: 87): our extended attention to the text is our connection to it. Again, the point is that our only relation to the exhibition is our attention to it. We have no obligation to be part of this public. A public is formed in relation to a discourse; this discourse is picked up and circulated, forming a social space (albeit one which is, as we have noted, self-organised and made up of strangers). The 'text' here could of course be visual, audio, etc.—any discourse which we can (freely choose to) take a shared interest in. What's important for Warner here is that the text is something which can address *us*. Ongoing, durational discourses—such as those around a theatre company or art organisation, or long-term debates on policing and security, for example—may form ongoing publics. Equally a single text, book, or exhibition may command long term attention, or indeed a public may form long after publication.

In this way, the public in question does not exist prior to being addressed: it is formed through attention. There is a partial echo of the circularity of Althusser's concept of interpellation. He writes that subject and ideology constitute each other: 'the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of "constituting" concrete individuals as subjects' (Althusser, 1971: 84). Crucially, for Althusser, it is the moment of recognising oneself in an address which transforms one into a subject: the moment of interpellation. Similarly for Warner, the basic nature of a public is that it 'exists by virtue of being addressed' (Warner, 2005: 67). Althusser's example of interpellation is that of a policeman who calls 'hey, you!', and an individual who turns and recognises themselves as being addressed. This differs from Warner's concept of address in that the policeman's call is 'not an example of public discourse' (Warner, 2005: 77); it is an address to an individual, and all others present are simply

bystanders. For Warner, this addressable thing—the potential for a public—comes into being through shared attention to a discourse to which, in turn, it will give purpose.

This conjures a public that is not easily measurable, that exists in relation to *the reflexive circulation of discourse*, and is by its nature never a fixed entity. Warner writes:

> A public is never just a congeries of people, never just the sum of persons who happen to exist. It must first of all have some way of organizing itself as a body and of being addressed in discourse. And not just any way of defining the totality will do. It must be organized by something other than the state (Warner, 2005: 68).

A public is *organised by something other than* the state. In other words a public is something other than that which is implied by state citizenship. A public is a 'relation among strangers' (Warner, 2005: 74). This is implied in his earlier points: if we understand a public to be self-organised, to be formed through shared attention to an address, it follows that this public will be made up of individuals who do not necessarily know one another. For example, the public of an exhibition, programme, or publication includes those who visit in person as much as those who view documentation online; the members of its public have not chosen to be part of a group due to its members but due to its content or discourse; they do not know each other and nor do they need to come to know each other. An individual can be part of a public without engaging with the other members. This is one of the most useful factors within this understanding of publics, as it allows for an appreciation of strangers as 'already belonging to our world', as Warner writes: 'we are routinely oriented to them in common life. They are a normal feature of the social' (Warner, 2005: 75). Publics, therefore, offer us an alternative way to engage with strangers: rather than only the unknown, they represent the possibility for us to enter into a wider public.

A public is addressed in a manner both personal and impersonal ('our partial nonidentity with the object of address in public speech seems to be part of what it means to regard something as public speech' [Warner, 2005: 78]). Contrary to Althusser's interpellation example, whilst public speech might seem to address us, this is 'by virtue of our participation in the discourse alone' (Warner,

2005: 78), and as such we will also recognize that this address is directed at many unknown others. Continuing with the case of an exhibition or publication, there are two forms of register: on the one hand, we may strongly identify with the content exhibited. Perhaps it addresses issues of a particular social group of which we are part, or a discourse we find particularly urgent; perhaps we know an artist involved or have a particular connection to the works shown. On the other hand, with all this in mind, we still have a sense that the exhibition's broader narrative is not meant, directly, for us—it is not a one-to-one statement, but a public address; we have the sense that others may identify or disidentify with it. This could be shown clearly, for example, with an exhibition addressing the climate crisis: something which we may feel speaks to us on a personal and direct level—which causes us to shift day to day actions – but we also know this to be part of a wider and necessarily public conversation. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly for us, a public is a form of world making. Following Warner, 'writing to a public helps to make a world insofar as the object of address is brought into being partly by postulating and characterizing it' (Warner 2005: 91). This will be crucial in thinking through the public that might be brought into being through being addressed by an art organisation: only by engaging in a kind of propositional world-making, enacting that which we want to see in the world, can we understand the publics that would form around these discourses. To summarise: a public for Warner is self-organised, separate from the state, and formed through attention to the circulation of discourse.

Warner's description of counterpublics makes reference to the work of Nancy Fraser, particularly her 1990 essay 'Rethinking the Public Sphere'. Fraser credits Habermas' framing with being essential to how we understand the public sphere today, but disagrees with him on some key aspects. She notes how Habermas stressed the singular nature of the bourgeois conception of the public sphere, and that a fragmentation of this into multiple publics would be a sign of decline; furthering the narrative that 'the institutional confinement of public life to a single, overarching public sphere is a positive and desirable state of affairs, whereas the proliferation of a multiplicity of publics represents a departure from, rather than an advance toward, democracy' (Fraser, 1990: 66). For Fraser, the idea of multiple publics is actually more useful. She writes that in the context of a 'single, comprehensive, public sphere', subordinated groups would have 'no arenas for deliberation among themselves about their needs, objectives, and strategies' (Fraser, 1990: 66). Indeed, she holds

that the bourgeois public was never *the* public: counterpublics always existed. She terms these *subaltern counterpublics*: 'parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs' (Fraser, 1990: 67). This conception of counterpublics is foundational to Warner's. The same is true of Fraser's stance that multiple publics and counterpublics more accurately describe the reality of society, and that the contestation and difference that this permits is actually beneficial to 'the ideal of participatory parity' (Fraser, 1990: 66), insofar as involvement from multiple publics, even as it is perhaps characterised by conflict, and even without achieving equity between them, is closer by far to an ideal of an inclusive society than one which acts as though subordinate groups do not exist.

Warner extends this concept of the counterpublic: for him a counterpublic, like a public, still 'comes into being through an address to indefinite strangers', but importantly, it marks itself off against a dominant public, and is constituted of a discourse which may be regarded elsewhere with hostility—addressees may be 'socially marked by their participation in this kind of discourse' (Warner, 2005: 120). The counterpublic can be understood as a space of dissent: while any public is formed through attention, counterpublics are those which offer a connection that members may actively be seeking, and which is not found amid a more mainstream public. Warner speaks to the possibility found in the idea of the counterpublic: that, freed from the discursive norms of a wider public, the counterpublic offers something potentially transformative to its members, a space to model new forms of speech and ways of living against the norm. He notes, for example, that within a queer counterpublic, 'no-one is in the closet: the presumptive heterosexuality that constitutes the closet for individuals in ordinary speech is suspended' (Warner, 2005: 120). Indeed, the concept of the counterpublic makes certain forms of political speech possible in much the same way that the concept of the bourgeois public sphere disallows them. Of course, while the idea of a counterpublic could be read as a grassroots, emancipatory form, this doesn't speak to its content or the direction of its political views, which could as easily be espousing hate speech as a radical left-wing agenda.

In terms of the publics addressed by art institutions, we could understand a counterpublic as, for example, a public formed around a text, exhibition, or organisation which is actively

dissenting—for example, an arts festival championing queer or trans issues or an organisation with a specifically political message. We might think here of Migrants in Culture, set up in 2018 as an advocacy network aiming to challenge the impact of the UK's Hostile Environment policy on the cultural sector, which champions forms of radical imagination (Migrants in Culture, 2018). A counterpublic may be a space in which we can model things differently, and navigate hostile environments, outside of what is possible within the norms of our society. But a counterpublic could also be that which came out in *support* of London's LD50 Gallery in 2017, after it was accused of promoting extreme alt-right ideology and Islamophobia (Ellis-Peterson, 2017). A counterpublic holds a particular identity, which ultimately stands for something which marks out its members as 'other'—whatever our associations with this are.

To summarise, counterpublics are a social space created by the circulation of discourse *against* a dominant public and its discursive norms. A counterpublic can represent, and has an important role in constituting the political reality of, the subaltern, in Spivak's sense (Spivak, 1988). These counterpublics present a further critique of the concept of the bourgeois public sphere: public discourse, and indeed public space, must be understood as something plural. An overarching and total public sphere is, in its nature, a highly privatised, policed, and exclusive space. With this in mind, for an art institution to address a 'general' public would be equally flawed; both in the sense that the perceived generality of 'the' public is false, and in that the art institution as a space open to publics will be differently experienced by these multiple publics and counterpublics.

1.3 Public Order

What happens to our sense of publicness, and of public space, if we reject the generality of an overarching public sphere? The idea of the general public is a trope often used against actual publics: imagining riots as disorder without cause, without systemic maltreatment at their core—the crowd or mob to be silenced by police, its specific grievances unheard, for the sake of the security of a general public. Nina Power describes acts of policing in the name of public order. She considers the imagined, good public: 'the acceptable public, the one invoked by the state in the name of the preservation of order. This is the mute, static public used against the mobile,

protesting public.' (Power, 2012, n.p.) What defines this 'good public'? It could be characterised as the intended public of 'public good' in the sense of how we might refer to a National Health Service as a public good. This is ultimately an abstract public, for whom we might determine the general enrichment of public services as directed towards. But what happens when this is used to justify, for example, acts of surveillance or crowd control? Whilst acts of policing are justified with regard to public safety, this discounts any 'mobile, protesting public' (Power, 2012, n.p.), instead acting on behalf of a public that may or may not exist. This creates a fragmentation of the public into 'the "good" public that expresses the right opinions, in essence the private bourgeois citizen, and the "bad" public that takes to the streets, opposes state policies, and occupies spaces that do not "belong" to it' (Power, 2016: 593); for Power this *bad* public is the *true* public, but could also be an example of a counterpublic, organised against the idea of a dominant, national public.

We could similarly consider the 'security' measures of what Agamben (after Deleuze) terms the 'Control State' (Agamben, 2013) as radically altering public space and political agency, in the name of a phantom 'public'. Agamben discusses the use of biometrics to identify those entering a particular country, effectively creating a virtual border, in reference to a 2004 project by the Department of Homeland Security in the US (Lichtblau and Markoff, 2004). Agamben's description of the 'Control State' describes how acts of surveillance are carried out in the name of security, much as Power describes acts of policing in the name of 'public' order. Agamben writes how these biometrical apparatuses, originally conceived for criminals (such as optical scanners to record fingerprints, retinal and iris eye structures) now 'tend to move beyond the police stations and immigration offices and spread to everyday life' with inevitable consequences for political identity (Agamben, 2013: 2), as every citizen becomes a potential terrorist in the eyes of the state. Whilst also perpetuating the idea of a general public in whose interest (and in whose name) surveillance and policing is enacted, this further shows us how simply being-in-public is actually a highly regulated experience.

A further understanding of this comes from Egbert Alejandro Martina, whose text 'Policy and Intimacy' looks at how ideas of care, intimacy and 'the good life' in policy and policing intersect with anti-Blackness, specifically in the context of Rotterdam. Martina notes how policies are

enacted in the name of care or safety, as a justification for acts of surveillance and policing. Just as we have seen how demarcating a particular group as *the* public (or indeed, the people) creates a line of exclusion, similarly we can see here that an act of policing in the name of safety is always demarcating the safety of a particular group - safety for whom, from whom? How we understand ideas of what is safe, and whom we deem worth caring for by keeping safe, has implications for our understanding of what it means to be part of a public. As Martina writes, 'safety policies are ways of constituting normative publics' (Martina, 2015, n.p.); invoking a notion of safety as justification for policing demarcates a specific public as needing safekeeping, and another as dangerous. Returning to Power, she writes in 2016 that 'the public in its embodied, human sense [is] currently being stripped bare, such that there will be no more public spaces, only public order' (Power, 2016: 596). How might the formation of publics and counterpublics, as forms of world building, radical imagination, and self-organisation, create new common spaces? Could the art institution play a role in this?

1.4 In Place of a Public Sphere

As we have discussed, if there is no *one* public sphere and in turn no *one* public, this has implications for the art institution and its intended audience, as well as for its workers. In her 2013 text ~~*Public Space*~~, Andrea Phillips described how our assumptions around public space often become apparent only when contested, at the point when the ideal of an open spatial area in which we have free reign is exposed as a fiction. Phillips' text was written in the context of the 2013 Taksim Square and Gezi Park protests in Istanbul, which were violently suppressed by police force, 'impinging on people's rights to the city' and exposed the idea of public space as a fiction (Phillips, 2013: 248). She wrote of the 'concept and enactment' of public space in Europe, traditionally a leisure space gifted by a monarch or state to its public, or the now common occurrence of an international company being given permission to buy land for corporate building on the proviso that it includes some kind of 'public' open space within (Phillips, 2013: 248–9), thus heightening the divide between work and leisure. The state says, this space is for play, and all other spaces become spaces of work: 'the very naming of public space maintains its opposite, the private' (Phillips, 2013: 256). In other words, a public playground seems to mark out all other grounds as

not for play, when in reality the playground itself is subject to rules and regulations. But so-called public space, as Phillips demonstrates, is dynamic; it appears and reappears, depending on context; it might reach the end of its usefulness as a spatial form in one culture just as 'it rises as an urgent need in another' (Phillips, 2013: 248).

Phillips holds that the way we act as citizens is informed—or produced—by the way in which we internalise ideas around public space, writing that 'beyond the by now well-established local problems of any public space—that it is privatized, that it is capitalized, that it is policed and governmentalized... the idea of public space is ingrained very deeply into a psycho-social condition that affects the way we think civility' (Phillips, 2013: 250). Our understanding of publicness, then, is not only a spatial concern, but one of our relation to the state and to each other, which conditions our movements, our thinking, and our production. Phillips' writing presents further evidence of the layers of exclusion which underpin public space and expose a general, public sphere as a fiction. She suggests a reclaiming of the term public space, through placing it *sous rature* or *under erasure*. This concept, derived from Derrida (adopted from Heidegger), is outlined by Phillips in the footnotes of her text as indicating a case 'where a word is completely inadequate but needs to remain in place for reasons of historical, hegemonic or philosophical understanding' (Phillips, 2013: 258, n. 2). In this case, the resulting phrase is '~~Public Space~~', which allows for a kind of knowing denial. Doing so keeps in mind the connotations, intentions, and sometime evils of the spaces called 'public', but allows a move forward.

As a community of art workers, Phillips writes, we are 'implicated in the structuring of publics and their spaces [...]: biennials, exhibitions, public art events, all maintain public space as a fictional utopia that is in fact highly legislated' (Phillips, 2013: 258). In other words, as art workers we actively contribute to the fiction of a public sphere, without always exposing the real terms of engagement. Even when prohibitive entrance fees exclude all except those with disposable income, it is the tendency to still speak as if addressing a wider public: to promote ideas as in need of wide attention, whilst in reality we may be speaking only to a tiny group of our peers. Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic, through forcing significant amounts of programming online, to some extent inadvertently allowed for wider levels of access than had ever been considered previously - exposing

any previous claims to accessibility as a fiction. Phillips suggests that art workers have a responsibility to rethink publics through their work: 'through the structural transformation of the public sphere we create' (Phillips, 2013: 258). The concept of a *public sphere that we create* calls back to Warner's concept of publics as poetic world-making and formed through address. I will return to this idea of transformation enacted by the arts in the closing section of this chapter.

What can be put in place of the public sphere? How might this alter how we think about art organisations? Sheikh (2008) writes of the public sphere that it is based on such specific, nineteenth-century ideas of citizenship and subjectivity that it 'cannot be so easily translated into the modular and hybrid societies of late global capital, into the postmodern as opposed to emerging modern era' (Sheikh, 2008: 29). The historical notion of the bourgeois public sphere is related to the general public of a particular country, and as such, is highly nationalistic. As Sheikh writes, the spatialization of the public was in relation not only to its being a people, but 'always a *specific* people of *sameness*, of a unity that could surpass differences of gender, class and even interest, namely the modern nation-state' (Sheikh, 2008: 34). This unity however, in addition to being in contrast and often conflict with other geopolitical nations, is a construction in much the same way as Habermas' blueprint: it claims a generality and a sameness of experience. The public sphere by these measures is, writes Sheikh, 'part and parcel of the nation-state, established along similar lines of exclusion, of interiority and radical exteriority, and can as such not so easily be disentangled from nationality, or, indeed, from nationalism' (Sheikh, 2008: 34). With this in mind, directing the programming of an art organisation towards a general public is, in practice, directing it towards a specifically nationalistic public. Today, these national publics become even harder to demarcate, and a fixed idea of statehood attached to land is no longer realistic. The contemporary reality of contested borders, the movement of people and of capital, and rising nationalism makes an understanding of a more nuanced form of publicness, and the formation of counterpublics, crucial to understanding the ways of organising which are taking place, and the landscape of what might be considered public.

In the absence of the public sphere, Sheikh proposes what he calls the *post-public*: not as a state after publicness, or a return to before publicness, but rather as 'a double movement of dematerialization

and expansion of what could be considered public', referring to both local and private concerns, economic flows and the geopolitical (Sheikh, 2008: 35). This understanding of the post-public, then, has some similarity with Andrea Phillips' proposal to put public under erasure: to critically reassess its meaning whilst acknowledging the complexity held within the term itself. As Sheikh acknowledges, the post-public is hard to pin down: without attaching it to a particular sphere with clear boundaries, how can it be understood, and further, how can it be utilised? Sheikh writes that 'what must be established, then, are public formations that can exist without the state, even in opposition to it' (Sheikh, 2008: 36). These *public formations* could be examples of publics or counterpublics; both of which, according to Warner, exist outside of the state—with counterpublics more specifically being formed in opposition to the state. Again, whilst the writing of Sheikh, Warner, and Phillips all exists in a left-wing trajectory, these counterpublics formed in opposition to the state in reality exist across the spectrum of political thought.

Prospects for updating the post-public, over a decade on, in some ways seems bleak. The UK has faced over a decade of austerity measures and the desecration of public services (not to mention the impacts of Brexit, Covid-19, and the climate crisis). Rather than future- or post- publics, we might think of publics *after the end of the world*, or indeed *border* publics: those not demarcated by state lines but instead adept at navigating such spaces; existing not in one or the other state but functionally and symbolically located in the border itself. The formation of publics outside of nation state forms, and thinking publics as multiple, is key to understanding publics today—and this has implications for how the art organisation (and other institutions of social and political life) relates to these publics.

1.5 From Assembly to *Cuidadanía*

In a lecture given at the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven in 2011, Isabell Lorey described the rejection of representation within protest movements taking place across Europe, specifically looking at Spain and Greece, to forms of assembly which reject current forms of government, whilst also neglecting forms of organisation that form a collective subject. Lorey reminds us that these non-representationist practices are not a new invention but have their routes both in

anarchism and in 'the Zapatist movement of the 1990s, the anti-globalization and EuroMayDay movement of the 2000s', as well as in the writing of Ranciere who highlighted the contradictions between democracy and representation (Lorey, 2011, n.p.). These movements, Lorey writes, stand by the position that 'a unified identity of the precarious is not possible', but that commonalities 'must be found and invented in debates, alliances and in the struggles themselves' (Lorey, 2011, n.p.). Within the public Lorey describes there are many publics or counterpublics. These need to be able to engage with each other, not necessarily to agree, but to debate and find commonality in order for the wider movement to be successful.

Lorey calls these practices 'presentist democracy': a form of democracy practised in the moment of the assembly. In the *moment* of assembly; this is a public that forms in physical space. We might refer back to one of Warner's forms of public: the 'crowd witnessing itself in visible space' (Warner, 2005: 66). In her 2015 book *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, Judith Butler speaks similarly of the physicality and performativity of assembly, writing that 'acting in concert can be an embodied form of calling into question the inchoate and powerful dimensions of reigning notions of the political' (Butler, 2015: 9). For Butler, the act of assembling bodies articulates something further than that which is voiced:

> It is *this* body, and *these* bodies, that require employment, shelter, health care, and food, as well as a sense of a future that is not the future of unpayable debt; it is *this* body, or *these* bodies, or bodies *like* this body or these bodies, that live the condition of an imperiled livelihood, decimated infrastructure, accelerating precarity. (Butler, 2015: 10)

The actual bodies assembled make visible what is at stake, through their physical presence. This visible crowd is also key for Lorey:

> It is not concerned with the unavoidable exclusions through representation, but operates radically inclusively. In the moment of the assembly, presentist democracy becomes a constituent power beyond the idea of the sovereignty of the people; the

> 'people' proves to be a multitude, the crowd that cannot be bound, tamed and standardised by representation (Lorey, 2011, n.p.).

However in both cases, and picking up Lorey's claim here of the radical inclusivity of presentist democracy, there is a lack here, of those bodies not able to be present in the moment of assembly. In Butler's evocation of bodies needing healthcare, there is surely the same if not more relevance in the visibility of sick, disabled or chronically ill bodies who are unable to physically assemble. Johanna Hedva's *Sick Woman Theory*, which makes reference to Butler's work on precarity, begins from a premise that often those who are the most affected by a particular situation are those unable to be physically present in a strike or protest, whether through practical circumstance, poverty, disability or illness. Hedva gives the example of the Black Lives Matter marches, in which the assuredness of a police presence was in itself a barrier to attending for those most at risk of police brutality or incarceration. They write,

> The inevitability of violence at a demonstration—especially a demonstration that emerged to insist upon the importance of bodies who've been violently un-cared for—ensures that a certain amount of people won't, because they can't, show up. Couple this with physical and mental illnesses and disabilities that keep people in bed and at home, and we must contend with the fact that many whom these protests are for, are not able to participate in them – which means they are not able to be visible as political activists. (Hedva, 2016: 2)

Hedva's text is a demand for the inclusion of sick bodies, and further than this, a claim that those bodies unable to attend are, by the nature of the infrastructures which block them, already engaged in an act of protest: 'Sick Woman Theory is an insistence that most modes of political protest are internalized, lived, embodied, suffering, and no doubt invisible' (Hedva, 2016: 9).

Butler does make reference to the inclusion of bodies not in attendance, noting that their inability to join the assembly is in itself contributing to the cause:

> Not everyone can appear in a bodily form, and many of those who cannot appear, who are constrained from appearing or who operate through virtual or digital networks, are also part of 'the people', defined precisely through being constrained from making a specific bodily appearance in public space, which compels us to reconsider the restrictive ways 'the public sphere' has been uncritically posited by those who assume full access and rights of appearance on a designated platform. (Butler, 2015: 8)

Nonetheless, this does seem to problematise the primacy of physical bodies assembling, and their specific performativity, as is key to Butler's text. How can we reconsider access, in our political organising, and in the form of the assembly? How might we account for different experiences of risk, which directly impact the constitution of assembly, rather than insisting on putting the body on the line? With regards to the publics and counterpublics addressed by the art institution, how can such addresses be accessible in their language, delivery, circulation and form?

Returning to the idea of a protesting public, and with Warner in mind, we can extend the members of a protesting public to include those unable to be present: their attention to the issue is what decides their being part of a public, whilst also considering Hedva's Sick Woman Theory, and that all those who identify with her call to 'all of the "dysfunctional," "dangerous" and "in danger," "badly behaved," "crazy," "incurable," "traumatized," "disordered," "diseased," "chronic," "uninsurable," "wretched," "undesirable" and altogether "dysfunctional" bodies belonging to women, people of color, poor, ill, neuro-atypical, disabled, queer, trans, and genderfluid people, who have been historically pathologized, hospitalized, institutionalized, brutalized, rendered "unmanageable," and therefore made culturally illegitimate and politically invisible' (Hedva, 2016: 10) would themselves form a counterpublic.

On the topic of presentist democracy, with this addendum as to who is counted as present, we can see this as a further way of considering the formation of a public beyond sovereignty (outside of state formations), and in plural: the alliances Lorey describes, between individuals or between counterpublics, are formed through shared attention. Researcher and activist Francesco Salvini (who also goes by the name 'pantxo ramas') wrote in 2013 on the development of

non-representationist politics in Spain and struggles for the 'right to the city' following the 15M mobilisations in 2011. Salvini writes about the forms of political organisation based on the composition of various distinct groups which led to the development of Barcelona en Comú, the citizen municipalist program in office in Barcelona since 2015, an enactment of compositional politics in the city, and a connected rethinking of ideas of citizenship, foregrounding community care, in their accounts from action-based research in Barcelona (2013). Barcelona en Comú is a united progressive electoral group formed of five existing parties as well as members of the Spanish Occupy movement, and various neighbourhood associations. Their electoral programme was drawn up with contributions from 5,000 citizens, with strategic decisions made in a bi-monthly plenary session (Baird, 2015). Salvini focuses on the kind of transversal alliances which might be formed between those who do not recognise themselves, or are denied recognition, as state citizens: a compositional public, or a counterpublic perhaps.

Particularly notable in Salvini's writing is the development of the concept of 'acts of citizenship', stemming from the writing of Egin Isin and Brett Nielsen, which thinks of citizenship beyond institutional representation; as Isin and Nielsen write, 'acts of citizenship should be understood in themselves as unique and distinct from citizenship practices, in the sense that they are also actively answerable events, where the latter are institutional accumulated processes' (Isin and Nielsen, 2008: 10). As Salvini writes, acts of citizenship are understood here as 'disruptive interventions in the public realm which are capable of transforming the parameters of formal citizenship and of instituting new relations in a community' (Salvini, 2013: 36) This implies a less exclusive form than what we understand as *practices* of citizenship (obtaining a passport, exercising the right to vote): any person may undertake an *act* of citizenship, whether or not a recognized state citizen. Indeed, Isin and Nielsen's concept figures a new definition of citizenship entirely: one which is wholly to do with acting in (a) public. Salvini writes, 'focusing on deeds and words thus determines an alternative conception of the polis, as public realm, and of politics, and a different definition of citizenship emerges: a dynamic collection of those performative acts embodied by a mobilised society' (Salvini, 2013: 35). We might see the act of citizenship as, for example, the formation of a counterpublic: breaking away from the fixed social contract. Indeed, Isin and Nielsen write of these acts that they are taken by those who *refuse, resist or subvert* (Isin and Nielsen, 2008, 38): those who

do not feel represented or refuse representation. Equally, as Salvini writes, 'acts of citizenship are always constitutive of something new, breaking away from the fixed social contract and involving the other in the production of alternative regulative frameworks for social life' (Salvini, 2013: 40). Something is constituted in the act of mobilisation; this could equally be Power's bad public, or a counterpublic; in Salvini's writing we can see the potential of such formations to change the political order.

Gerald Raunig also refers to the movements within the municipalities of Spain, the 'new municipalismos', as an anomaly in the context of 'a Europe marked by institutional racism, new fascisms, and an aggressive middle frantically shifting to the right' (Raunig, 2016, n.p.) with the potential to reconfigure institutional forms. Both Lorey and Raunig make reference to the writing of the Madrid-based queer-feminist activist group Precarias a la Deriva and their concept of *cuidadanía*, a care community: 'the Spanish neologism *cuidadanía* conjoins (state) citizenship (*ciudadanía*) with care (*cuidado*), and so suggests a new way of living together socially, politically, legally, economically, and beyond the (nation-)state border regime' (Lorey, 2015: 429). Within such a care community, in response to the multidimensional care-crisis in which we have been living for some time, interdependence in response to our shared condition of precarity is emphasised over the logic of autonomy and the ideal neoliberal subject (Precarias a la Deriva, 2004, n.p.). Emma Dowling similarly draws on the example of municipalist movements in Europe as an example of how the care crisis might be overcome, suggesting that 'a form of care municipalism based on public funds and non-profit ownership models could offer a democratic locale for the negotiation of participation, ownership and the allocation of resources' (Dowling, 2021: 205). Care, then, is here at the centre of rethinking publics, and key to the transformation of institutional forms. I will return to this in the chapters that follow.

1.6 Publics and the Art Institution

In light of the present, multifaceted crisis (described by Fraser as 'economic, ecological, social', 'adding up to a general crisis' [Fraser, 2019: 8]), then, what does it matter how the publics of art institutions are formed? It matters because, as we have seen in the work of Warner, Salvini, Lorey,

and others, the possibility of future, care-forward (counter-)publics requires multifaceted, inclusive, community-wide alliances.

If we take publics and counterpublics as formed by an address (and self-organised, separate from the state, addressed through discourse), what might this mean for the art institution? Rather than programming for a pre-existing audience or general public, instead it is the address of the art organisation itself—you could say *the circulation of discourse around and through the art organisation*—which forms the public. This might make space for the address of an institution to be complex, situated, and specific—rather than neutral, and in service of a phantom general public. If we take publics to be, after Warner, a form of poetic world-making, it follows that the address of art institutions has this capacity: to model a world we might want to live in. I will return to this in Chapter 5. This power to form publics gives at once more agency and more responsibility to the institutional address. Understanding the address of the art organisation (and how it might be manipulated) goes hand in hand with thinking through the kinds of publics or counterpublics that an institution would wish to be a part of, to foster, to offer space to.

Going back to the writing of Salvini, if an act of citizenship could be within the address of an art organisation, how would this alter the publics that formed around it? Salvini's writing on compositional politics and acts of citizenship poses the possibility of these acts enacted by individuals and groups as well as social institutions—imagining acts of citizenship in the form of care enacted by the arts, education, and healthcare. As discussed in section 1.4 above, Phillips suggests that art workers have a responsibility to rethink publics through their work: 'through the structural transformation of the public sphere we create.' (Phillips 2013: 258). This is taken further in later writings of hers, such as her 2017 paper 'Reclaiming participation: arts centres and the reinvention of social condensation' in which she suggests the transformation of arts centres from within:

> Just as arts centres have morphed into sites of the performance of neoliberalism, so they could transform again into locations where we test and perform practices of equality on a daily basis: not just through the making of exhibitions and events but through equal

> staffing and pay structures, through fair pricing, through the maintenance of equality within our collegiate relationships and through the recognition of the intelligences of our audiences. (Phillips, 2017)

Further to this, at the 2017 Contemporary Art Society conference in London, Phillips proposed *management* as a site of contemporary political struggle, and not in the ways we might expect (such as exploitation of workers or micromanagement under contemporary capitalism), but rather a site of struggle in how we manage institutions—with management as key to their transformation in real terms (Phillips, 2017). Might the address, then, be located not only in programming, but in the institution itself? Not only its exhibitions, but also the kind of language it uses, the artists it works with, the informal things we have heard about it, the way its staff interact with visitors, its modes of organising, its working structures, and its policies—all of these elements form part of the address of an organisation, feeding into our idea of it, building a narrative around it, and so influencing our choice to be a part of its public. In describing the nature of curatorial research, Sheikh noted how elements such as design structures and modes of display are 'an integral part of the curatorial mode of address, its content production, its proposition' (Sheikh, 2015: 40). This is nowhere more apparent than with the display-structure driven Eastside Projects, whose series of function shows (*Trade Show*, *Display Show*, *Production Show*, to name a few) articulated the strength that form and design can have in exhibition making. Indeed, one of Eastside Projects' early policy statements reads *we do not make art for the public, we are the public that makes art*, which in some ways could be seen to echo the idea of a public formed by address: not making art for a particular public, but simply making art and seeing what kind of public might form in response.

With this in mind, we can see how the address is located not only in the external practices of an organisation, but also its internal practices, which might include things like display structures, accessibility, working policy. This is visible, for example, in our responses to conflicted sponsorship deals (such as BP's sponsorship of major art organisations) or in reviews not only of content but of working practice (such as the 2018 piece by The White Pube on the Liverpool Biennial [de la Puente, 2018]). These aspects contribute to the address of an organisation. The ways we work, which of course contribute to the informal discourse around our organisations, form part of our

address. As Sheikh writes, 'an institution institutes through more than its programming, but does so also in its spatial production, social relations within the workplace, production of subjectivity as spectatorship, and thus, in general, its instituted social imaginaries' (Sheikh, 2017: 8). How would it change the address of an organisation to apply the same thought, the same rigour and criticality, with which we form our artistic programmes, to institutions themselves, from management to working culture? Bringing internal and external practices into alignment is one of the main focuses of this research, as I will expand on in Chapter 2.

1.7 Prefigurative Institutions

This reflection of content within the mode of organisation is exemplified within *prefigurative politics*. Prefigurative politics holds that the nature and method of one's organising must be in keeping with both the politics at hand and the eventual goal. Following this, curator and writer James McAnally writes of what he terms the 'prefigurative institution':

> If we create a structure based on individual competition and success, or one of horizontal power and shared resources, of justice and love, we are also 'instituting' that in the world. The structure manifests something that we believe, as well as forwards a kind of ideology. The forms we adopt as institutions, or those we agree to participate in, speak to the assumptions we have about the world. In discussing institutional forms and futures, we are equally considering the form and futures of a world in light of our present crises (McAnally, 2017, n.p.).

Extending this, if the art institution is to follow through with the intentions of its programming, its management and working structures should follow the same concerns. In order to meaningfully address and retain publics, the organisation itself, not only its public rhetoric, should follow the commitments of its programming. Returning to Phillips' suggestion that we might readdress the idea of 'public' through 'the structural transformation of the public sphere we create' (Phillips 2013: 258), the structures of art institutions themselves are key to their formation of publics. With Hedva (2016) in mind it is therefore necessary to build access into the very structures of art

institutions, if we aim to address diverse publics. If the address of the art institution is in its internal workings as well as its public programme, and if addressing publics is a form of world-making, then forming publics in intentional and care-forward ways is one way that art institutions can contribute to building more equitable futures. It is this question of the structures of institutions, and how they might model forms of care, that my second chapter will contend with.

2

Instituent Imaginaries and the Care Fix

In this chapter, I chart a number of ways of thinking about institutions, beginning from the perspective outlined in Chapter 1: that an institution's mode of address is situated not only in its public output, but also in its infrastructure and modes of working. I begin by connecting the present research project to the legacy of institutional critique, before looking in some depth at the writing of Gerald Raunig on what he terms 'instituent practice', and the connection he draws to Foucault's concept of *parrhesia*, a concept also taken up by Simon Sheikh as a frame for thinking about how the art institution could practise care of the self. I then look at the field of institutional analysis, and how this has been taken up in the work of art institutions, before examining the evidence for a crisis of care in the sector, characterised by a series of ruptures which make visible a disconnect between the outward programmes and the internal workings of art institutions. I use Sara Ahmed's writing on complaint as a way to think about how critique can function in the art institution, and how experiences of complaint often have an impact on the health of the complainant. In order to further connect theories of institutional analysis and complaint to the art institution, I introduce the example of *Building as Body*, a project by Manual Labours and Nottingham Contemporary. I conclude the chapter by outlining what Emma Dowling terms the 'care fix', how this might apply to the field of art, and the need to look to other fields for a more in depth understanding of theories of care.

2.1 Legacies of Institutional Critique

One of the core topics in this thesis is instituting and instituent practice, both as applied to a situated study of the instituent practices of Eastside Projects, and as part of a wider discourse about the practices of (art) institutions. This project is indebted to and in some ways continuing a legacy of institutional critique, defined by Julia Bryan-Wilson as work which 'interrogates the ideological, social and economic functions of the art market' (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 89) and which, at its best, shows how institutions 'are implicated in larger cultural and social phenomena far outside the

strictures of art consumption such as surveillance, nationalism, and advertising' (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 91–2).

Bryan-Wilson notes how initial forms of institutional critique in the 1960s and 1970s were enacted by artists performing a critique against the institution which in many cases bought and exhibited their work:

> Artists have addressed how the museum is a specific architectural space (Michael Asher) that collects and classifies objects (Marcel Broodthaers), is dependent on corporate funds (Hans Haacke), is buttressed by networks of interpretation (Andrea Fraser), is implicated in long-standing systems of racial inequalities (Fred Wilson), and is embedded in distribution and publicity systems such as the art magazine (Dan Graham). (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 91)

Bryan-Wilson notes how a second wave of institutional critique in the 1980s and 1990s reflected on these practices, but now also implicated the artist's role within the institution, exemplified in the writing of artists such as Brian O'Doherty's 1986 *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* and Hans Haacke's 1986 *Museums: Managers of Consciousness*, in which Haacke elucidates the impact of corporate sponsorship on museum policy (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 101). She also notes how these forms of critique were essentially subsumed within the art institution, giving the example of the Guerilla Art Action Group (GAAG) which was invited by MoMA to reprise its protests against their board members' connections to the manufacture of napalm during the Vietnam War, as part of their programme.

In the mid-2000s, Simon Sheikh, Andrea Fraser, Gerald Raunig, as well as Bryan-Wilson, wrote of a third wave or continuation of institutional critique coming from within the institution itself, its curators and workers, in the form of programmed events and discussions which criticised the institution from within. Bryan-Wilson suggested this might be a professionalisation of institutional critique, as 'young artists and up-and-coming arts administrators cut their teeth on the premise that

the museum itself is a loaded space' (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 103). Writing in 2005, artist Andrea Fraser proposed that:

> [...] Just as art cannot exist outside the field of art, we cannot exist outside the field of art, at least not as artists, critics, curators, etc. And what we do outside the field, to the extent that it remains outside, can have no effect within it. So if there is no outside for us, it is not because the institution is perfectly closed, or exists as an apparatus in a 'totally administered society', or has grown all-encompassing in size and scope. It is because the institution is inside of us, and we can't get outside of ourselves. (Fraser, 2005: 282)

There is seemingly a contradiction in Fraser's essay, which at once states that we are 'trapped within our field' (Fraser, 2005: 283), and that the art world is deeply connected to, for example, neoliberal economic policy, rising debt, and the real estate market. Sheikh writes of a confusion in Fraser's text, in 'the simultaneous attempt to integrate the art world into the current (politico-economic) world system and the upholding of a "we" of the artworld itself' (Sheikh, 2006: n.p.). Indeed, Fraser's claim that 'what we do outside the field... can have no effect within it' (Fraser, 2005: 282) seems to place a divide which obstructs the potential of practices of both art and instituting which might have some impact on the wider context. Similarly, Raunig writes of Fraser: 'contrary to all the evidence of the manifold effectivity not only of critical art practices throughout the entire 20th century, she plays a worn-out record: art is and remains autonomous, its function limited to the art field' (Raunig, 2006: n.p.).

I would rather take forward the understanding of the institution as put forward by Bryan-Wilson:

> Any curriculum for institutional critique will need to keep alive this activist, even utopian, component. It will need to understand that the 'institution' in question is still just as broadly defined as its earliest practitioners imagined: not merely a physical set of walls and rooms, but the labyrinthine procedures of capitalism itself. As such, these institutions are contradictory – bound with corporate interests, fraught with ideological agendas, but also

> vibrant with real moments of pleasure, knowledge, and resistance. (Bryan-Wilson, 2003: 106)

Bryan-Wilson's text offers the possibility, not to historicize institutional critique (and indeed, present it within the art institution as its sole destination and context), but to utilise it as a tool in the ongoing work of both artists and institutions. In reference to Bryan-Wilson, Sheikh writes, 'one can then see institutional critique not as a historical period and/or genre within art history, but rather as an analytical tool, a method of spatial and political criticism and articulation that can be applied not only to the art world, but to disciplinary spaces and institutions in general' (Sheikh, 2006: n.p.).

This more adaptable, mutable form of critique is reflected in Gerald Raunig's writing on instituting and instituent practices. In his paper 'Instituent Practices: Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming', Raunig discusses the potential of instituent practices as a process of ongoing instituting, rather than a process of gradually 'becoming institution [sic] in the sense of constituted power' (Raunig, 2006: n.p.). He describes the process as one of *exodus*—not in terms of withdrawal from the institution, but rather through 'betraying the rules of the game' (Raunig, 2006: n.p.). This entails a departure from the two previous iterations of institutional critique by drawing something from each: working from a position of ongoing self-questioning (not imagining an artificial distance from the institution), but also not fixating on complicity within it. If the process of instituting—whether one of becoming, or of reconfiguring—allows for a particularly porous (art) institution to form, how does this change the publics to whom it speaks? What would it mean to attempt to institute this porousness, to hold an art institution in an ongoing state of becoming? In Chapter 4, I will focus on a process of instituent practice at Eastside Projects, and how this impacted on the institution.

Writing in 2008, Nina Möntmann described the potential for some smaller art institutions to function as the so-called 'wild child', with the ability to enact a more radical address than the more established institution. Möntmann was writing towards the end of what has been called 'New Institutionalism', a term describing practices of curatorial, educational, and administrative

practices from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, which 'endeavoured to reorganize the structures of mostly medium-sized, publicly funded contemporary art institutions, and to define alternative forms of institutional activity' (Kolb and Flückiger, 2013, n.p.). In this context, exhibitions and the art institution itself moved away from the display of objects towards more expanded forms of curatorial practice, which might include reading groups, discursive events, residencies and social practice. The role of art institutions themselves was rethought, with Charles Esche for example proposing that of a community centre (Kolb and Flückiger, 2013, n.p.).

Möntmann, at the time curator of the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art (NIFCA), writes of a difference between art institutions and institutions more broadly, arguing that 'art institutions also have a certain subversive social potential not enjoyed by other institutions which, indeed, exist in order to regulate and legitimate a certain hegemonic social form' (Möntmann, 2008: 2). For Möntmann, this choice to move away from being 'the executive organ of direct governmental instructions and regulations' (Möntmann, 2008: 2) means operating without a stable economic framework, as many public funding sources come with guidelines on political neutrality. Able to reject, to some extent, capitalist ideals of productivity and consumerism, this small art institution as wild-child is able to replace its overproduction of entertainment-like events with 'a concentrated programme giving visitors the option of positioning themselves, beyond mere consumption, as active participants in the institution' (Möntmann, 2008: 4). While this is a noble aim (and situated in the time that Möntmann is writing in), this focus on scale seems misplaced. Why is it that we ask more of the small organisation, as opposed to its more established institutional counterpart? Is the institution with secure funding and larger resources not better placed in many ways to rethink its programming, and take on any potential risk? Further, Möntmann's focus on the art institution as being at odds with other institutions misses a significant point, that the institutions of art are also part of regulating and legitimating social forms. In many ways the institutions of art are vital to the neoliberal project, in that they present social progressiveness, whilst being deeply tied to competition and global finance.

A contemporary reading of institutional critique by the curator Karen Archey speaks to this connection between the institution of art and institutions more broadly. In her book *After*

Institutions (effectively a catalogue essay for a Stedelijk Museum exhibition of the same name which, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, never opened), Archey positions a contemporaneous wave of institutional critique as artistic practices that address institutions on a more expansive scale, not only the art institution: here, institutions of policing, of healthcare, and of incarceration, to name a few, are the target (Archey, 2022). Whilst she speaks to a present moment shaped by movements such as Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, and #MeToo, Archey suggests that this wave of institutional critique can also be applied to historical works addressed not only to the institution of art, but to the interwoven fabric of state institutions which shape our lives (Archey, 2022), arguing that the first step to changing our institutions is highlighting how they operate.

2.2 Institutions of the Common

I now turn to a fuller examination of the work of Gerald Raunig on instituting and instituent practice. In his 2013 text 'Flatness Rules: Instituent Practices and Institutions of the Common in a Flat World', Raunig makes reference to the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their 2009 book *Commonwealth,* in which they define our common wealth as being both 'of the material world—the air, the water, the fruits of the soil, and all nature's bounty' as well as 'those results of social production that are necessary for social interaction and further production, such as knowledge, language, codes, information, affects, and so forth' (Hardt and Negri, 2009: viii). These are not, however, imagined only as inexhaustible resources, but rather as part of an ongoing act of cultivation. Raunig describes these as 'practices of interaction, of care, of living together in a common world. These are practices that do not consider humanity as being separate from nature, neither in the logic of exploitation nor in that of protection' (Raunig 2013: 169). Adding to Hardt and Negri's categorization, Raunig posits a third aspect of common wealth: 'the common as the self-organization of social cooperation... the political project of instituting the common' (Raunig 2013: 170). He goes on to set out two connected ways of doing this work to institute the common: (i) instituent practice, and (ii) the institution of the common. In this section, I start with the latter.

Raunig asks: 'what would become of institutions in the art field, if they became institutions of the common?' (Raunig 2013: 170). Whilst *institutions of the commons* seems as though it could overlap

with ideas of the institution as agent of the state, focusing on access to all, universal appeal, and the neoliberal focus on visitor numbers above all other metrics of success, this is not what Raunig means. Rather, he takes issue with both a historical conception of the art institution (ultimately exclusionary and elitist) and a more contemporary, 'big society', market-driven version, which he categorises as 'modulating': changing its form to follow the market whilst projecting a veneer of being for everyone. He writes: 'We can still reject the choice [...] between a modulating or exclusionary positioning of the art institution: there is a possibility for disobedience to the alternatives of adapting to the neoliberal mainstream or returning to an elitist figure of verticality' (Raunig 2013: 172). Therefore, he regards the art institution as not only defined by being part of the state or market, but also as not able to exist wholly outside of these forms. Being *part* of the state apparatus means that the art institution is in a position to contribute to the transformation of the state apparatus.

That we are in a moment of multiple crises (of both state and market) necessitates this transformation: 'it is exactly at the crisis-related rupture of the art institution that an offensive becomes imaginable, which consciously impels the transformation from "public institutions" to "institutions of the common"' (Raunig 2013: 172). Raunig explains that this point of crisis in which only fragments of the state remain is exactly the point at which to restructure the state—while it still functions, albeit vestigially. Whilst it may seem a leap to suggest that the art institution may have the ability to reinvent the state, Raunig's point here is that the art institution (in receipt of public funding, presumably) is both *part* of the state, and also more able to work experimentally, autonomously, and politically than other state institutions (of science or education, for example) (Raunig 2013: 172–3). This is to some extent an echo of the exceptionalism proposed by Möntmann—the art institution as separate from other institutions of public life—but at least here with a recognition that the art institution is also part of the state apparatus. Raunig notes a so-called radical turn in artistic, institutional, and curatorial practice which begins to do such work, citing Manuel Borja-Villel's tenure as director of MACBA in Barcelona, with curator Jorge Ribalta, which positioned the museum as an active participant in social movements.

Moving forward, Raunig gives a more concrete framework for an institution of the common, describing its three core attributes (Raunig 2013: 173–5) as follows. In terms of content, the institution of the common would neither reproduce nor replace the canon, but rather would investigate and deconstruct its colonial entanglements, working across geopolitical contexts. In terms of modes of production, it would be transparent about the flow of capital, and question and re-territorialize time management, finding commonalities between workers:

> [...] between the curator burned out by the extreme time regime of the exhibition business and the outsourced security person, between the museum director worn down by political turf wars and the cleaner with no residence permit, between the underpaid head of collections and the gallery educator constantly on stand-by. (Raunig 2013: 174)

Finally, in terms of audience, the institution of the common would use its resources for what Raunig describes as 'the production and treatment of political-aesthetic problem complexes' (Raunig 2013: 175) rather than in pursuit of all possible audiences at whatever cost; in other words, the resources of the institution of the common would be directed towards social and political activity, in the form of programming, rather than focused on visitor numbers and market success. Referring back to Chapter 1, we can see that the publics of the institution of the common would be formed in their attention to both its programming and its modes of production.

To return to Möntmann, she raises the question of how an art institution might rid itself of the learnt strategies of surviving in the neoliberal machine, after it has 'internalized the mechanisms of the free job market', 'understaffed and overworked' (Möntmann, 2008: 5). She proposes a process of stocktaking, which must begin from within: 'the attempts begin with the structure of the institution's own institutional and institutionalized work [...] as well as the orientation of its programme and its formats' (Möntmann, 2008: 5). Möntmann describes how a project she organised, *Opacity*, involved artists in organisational thinking:

> [...] in a combination of public and non-public events, it was a matter of involving artists (whose participation in institutional processes is normally restricted to presenting the

> results of their work to a public in the exhibition space) in the institutional processes of planning and decision-making which, indeed, in fact corresponds to their position as active co-producers in the art industry. (Möntmann, 2008: 6–7)

This involvement of artists in institutional processes, acknowledging their role as co-producers of the art institution, is typical of Möntmann's work at this time and of New Institutionalism. Möntmann's description of the art institution as wild child does echo some of Raunig's concept of the institution of the common; this would be, she writes, a 'transgressive institution positioning itself in its relations to various publics, including minorities, against the populist conception of a public in consumer society [...] creating alternatives to the event economy, involving its local publics and networking internationally [...] temporarily retreating in order to have sensible communication in closed thematic workshops' (Möntmann, 2008: 7). The 'wild child' institution described by Möntmann addresses multiple publics, and has periods of retreat built into its structure.

2.3 Instituent Practice

We will now turn to Raunig's second way of thinking about instituting the common: instituent practice. Whilst giving some examples of existing transversal practices which sit between art and activism, (including the work of Isola Art Centre, which I will come to in Chapter 5) on the whole, he categorises these as 'delicate beginnings, prototypes of a future practice' (Raunig 2013: 175) rather than a norm. In thinking through the activity of institutional critique, in the sense of the critique of particular institutions, he holds that the institution of the common would, in ideal circumstances, do this work itself, with artistic production's institutional critique taking instead the more active form of offering 'proposals for a good life, suggestions for possible new worlds' (Raunig 2013: 176), moving from critiquing concrete institutions, towards an active form of instituting. This is what Raunig calls *instituent practice*.

Raunig defines instituent practice as an 'actualization of the future in a current becoming': a form of continuous world-making (Raunig 2013: 176). The concept of instituent practice refers to

Antonio Negri's *constituent power*: a power which constitutes itself, at odds with *constituted*, state power. Constituent power, for Negri—the power of the multitude, existing outside of the state, a mobile counterpublic, perhaps—will never be completed. Rather, 'the institution should become a continuously open reality in which constituent power would not be excluded but integrated. An institution in permanent becoming' (Negri, 2008: 109). Raunig holds that instituent practice, in turn, is self-instituting. As such, it has two temporalities: 'on the one hand, the component of what is eventual in the instituting; on the other, the component of sustainability, of insisting, of always newly starting again' (Raunig, 2013: 176). In other words, there is the event or moment of instituting, and there is the ongoing process of instituting. For Raunig, these are not at odds, but rather make up together the very nexus of instituent practice: something that is always beginning, remains in a state of becoming, and resists becoming concrete.

In an earlier text from 2006, 'Instituent Practices: Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming', Raunig elaborates on his concept of instituent practice. He refers back to the concept of critique, this time via Foucault, and its role in transforming forms of governance in line with our above discussion of how the institution of the common might contribute to the transformation of the state apparatus. He notes how Foucault, in his 1978 lecture 'Qu'est-ce que la critique?', charts the spread of governmentality in Western Europe in the sixteenth century, and how critique developed 'as the art not to be governed *like that*', and posits that the relationship between *'government* and *not to be governed like that*... [is] a prerequisite today for reflecting on the contemporary relationship between institution and critique' (Raunig, 2006: n.p.). Foucault writes that, in the concern with governmentality and the search for ways to govern, 'we identify a perpetual question which could be: how not be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them' (Foucault, 1997: 28). Notably, this does not translate as *not to be governed at all*, rather not *like that*. In this, Raunig notes, it is not so much a total refusal but rather an ongoing process of instituting (Raunig, 2006: n.p.). Foucault thus describes critique as 'both partner and adversary to the arts of governing, as an act of defiance, as a challenge, as a way of limiting these arts of governing and sizing them up, transforming them, of finding a way to escape from them or, in any

case, a way to displace them' (Foucault, 1997: 28). This transformation, for Raunig, involves traversing multiple fields, a useful counter to our discussion of Fraser in section 1.1 above ('we are trapped in our field' Fraser, 2005: 105), and the failure of previous iterations of institutional critique to escape the art world.

It is this idea of critique as an *escape* or *transformation* that Raunig picks up on here: 'transformations as ways of escaping from the arts of governing, lines of flight' (Raunig, 2006: n.p.). These lines of flight are not, however, passive refusals, as withdrawal is often posed within the art world. Rather this is an active form of flight ('nothing is more active than fleeing!' write Deleuze and Parnet in *Dialogues* [1977]), portrayed as a figure of resistance, 'fleeing to look for a weapon' (Raunig, 2006: n.p.), but resisting through changing the institution itself. As Raunig writes:

> Flight and exodus are nothing negative [...] but are instead linked and intertwined with constituent power, re-organizing, re-inventing and instituting. The movement of flight also preserves these instituent practices from structuralization and closure from the start, preventing them from becoming institution in the sense of constituted power. (Raunig, 2006: n.p.)

This conception of instituting as an ongoing practice of critique which has the capacity to change the structures of institutions (or indeed to resist forming such structures) has been formative in my research and in the approach adopted in the project with Eastside Projects discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.4 On *parrhesia*

In Raunig's exposition of critique, he directs us to the concept of *parrhesia* as detailed in Foucault's lectures 'The Courage of Truth', given at the Collège de France in 1983–84. Foucault describes it as an uncompromising form of truth-telling: to practise *parrhesia* is to speak frankly from a position of exposed vulnerability, to speak truth to power, and in so doing to practise a kind of radical care of the self (Foucault, 2008).

Foucault explores the origin and etymology of the term *parrhesia* as a political concept involving speaking truth to power, but also one with a relation to his studies on personal ethics and the moral subject; the two are linked in what he calls 'the government of oneself and others' (Foucault, 2008). As Raunig describes it:

> The classical Greek conception of parrhésia [...] was constituted by the fact that someone was courageous enough to tell the truth to other people. [...] There is a shift from that kind of parrhésiastic game to another truth game which now consists in being courageous enough to disclose the truth about oneself. (Raunig, 2006: n.p.)

Foucault explains how, etymologically, 'parrhésia is the activity that consists in saying everything: *pan rema*. *Parrhésiazesthai* is "telling all." The *parrhésiastes* is the person who says everything' (Foucault, 2008: 9). He writes that the term has been used in both a pejorative and a positive sense: the first in the case of one who says anything and speaks with abandon. Thought positively, *parrhesia* 'consists in telling the truth without concealment, reserve, empty manner of speech, or rhetorical ornament which might encode or hide it' (Foucault, 2008: 10). *Parrhesia* in the sense that Foucault is using it is truth-telling: not speaking all in the sense of saying anything that comes to mind, but rather an urge to speak a personal truth, and to bind yourself to it.

This act of truth-telling requires a second person to be present. This other, Foucault explains, need not be someone of a particular status such as a teacher or a philosopher; their qualifying attribute is rather their relation to the truth-teller: they must be of personal significance. Their role in relation to the truth-teller is one of guidance—whether political guidance or taking care of the soul (Foucault, 2008: 6). This interpersonal relationship is crucial for the nature of *parrhesia*, which must involve an act of courage through risking the relationship in question (both on the side of the one who speaks and the one who listens). As Foucault writes, 'the parrhésiast always risks undermining that relationship which is the condition of possibility of his discourse' (Foucault, 2008: 11). To summarise, *parrhesia* is the act of truth-telling, as a form of care of the self. It involves the speaker taking a risk, and courage on the part of the speaker and the listener. The listener is the one who makes this discourse possible, through their relationship to the speaker.

We can thus see the nature of *parrhesia* as the activity of one who speaks the truth to others, and one who speaks the truth of herself, as an individual. What then of the relationship between the practice of *parrhesia* and the institution? What would it mean for an art organisation to practice parrhésia? Raunig draws a parallel between the two forms of *parrhesia*—speaking the truth *to* the institution or to power, and speaking the truth *of oneself*—and the two iterations of institutional critique that I have outlined, in which the institution is critiqued from outside and from within. Raunig proposes an amalgamation of these two forms of critique, and following this, an amalgamation of the two forms of *parrhesia*: transforming institutional critique through enacting *parrhesia* both as a political action (speaking truth to power) and a personal action (speaking the truth of oneself).

In a paper titled 'Careful and Careless Power', delivered at BAK, Utrecht in 2016, Simon Sheikh looked at Foucault's writings on *parrhésia* to consider the connection of care and power in terms of the institution:

> If it is the first notion, of speaking truth to the powers that be, that have [sic] long informed artistic and political institutional critique, could we also think of institutionality in terms of the latter—the coupling of care of the self and the telling of truth about oneself, and the position of the speaker? (Sheikh, 2016).

Shiekh emphasises the significant and enduring risk inherent in an act of *parrhesia*: not simply telling any truth, but speaking truth of oneself in a manner that holds some amount of danger. He explores what it would mean to speak the truth of oneself: a process of self-reflection and an uncompromising honesty about the position from which you are speaking (Sheikh, 2016). In the case of an art institution, this element of risk could be found in the potential risks that Möntmann discusses, of decoupling from neoliberal funding bodies or in terms of an institution putting its future in jeopardy by speaking truth to power on behalf of a particular cause. Sheikh describes, after Socrates, how the Cynics in ancient Greece understood *parrhesia* as *changing the value of the currency*: a total rejection and rebuilding of an economic system. He posits that an institution

practising care of itself would not try to survive at any cost, but instead aim at being truthful of itself to its publics (Sheikh, 2016). Could we then consider institutions practising care of the self through speaking truth of, not only their artistic programs, and the information they make public, but also their modes of governing and instituting?

As Raunig describes, the truth-teller is involved in a self-critique that 'queries the relationship between their statements (*logos*) and their way of living (*bios*)' (Raunig, 2006, n.p.). If we see the outward facing program of the institution as its statements, or *logos*, and its internal functions as its way of living, or *bios*, then a reconciliation of the two is needed in order to practice *parrhésia* as (self-)care. Raunig positions this as a form of exodus:

> Here exodus would not mean relocating to a different country or a different field, but betraying the rules of the game through the act of flight: "transforming the arts of governing" not only in relation to the institutions of the art field or the institution art as the art field, but rather as participation in processes of instituting and in political practices that traverse the fields, the structures, the institutions. (Raunig, 2006, n.p.)

Remembering that Foucault explains critique as, 'the art not to be governed like that', it follows that a practice of critical (and *care-ful*) *parrhesia* could move towards *transforming the arts of governing* of the institution. So long, that is, as that critique is allowed to actively alter the forms of instituting, not merely performed as a part of its programming only, nor levelled at it from the outside, but enacted within its walls, without deference to or over-identification with the institution itself.

2.5 Institutional Analysis

The field of Institutional Analysis (stemming from Institutional Psychotherapy) remains significant in rethinking the structures of institutions, and has been taken up by some of those who are engaged in the remodelling of art institutions, specifically in relation to care. Institutional Analysis was the name for a radical reframing and collectivisation of mental health care and its

institutions following the Second World War, based on the premise that the institution itself—its organisational structures, the social relationships it produced, the physical environment—was in need of care as much as its patients. I will focus here on the strand of this work coming out of Clinique La Borde, founded in 1953 by Jean Oury, who was soon joined by Félix Guattari. (Francesco Salvini has written extensively on the transformation by Franco Basaglia of the mental asylum in Trieste into a therapeutic community in the 1960s, which I will return to in Chapter 3). In her text 'Can an Institution be Militant?', Susana Caló writes how institutional analysis argued against the secluded and hierarchical conditions of the asylum, as well as rejecting 'the secrecy surrounding the dual analyst-patient relation' (Caló, 2019: 117) rather changing the focus towards the collective. This new collectivity was both in terms of therapy, which became a group endeavour, as well as the work of upkeeping the asylum itself, which was shared among all staff and patients - the involvement of patients in their own environment was seen as crucial. As described by Caló,

> Oury's understanding was that institutions of care were themselves sick and it was necessary to treat them. [...] He developed the idea that, in part, patients' symptoms were an effect of the atmosphere in which they lived [including] social relationships, spatial, and material factors. [...] For Oury and Guattari, an analysis of the institution was fundamental. As Oury put it: To treat the ill without treating the hospital is madness! (Caló, 2019: 120–1)

A key aspect of this was the requirement for patients to take an active role in their treatment and daily lives, as opposed to the more passive role implied in the usual doctor-patient relation: 'the approach of institutional analysis was based on the core principle that patients should take responsibility for their existence' (Caló, 2019: 125). This was enacted by *La Grille*, 'the grid'. Caló writes, 'the grid was a rotational work schedule, divided by tasks and activities. It had the names of people rotating and the amount of time each person would spend on each task or activity per week' (Caló, 2016: 2). Tasks and activities ranged from dishwashing, to cleaning, to doing the laundry. The grid was discussed and reviewed by all those implicated in its tasks. This seemingly simple aspect of institutional work was vital to the work of La Borde, not only in the way it gave patients

responsibility for their own environments, but also in what it made visible, through the process of deliberation and revision of the grid itself:

> The grid allowed mutations of desire and subjective investments to be traced, insofar as these were expressed at the level of institutional dynamics. At the same time, as an organizational protocol it made power relations visible—in particular, all those aspects left outside the traditional doctor–patient relation. It also brought to the forefront relationships existing in the background: the institutional context, its constraints, organization, specific practices, and so on. Each institutional event, material or immaterial, discursive or non-discursive, was given expressive potential. (Caló, 2016: 3)

Similarly, the work of medical professionals also rotated—with different staff members taking on the management of the grid, or giving out medication, etc.—spreading responsibility for the organisation of the hospital. Caló notes how the organisation of the grid was unsurprisingly often a source of conflict, but that this 'was vital in exposing dominant frameworks and making visible the power structures in play' (Caló, 2016: 4). The grid was therefore crucial to the enactment of institutional analysis at la Borde, being the means through which the work of the institution was structured, 'an instrument of collective institutional design' (Caló, 2016: 5). Caló also provides us with a useful reflection on the use of the term institution:

> While in English, the word "institution" conveys forms of social organisation that are close to state institutions, or similarly formal organisations, in French the term "institution" refers to any form of social formation, as well as to that which is "instituted" and therefore to the act of "instituting." (Caló, 2019: 129–30)

Similarly Andrew Goffey notes how the English use of the term 'institution' would better be translated in French as *établissement* (establishment), with institution referring to the *act* of instituting (Goffey, 2016: 38). The concept of institutional analysis is therefore intrinsically linked to a collective and ongoing *instituting* of the hospital.

Institutional analysis has been taken up by art workers as a way to approach the restructuring, and collectivising, of their field. In 2018, as part of a wider programme on institutional analysis, feminist practices and art institutions at Nottingham Contemporary, curator Alba Colomo convened a conversation with Caló and Laurence Rassel (titled, after Guattari, *It is not about what we bring, but to be as less toxic as possible* [sic]). Rassel, director of the École de Recherche Graphique in Brussels, describes how she has rethought this institution using the principles of institutional analysis:

> My motivation to look into institutional psychotherapy was to think of another relationship to the institution other than the neoliberal and paternalistic principles of efficiency, profitability, and arbitrary authority. The violence of this approach is not only felt on the body and the relationships between cultural workers, but also on the type of programme and the way success is measured [...] I can assume the management of an institution only through principles that consider the collective, care, collaborative structures, openness and process-oriented practices. (Rassel, 2018: 9–10)

Rassel has elsewhere described her understanding of institutional analysis as follows: 'if you want to take care of a person, you have to take care of the institution, which means, when the institution is sick, so the people who are patients there will be sick as the institution is' (Rassel, 2018b). In her work at the École de Recherche Graphique, Rassel has taken a collective approach to the organisation of the institution which draws from institutional analysis, rejecting the neoliberal model of education in order to imagine an alternative, one with parallels with Raunig's concept of the institution of the common. Of her approach, Rassel states:

> everything counts, the way the garden is done, the cleaning is done, the cooking is done, is affecting how the people live or are. And also this idea [in institutional analysis] that then the nurse, the cleaning person, the gardening person have their say, have their part in the care function or the cure function, because one of the principles that is important is that the patients are actively related to their cure; so they participate in their own cure. So, this idea that the people working inside the institution are active, to give them the agency, the

> power to act and not to be told what to do, how to do and so on, so forth. Basically, you think that the institution is done by the people who are in [it]. (Rassel, 2018b)

Translating to the art context, then, institutional analysis could mean a collective approach to organising the work of the institution. It also illustrates a circularity between the wellbeing of staff and the institution itself: if one is sick, both are in need of care. Returning to her conversation with Colomo and Rassel, Caló notes that her 'fascination with institutional analysis originated precisely from the fact that "analysis" means the process of intervention and transformation. There is no separation between the analytical process and the transformative process' (Caló, 2018: 10). This is interesting in connection to our earlier discussion, via Foucault, of the ability of critique to transform the arts of governance.

2.6 A Crisis of Care?

In order to undertake instituent practice as a form of world-making, of *parrhésia*, of transforming the arts of governing of the institution, of becoming an institution of the common, the discussion in this chapter has posited that that institution must variously:

- reconcile its *logos* and *bios*;
- address its means of production;
- redirect its resources;
- programme in ways reflective of these concerns.

In all of this, in the background there is the assumption of the existence of a problem: the assumption that this work is *yet to be done*. This is not for lack of writing about the need to restructure the art institution, as I briefly touched on in Chapter 1, with Andrea Phillips' proposal of the management of art institutions as both a site of contemporary political struggle, and key to their transformation. Why does this problem exist, and persist?

In the opening essay for her 2015 research project, *Para-sites like us*, titled 'What is this para-sitic tendency?' curator and educator Janna Graham describes the role of the para-site in contemporary culture. Graham's text situates the para-site as those who work within the framework of the neoliberal institution, but do so with the purpose of carrying out real social justice work, not necessarily with the intention of changing the politics of their hosts, but rather as a way to do their work at all:

> those who sustain work within cultural institutions through ongoing and embedded relationships, those who "sit at the tables" with those at the helms of hegemonic processes, all the while committed to the project of social justice, somewhere else, in direct contact and negotiation with critical social agents. They run para (outside/beside), but also within, and understand themselves neither as autonomous nor as exclusively engaged in struggles framed by the language and concerns of the dominant cultural institutions from which they draw resources. They are organizing for social changes that are located in other sites, in concrete struggles with accountabilities beyond the art world's often hermetic focus on itself or its phantom mirroring of social process. (Graham, 2015: n.p.)

Graham references the political philosopher Brian Holmes' naming of 'the double game of cultural institutions that present radical art and culture with no interest in supporting radical social consequences' (Graham, 2015: n.p.), or as Holmes puts it in the opening to his text, 'when people talk about politics in an artistic frame, they're lying' (Holmes, 2003). Graham's description of the para-site is of one working despite these circumstances; 'not ignorant or neutral with regard to the politics of their hosts,' but using their position, and the resources afforded by it, to contribute to real social justice work happening outside of the institution, 'far away from the ears and feasts of the host body' (Graham, 2015). She situates this in a context of the UK (at the time of her writing in 2015) where a vague commitment to 'community' or 'socially engaged art' is seemingly prioritised by government rhetoric and Arts Council funding aims, at the same time as (and often hand in hand with) a push to cultivate more private donors, with the latter often allocated higher budgets and more resources (Graham, 2015: n.p.).

Utilising Paulo Freire's concept of banking from his 1968 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*—a transactional, one-way knowledge transfer from one *with* to one *without*—Graham describes how the planning and delivery of cultural projects is often mono-directional, imagined as something fulfilling a need, to be packaged and delivered to its chosen audience (either a targeted, often low-income community or an assumed 'general' public of the institution) (Graham, 2015: n.p.). Thus, she writes, while 'a socially progressive education or exhibition program may take place on the level of content, in the process of its production it may reinforce a chain of subjectivations that instills its very opposite' (Graham, 2015: n.p.). Content is permitted to be seemingly progressive, even radical, but as Graham writes, 'the host, while seeming outwardly amenable to progressive social elements, minority communities, etc., is so only when these initiatives and groups coexist with this banking concept and the invisible elements it solidifies' (Graham, 2015: n.p.). It is rare, she holds, that the politics of the para-site is able to impact on the organisational structures, working habits or policies of the host institution. Instead, 'the fundamental difference between commitments to antiracism, anti-imperialism, and problem-posing curricula and these liberal foundations [held by cultural institutions] is often glossed over and neutralized in the speed of spectacle production' (Graham, 2015: n.p.).

One way to understand this trend is as an example of progressive neoliberalism. In her 2019 book *The Old is Dying and the New Cannot Be Born*, Nancy Fraser describes American politics pre-Trump (embodied by Obama and further promised by Clinton) as progressive neoliberalism: 'a real and powerful alliance of two unlikely bedfellows: on the one hand, mainstream liberal currents of the new social movements (feminism, antiracism, multiculturalism, environmentalism, and LGBTQ+ rights); on the other hand, the most dynamic, high-end, "symbolic," and financial sectors of the US economy (Wall Street, Silicon Valley, and Hollywood)' (Fraser, 2019: 11). This repackaging of the neoliberal project as superficially emancipatory, she writes, gave progressive neoliberal policies 'the patina of legitimacy' (Fraser, 2019: 15). Fraser notes how this program was not actually concerned with structural reform, but only with the presentation of apparent progress:

> The progressive neoliberal program for a just status order did not aim to abolish social hierarchy but to "diversify" it, "empowering" "talented" women, people of color, and

> sexual minorities to rise to the top. That ideal is inherently class-specific, geared to ensuring that "deserving" individuals from "under-represented groups" can attain positions and pay on a par with the straight white men of their own class. (Fraser, 2019: 13–14)

We can see this progressive neoliberalism as also applying to the art institution: performing progressive politics whilst actually still engaged in corporate and financial agendas. One example of progressive neoliberalism in the art sector is the pattern of historically white-led organisations responding to criticism and allegations of racism by hiring Black curators into leadership positions without investing time into structural, organisation-wide reform, or engaging critically with institutional histories of racism. In doing so the onus is placed on this individual to solve the institution's problems, at the same time as emphasising a narrative of individual exceptionalism and scarcity, asking them not only to represent a whole community but also to transcend it. We can equally see progressive neoliberalism at play when, for example, art itself (the act of collecting it, or the creation of a public gallery) functions as a 'patina of legitimacy' (Fraser, 2019: 15) for a source of wealth tied into real estate or arms dealing, a not uncommon occurrence, as perhaps exemplified by controversy around London's Zabludowicz Collection due to ties to organisations lobbying for the Israeli state (Boycott Zabludowicz, 2014), or the withdrawal of a number of artists from the 2019 Whitney Biennial over its vice chairman owning a business which allegedly manufactures the tear gas used on asylum seekers at the US-Mexico border (Morgan, 2019: n.p.).

This performance of progressiveness is also noted in the conversation between Caló, Colomo, and Rassel mentioned in section 2.5, as 'the separation between the "said" and the "practice"' (Caló, 2018: 8). As Colomo puts the question, 'why do we allow art institutions to perpetuate this representational model where everything stays at a discursive level without affecting policy, workers or structural changes?' (Colomo, 2018: 8). It is this discrepancy between what is presented and what is enacted by art institutions that we are concerned with here, as a direct counter to the idea of a parrhesiastic institution (one speaking the truth of itself). The widespread visibility of such discrepancy, through a series of ruptures, represents a turning point, or as I argue, a crisis of care within the institution of art.

This contention—that the working structures, the *bios* of art institutions, are at odds with their programming—is both widely accepted and discussed amongst art workers, and also hard to pin down, in that much of it is only evidenced behind closed doors. Returning to Graham, she notes:

> For each of these struggles waged in public, however, there are many more that take place in silence: practitioners who have not found a collective voice, those who feel out of their depths, those who feel that they have too much to lose to speak out, and those whose struggles are represented by artworks and projects within institutions of culture, but who are nowhere near a position in which they might be heard by these institutions. (Graham, 2015)

Individual experiences of problematic working environments are rarely made public. To take one example, it is known, anecdotally at least, that certain organisations have high rates of employee sick leave for mental health, but the power imbalance between individual and institution prevents employees from speaking out publicly about such cases. Moreover, when such working relationships result in the termination of employment, a number of institutions use confidentiality clauses in severance packages. Only the high turnover of staff is left as a clue. The anecdotal nature of this evidence presents a challenge in its study. Nevertheless if we are to examine how the art institution might practise care, we need to understand the ways in which it is currently falling short of this.

What I have called a crisis of care within the art institution can be understood, then, as a moment of rupture, exposing a separation between the *logos* and *bios* of the institution. As this is often obscured from view, it is usually made visible only at breaking point, which interrupts the usual activity of the institution. I will discuss here the case of Bétonsalon, as a recent and very public airing of an internal moment of crisis.

Bétonsalon is an art organisation in Paris, until 2020 under the artistic directorship of Mélanie Bouteloup, one of its founders. In October 2019, the French daily *le Quotidien de l'Art* published a short article titled 'Harcèlement moral à Bétonsalon?' (Moral Harassment at Bétonsalon?),

detailing how Bouteloup had 'been the subject, for several years, of accusations of managerial harassment (which remain confidential) on the part of former employees' with repeated cases of 'sick leave for burnout, non-renewal of fixed-term contracts or contractual terminations' (Lesauvage, 2019: n.p.) and repeated reports to the board of directors. Moral harassment can be understood here as it is used in the French legal system, as pertaining to a series of actions which may lead to, for example, 'deterioration in mental or physical health,' or 'a threat to [one's] professional development' (Service Public FR, 2023). The article notes an interprofessional strike in September 2017, the recruitment of a management coach for Bouteloup in 2018, and in March 2019 an anonymous letter sent to both the board of Bétonsalon, and the relevant authorities in the region, which sparked an internal audit, with around thirty past and current employees interviewed, and ongoing training for Bouteloup (Lesauvage, 2019: n.p.). Bouteloup is quoted in response to these accusations, noting how seriously they have been taken, and stating, 'il y a toujours des erreurs dans une structure' (*there are always errors in a structure*) (Boutelope, in Lesauvage, 2019). In a later article dated June 2020, le Quotidien reported that Bouteloup left her post on 5 June 2020.

Bétonsalon and Bouteloup herself held a well regarded position within the art world internationally, and specifically in that more research-driven side of the field, with Bouteloup writing for a number of publications, and invited to speak often about practices of instituting (for example, *How Institutions Think* at the Luma Foundation in Arles, 2016; *Modes of Instituting* curated by Valerio Del Baglivo for Cittadellarte, 2019; *Towards a possible decalogue for the institution yet to come*, La Casa Encendida, 2020, curated by Ane Rodríguez Armendariz). From an external viewpoint, then, previous to the publication of these accusations, the address of Bétonsalon is of an organisation committed to research—with a relationship to a university—that programmes and thinks on the role of arts organisations in times of crisis, and which has a critical relationship to the notion of institution. It is also an organisation with a large proportion of private funding, a decision made, Bouteloup explains, to allow for more freedom in programming and to avoid the neutrality imposed by public funding; it is not, in her view, an institution as such (Bouteloup, 2019). Whilst one might make certain assumptions based on the nature of Bétonsalon's programming, it is only at the point of rupture, when these accusations are made

public, that we can see that the organisation is in crisis, that there is a disconnect between how it presents itself externally, and how it is experienced internally.

Speaking in 2020, in a conversation with Elvira Dyangani Osé (then director of The Showroom, London, now director of MACBA, Barcelona) titled 'The institution as a place of research', Bouteloup reflected on this situation. In her retelling, we gain a different understanding: of an organisation which expanded and professionalised at great pace, resulting in overwork and exhaustion. She describes both the energy and drive of the organisation, and the impact it had on her health:

> We were always unstable, struggling, there were always urgencies, a necessity to get things done, a kind of impossibility to slow down, because we were full of desires [...] every year it was a bit better, so we thought, let's continue, let's fight. (Bouteloup, 2020)

> At one point there were too many difficulties. I became a mother, we lost our main sponsor, who decided to stop their support, then I had some health difficulties, and people started to accuse me of moral harassment. So this was a big moment that I tried to face, and that we tried to face, with the team, but at one point it just became impossible to face. And my body just dropped me. (Bouteloup, 2020)

The exhaustion of the high level of production in the field is a sentiment shared by Dyangani Ose, who notes how 'we are invited to accelerate, to over do, create content, for a reality and an audience that is not capable to consume [...] there is an absolute need to slow down' (Dyangani Ose, 2020). Whilst Bouteloup's contention that *there are always errors in a structure* might seem a deflection of responsibility, we can see that it also likely holds some truth, and that in this case as in others, there is an external context—the pressure to be the model of a modulating, neoliberal institution—which values high output without the resources to maintain a staff body who can safely deliver such volume. Bouteloup reflects on the ultimate impossibility of the organisation to adapt to all needs (funding, staffing, the needs of artists) and lists the organisation's attempts to work differently:

> We tried to be horizontal, we tried to be feminist, we tried to slow down, we tried to be collective, we tried to raise money, [...] we tried to care... but at one point, you know, when the basis of what you are trying to achieve is weak, and there is something like... like if it was a body with a part missing, somehow, that you cannot walk, or you are walking, but at one point your body is just tired, and exhausted, and then... and I think this is somehow kind of what happened. (Bouteloup, 2020)

Of course, this like any specific situation is one more complex than we can glean from either Bouteloup's accounts, or the reports of accusations of wrongdoing. I include it here not to draw conclusions on the accuracy of either position, but to reflect on a visible disconnect between an external view of an institution and its internal workings. Bouteloup reflects on the standard that art institutions are held to, and how this is at odds with their reality:

> Of course you do mistakes. And somehow, an institution, at some point, is asked not to do any mistakes. Because somehow the institution should be the warrant of professional quality, of care, of stability. And if you don't comply with this then there is something not working and we should somehow denounce it. And I was trying to talk about it - with my partners, the board, the team - but of course, change takes time. [...] and of course it's never enough, and you are doing a lot, and it's never enough. (Bouteloup, 2020)

Whilst Bouteloup's sense of exhaustion here is palpable, and her points relatable, it is notable that those accusing her of moral harassment do so anonymously; as such we do not hear their voices, their stories, the nature of their complaints. Whilst Bouteloup describes the bodily impact of receiving such complaints (*tired, weak, a body with a part missing*), the equally physical impact implied by staff accusations is not spoken. The situation is reported in legal terms, of moral harassment and contractual ruptures, which serve as placeholders for something more interpersonal, the real and long-term impact on these unnamed former staff who are reported to have experienced burn-out and other health concerns as a direct result of their employment at Bétonsalon.

To take Bétonsalon as an example here is not to cast them as the *only* or even *worst* example of a malfunctioning structure, but simply to use this public instance as a framework. In the case of Bétonsalon, we can see that something has been amiss for a number of years within the institution, whilst at the same time its director was frequently writing, lecturing and programming around the future of art institutions. This discrepancy between an internal and external reality of the institution brings us back to the idea of *parrhesia*. Bétonsalon does not seem to have 'spoken the truth of itself' nor practised 'care of the self'. However, this insight into the institution's internal workings is only visible to the wider publics of the institution through a moment of rupture; in this case, the open letter from current and former staff, and the resulting press attention. The knowledge created by this rupture changes the address of the organisation, with publics now having to reconcile their knowledge of Bétonsalon with the new knowledge of alleged harassment. A crisis of care is thus often only seen in moments of rupture across art institutions, the unknown aspects which come out through conversation amongst friends, gossip and anonymous writing, which point to a larger and more systemic issue. Indeed, Bouteloup herself states,

> There are a lot of young people today who don't believe in institutions, they just believe in going into the street. And talking about conditions of work, how places are funded, the problems in the private, and all these things that are not working in the art world, but not only the art world, in society in general. (Bouteloup, 2020)

It is often in this informal conversation, as I noted earlier, that complaints are heard. However I would also like to take some time here to outline some more formal ways in which we gain an insight into the internal workings of institutions.

2.7 Rupture and Complaint

A moment of rupture (when the internal becomes external) can be what alerts us to a longer-term or systemic issue within the institution. There are a number of ways for this to happen:

a. The one-off case or statement, which gives a fleeting and incomplete insight into internal struggle, a kind of temporary break in the institutional facade. This can be seen, for example, when there is a high profile resignation without explanation. Such was the case when, in 2018, the curatorial team at Extra City (Antonia Alampi, iLiana Fokianaki, and Michiel Vandevelde) resigned with a short statement citing 'artistic differences in regards to how [certain] decisions and policies are and will be manifested' (eflux, 2018). It can also be seen when the result of a lawsuit is made public, as with Nikki Columbus' successful lawsuit (settled out of court) against MOMA PS1, who rescinded a job offer based on her pregnancy (Ryzik, 2019), or the 27 National Gallery educators in London who won workers' rights in 2019 (Bowcott, 2019). And it can be seen in individual or group withdrawals from public events, such as the 2012 withdrawal from the Whitney Biennial, on the basis of institutionalised white supremacy, by the collective HOWDOYOUSAYYAMINAFRICAN? (Graham, 2015), or more recently, the statement from some artists participating in the British Art Show 9, that they would not be exhibiting in the Manchester location of the touring exhibition due to the University of Manchester's failure to stand by a statement of support for Palestine that was included as part of an exhibition by Forensic Architecture (Shani, 2022).

b. A more long-term and drawn out public struggle, for example a persistent calling out of the organisation by its employees (as seen in the activity of the New Museum Union, established in 2019 and since then active on social media in calling out malpractice within the museum) or a years-long process such as the renaming of Kunstinstituut Melly, formerly Witte de With, Rotterdam, which changed its name in 2020, two years after it committed to do so in a movement away from the colonial history of its name (Borstner, 2020). A further example of this is BDZ, or Boycott Divest Zabludowicz, the campaign which has operated since 2014 to build support for a boycott of the London-based Zabludowicz Art Trust and Zabludowicz Collection, due to its connections with arms dealing and the support of the Israeli state regime in its conflict with Palestine (Boycott Zabludowicz, 2014). The 2017 publication *I Can't Work Like This: A Reader on Recent Boycotts and Contemporary Art,* edited by Joanna Warsza and the participants of the

Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts, charts a number of such withdrawals.

c. Online, often anonymous spaces of circulation which gather insight and behind the scenes information. One example of this is Art + Museum Transparency, formed in May 2019 by a group of art and museum workers in the US, who create and share open access spreadsheets collating data on employment such as salary levels and unpaid internships (Art + Museum Transparency, 2019). A prominent example of this kind of platform is The White Pube, the collaborative identity of Gabrielle de la Puente and Zarina Muhammad, a website through which de la Puente and Muhammad share weekly texts, which range from reviews of exhibitions and games to more long-form writing around issues pertaining to the art world and its institutions. The White Pube have in recent years focused increasingly on issues of exploitative practice, racism, and elitism within art institutions. For instance, in 2018, they wrote of the Liverpool Biennial that it 'has developed a sour reputation in the city and beyond [...] for being a harmful place to work and work with' (de la Puente, 2018). An earlier example, the blog Cathedral of Shit, ran from 2009–2011, posting insider gossip about the art world ('should you have any snippets of tittle tattle or back-fence gossip, feel free to email us anonymously or otherwise. Want to flag up a wrong deed or a bit of bad behaviour? We're your man' [cathedralofshit.wordpress.com, 2009]).

d. A cultural shift on a wider scale. We can see this, for example, in the response of the cultural sector to both Covid-19 and the increased visibility and action of Black Lives Matter in response to the murder of George Floyd in 2020. These moments of crisis, in that their scale is such that it necessitates response and invites attention, can be exposing (of, for example, an institution's commitment to pay freelancers during the pandemic; their approach to sick pay; the concrete actions which may or may not follow a promise to address anti-racism in hiring practices). Through these actions or their lack, we see first hand the separation between, for example, statements of anti-racism and inclusion made by institutions with all-white staff teams and boards. These moments of greater visibility and shared narrative can also be a safer space for individuals or collectives to come forward with

stories of bad practice (such as within the #MeToo movement) as there is a greater willingness to listen and platform other voices. In July 2020, to take one example of this, a group of current and former staff of Nottingham Contemporary came together to write an open letter (addressed to the then director and head of the board) alleging current and historical racism in the institution, in response to the seemingly progressive statement the institution had shared. In this letter, they cited previous attempts to address these structures of inequality inherent to the institution, which had been shut down or put to one side (anon, 2020). Symptomatically, Nottingham Contemporary was quick to respond with a further public statement, which served to quash the open letter, stating that their intentions and commitments had already been made, however not addressing the points within, or indeed labour that went into, the open letter. Perhaps the most visible example of such a cultural shift is the Me Too movement, catalysed by the series of accusations of sexual assault made against film producer Harvey Weinstein in 2017. Within this context, an open letter denouncing sexual harassment in the art world was signed by over 200 artists, curators and other art workers (ArtReview, 2017).

e. The publication of a longer-term study, policy document or similar that provides a depth of insight. For example, the 2018 study *Panic! It's An Arts Emergency* by Create London which included a research paper 'Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries', led by sociologists from the Universities of Edinburgh and Leicester, investigating inequalities in the cultural workforce in the UK. Jemma Desai's autoethnographic research paper *This Work Isn't For Us* (2020) counters the claimed impacts of diversity-led policies in the cultural sector with the actual experience of cultural workers. Jack Ky Tan's AREVA report commissioned by Iniva (institute of international visual arts), London, and CVAN (contemporary visual arts network), details a proposal for antiracist and equitable practice to be taken up by the sector. (I will briefly revisit each of these studies in later chapters, in understanding how policy functions in the art sector, and how a caring practice might be defined.)

Each of these instances, from long-term campaigns to individual grievances, amounts to a form of *complaint*. In her 2021 book *Complaint!*, feminist academic Sara Ahmed describes how complaints within institutions—specifically in Ahmed's case universities and other institutions of education—are effectively silenced through the bureaucratic system of complaint procedures, protocols, meetings and so forth, exhausting the complainant. She notes how the system, the infrastructure of institutions, is built to swallow complaint, to *appear* to address it without addressing the issue in question at all. She writes of how institutions might point to their policies (on diversity and inclusion, or sexual harassment, say), 'as if having a policy against something is evidence it does not exist' (Ahmed, 2021: 52). Ahmed's account of complaint procedures within universities outlines the power structures that become visible through the act of complaining. She draws on oral testimonies from forty academics and students who had made complaints about harassment, bullying and unequal working conditions in universities, as well as eighteen written statements and hundreds of informal conversations.

The act of making a complaint, and the process of following the complaint procedure, makes certain things visible: 'to make a complaint is often to find a gap, a gap between what is supposed to happen, in accordance with policy and procedure, and what does happen' (Ahmed, 2021: 30). This act, then, also functions as a rupture in the institution, making visible to the complainant–but often the complainant only–how the institution really works, which policies are meant and enacted genuinely, and which are, as she writes, a form of window dressing:

> The new procedures and policies allowed the university to appear at the front, in public, as having created a new culture that was more supportive of those who made complaints about harassment. Behind closed doors, the culture was unchanged. (Ahmed, 2021: 55)

We can see here how the creation of a policy could be a kind of front or window dressing, which allows an institution to appear a certain way, until the policy is challenged, or attempted to be used. Ahmed describes how testimonies depict the exhaustion of making a complaint; the labour involved in attempting to pass a seemingly endless bureaucratic procedure, and the impact this has on our capacity to see a complaint through. Often, she notes, the complainant is themselves treated

as the problem, making trouble with their complaint, somehow causing rather than highlighting the issue at hand.

Ahmed also describes the physical impact of making a complaint, on one who has already experienced institutional harm:

> The person who makes the complaint–who is often already experiencing the trauma or stress of the situation they are complaining about–ends up having to direct an unwieldy process. [...] We sense a difficulty here given that many of the experiences that lead to complaint can make it hard to hold yourself together, let alone an unwieldy process. (Ahmed, 2021: 36)

> The body of the complainer is a testimony to the work of complaint. (Ahmed, 2021: 39)

There is an echo in this of Bouteloup's statement that 'my body dropped me' (Bouteloup, 2020), although of course from the other side of a complaint. Indeed, in the reporting of many years of claims of harassment, of cases of sick leave for burnout, *before* the point when the open letter was submitted to Bétonsalon's board, we get some sense of the unwieldy processes that Ahmed speaks of here. Ahmed is not making a case for institutions that do not warrant complaint, although of course that would be preferable. Rather, and despite these unwieldy processes, her contention here is that complaint, albeit slow, is a vital part of change. Should we then welcome these moments of rupture, what Ahmed calls *scratching away* at the institution, as the possibility of change? As Ahmed writes,

> We cannot always perceive the weakening of structures until they collapse. When structures begin to collapse, the impact of past efforts becomes tangible. Complaints can participate in the weakening of structures without that impact being tangible. Impact is a slow inheritance. (Ahmed, 2021: 310)

Earlier in this chapter, critique was figured as the capacity to change governance. We could consider complaint as one form that this could take, making visible discrepancies in the *logos* and *bios* of institutions.

2.8 Building as Body

I want to pick up again here the impact that such processes have on bodies (whether of the complainant, the subject of the complaint, or the institutional body), returning to the particular context of the institution of art. In Chapter 1, I introduced a conflict of sorts within the concept of assembly and its performativity, as outlined by Butler, and the ability of sick bodies (or bodies at risk of violence) to take part in performative politics, looking at Hedva's Sick Woman Theory. In many of the examples I have included in this chapter, it is often the body on the line: whether through burnout, or in the case of #MeToo, through forms of abuse. In their 2017 text 'Labours of Love: A Conversation on Art, Gender and Social Reproduction', Danielle Child, Helena Reckitt, and Jenny Richards discuss the assumption that it is love, rather than material gain, that motivates work in the cultural sector, and how current conditions of precarious work isolate and harm workers. Richards notes:

> Individualised workers' bodies endure, suffer and complain about their working conditions. Unable to be heard within the current system of online forms and automated phone services, their grievances manifest themselves as bodily complaints - sickness, depression, diarrhoea; physical responses that leak out of the body when the voice is consistently silenced. (Child et al, 2017)

Richards is here drawing on her project *the complaining body*, part of Manual Labours, her collaboration with Sophie Hope. Manual Labours explores our physical and emotional attachments to work. Since 2013, they have worked with various workers including call-centre workers, cultural workers, commuters and complaint teams, resulting in numerous workshops, artist commissions, performances and reading groups (Manual Labours, 2013). In 2014, they explored how working conditions related to love, through hosting workshops with a wide range of

workers, from artists to administrators. As Richards writes, 'love was exposed as a catch-all term that can hide a diverse array of work processes that are alienating, disenfranchising and motivated by values of status and cultural, social and economic obligation' (Child et al, 2017). If a feeling of love regarding one's work puts us in a prime position for exploitation under capitalism (we will do more for less), how can we rethink this relationship and begin to strategize? As Danielle Child writes in response to Richards, 'this is precisely the nature of the neoliberal political project post-Thatcher. The more we compartmentalise ourselves, the less likely we are to collectivise; individuals are less threatening to the dominant order than a collective' (Child et al, 2017). This emphasis on interdependence over competition is echoed in Dowling's writing on the care crisis, as I will outline in Chapter 3.

In 2016, Manual Labours were invited by Alba Colomo and Janna Graham (then Curator of Public Programmes and Research, and Head of Public Programmes and Research respectively) of Nottingham Contemporary to work together with the staff of the institution over a two year period. The resulting manual (the fourth produced by Manual Labours) is titled *Building as Body: A Handbook for Investigating your Workplace*. The manual poses questions: 'what kind of labour and exploitation is the cultural sector reliant on? What effects does work have on bodies at all levels of my organising and production?' (Manual Labours, 2018: 8). It charts an investigation into the organisation, written from the perspective of the building as an ailing body, using this metaphor to outline the work undertaken through this period, working through the different areas of the building and their various ailments and possible cures. The building tells us:

> The focus of these procedures has been my internal operations, rather than my exterior public face. This makes a change because as a public organisation most of my energy is spent on keeping up my public profile and providing activities for the public. [...] These kinds of investigations can be seen as a form of institutional analysis in which my structures and operations are reflected upon. (Manual Labours, 2018: 6)

Building as Body could indeed be seen as a form of institutional analysis, an attempt to treat the institution, not only its workers. The language used throughout is one of healthcare processes,

using terms such as patient, doctor and caregiver to examine the reproductive labour inherent to the workings of the organisation, such as who is doing the cleaning, caring and administrating, and what are the spaces for eating and resting. Manual Labours refer to Michelle Murphy's exploration of *sick building syndrome* (2006) and the women office workers' movement in the US, where, 'in the office, unlike the factory, disease or illness had to be proved rather than believed' (Manual Labours, 2018: 8). Through the two-year research process, they worked with staff of Nottingham Contemporary to diagnose the institution's ailments; primarily, how the physical environment of the institution impacted on staff wellbeing. Using the metaphor of the building as an ailing body allowed for frank conversations about what needed to shift. Manual Labours, again in the voice of the building as body, are clear about the process not being an easy one, and entailing a willingness from the institution:

> It's been painful at times, raising difficult conversations between those working across different body systems, but I feel I now have a better sense of my areas of need and I hope those doing the investigating do too. This has been made possible because I have been willing to let those who work within me investigate my inner workings, and because those who have chosen to do the investigating care deeply about how I grow. (Manual Labours, 2018: 7)

The manual itself attempts to be transparent about the process, including a budget, various documents from staff workshops, and mentioning certain struggles within the process, such as the lack of involvement from the management team, whilst also keeping participants as anonymous as possible. It includes a letter, again written from the building, to the board of the institution, which proposes a series of architectural interventions, ranging from improving natural light in office spaces to redesigning all staff areas. It is designed to be used as a manual in art organisations and institutions more broadly, as both a staff resource and a publicly available publication (this is similar to Eastside Projects' *User's Manuals*, which I will discuss in Chapter 4).

Alongside the manual and its included proposals to the board, a further output of this process was *The Wandering Womb*, a portable staff room and kitchen designed by Manual Labours and

fabricated by Effy Harle, highlighting the primary conclusion of the research: the lack or inadequacy of space for social reproduction. The manual highlights how the focus is usually on aspects of production and endless events, rather than taking a holistic view of the institution, reminding us of the distinction between the *logos* and *bios* of art institutions. The building tells us:

> Social reproduction theory questions how and who maintains workers so that they can continue to work. While the focus is often on the domestic, private spheres of care needed to reproduce a healthy and efficient workforce, examinations of my body have focused on the workplace as equally crucial to the social reproduction, maintenance and care of the worker. (Manual Labours, 2018: 10)

Whilst we can count the manual itself, its proposals to the board, and the mobile staff room as each concrete and useful interventions, it is not clear whether these have led to significant change within the institution. The project, then, documents and acts as evidence of the process, but it could feasibly be used in much the same way as the policies described by Ahmed: as evidence of something that may or may not have actually taken place, or indeed as a case of what Colomo terms as 'a discursive and performed framework of radicalism, solidarity and care' (Colomo, 2018: 8) despite this being the opposite of its process. Without commitment from the very beginning from all levels of staff, management, and board, could such a project facilitate significant change? The manual's value might therefore be primarily as a resource for a rigorous and ongoing self-examination, whether for future staff of Nottingham Contemporary or for other institutions. In their creation of a language for investigating one's workplace, Manual Labours evoke Audre Lorde's writing on the power of poetry as a shared language: 'we can train ourselves to respect our feelings and to transpose them into a language so they can be shared. And where that language does not yet exist, it is our poetry which helps to fashion it. Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives' (Lorde, 1984: 36–39). This creation of a shared language could contribute to the long-term work of *scratching away*, as described by Ahmed.

2.9 The Care Fix

I will close this chapter by introducing Emma Dowling's concept of the care fix, naming an institutional dynamic which responds to the disconnection between logos and bios that I have set out in this chapter, albeit not framed in the art sector. In her book *The Care Crisis: What Caused it and How Can We End It?*, Dowling describes the reorganisation of care work as an example of what she calls a 'care fix', adopting the geographer David Harvey's description of 'the ways in which capitalist production undertakes spatial, technological, organisational or financial "fixes" to solve the pressures of maintaining profitability' (Dowling, 2021: 14). She writes:

> In the face of crisis and in light of the limits or impasses it faces, one mechanism available to a capitalist economy is to reorganise to overcome crises of profitability. [...] This can very well mean that the underlying problems which led to the crisis in the first place are not addressed, but merely displaced. (Dowling, 2021: 14)

It is Dowling's contention that the reorganisation of care—such as privatisation and a reliance on unpaid labour—represents one such fix, in that it does not address any of the core issues at hand, rather shifting attention, and giving the *appearance* of having done something meaningful: 'a care fix entails the management of the care crisis in ways that resolve nothing definitively, but merely displace the crisis, thereby perpetuating the structural reflex of capitalist economies to offload the cost of care to unpaid sectors of society' (Dowling, 2021: 15). She similarly casts the trend for self-care as obfuscating 'the structural causes of societal problems' (Dowling, 2021: 185), another care fix which disincentives collective action, instead casting our needs as individual. There is something of this in the over-identification with work discussed by Child, Reckitt, and Richards; the idea that we work out of love as the perfect cover for accepting poor conditions and discouraging complaints.

The crisis I have outlined within the art institution is an example of a *care fix*. Programming and publishing on such topics of care, feminism, labour, access, anti-racism, radical museology, and so on: these function as a fix, deflecting attention from the fact that internal realities have not been addressed in real terms. Even projects devised and implemented as intending to address care in real terms, as with *Building as Body*, have the potential to be used as a care fix: an example to be held up

as evidence, but in actuality left unimplemented when their instigators move on. As Colomo writes, 'it seems that nobody is willing or able to take the risk and put care, affect and people at the centre of institutional work' (Colomo, 2018: 7). The points of rupture described earlier in this chapter, then, are moments when the fix falls away.

How might we, then, institute with care in reality—what we might call instituting with integrity—not as a fix, nor window dressing, but rather organising art institutions in ways congruent with the statements they make? How might an institution embrace instituent practice as a means to practising *parrhesia*? These questions inform my reflections on working with Eastside Projects later in this thesis. In the next chapter, I will explore in more depth the field of care, from community care, to access, to the care crisis, to better understand what it is that we mean when we talk about care, and how this might operate in the workings of art institutions.

3

On Care (in Crisis)

What does it mean to care *well,* and why does it matter, in the context of the art institution? This chapter will be engaged with answering this question. As I have demonstrated, an in-depth examination of different understandings of care (and their relation to artistic and organisational practice) is pivotal both for naming a crisis of care within art institutions situated in the broader social, economic, and political context, and equally, drawing on different theories of how care might be rethought can provide concepts for imagining and evaluating caring practices within art institutions. As such, this chapter begins with a working definition of care as maintaining our world (Fisher and Tronto, 1990), and uses this framing to discuss three aspects of our world that require maintenance: our bodies, our selves, and our environments. I begin with care for bodies, which is perhaps what we most easily understand as care work: healthcare, social care, and intergenerational care. I cover some recent writing on the care crisis, in particular picking up Emma Dowling's framing of the care fix introduced in the previous chapter, as well as various proposals for integrating care into our communities and some examples of artistic projects embedded in care settings. I then examine care for the self, with reference to *parrhesia* as a form of this kind of care, discussing Audre Lorde and Sara Ahmed's writing on self-care as warfare. Following Juliet Jacques, I also explore how self-care is put to work for capitalism, and how it could be extricated, before examining how self-care could be thought collectively, in terms of kinship models, as proposed by The Care Collective. Finally, I turn to care of our environments, and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's proposal of an ethics of care for more than human worlds, which draws on the principles of permaculture and rewrites Fisher and Tronto's definition of care, with a focus on imagining *as well as possible worlds*.

Drawing connections with these three ways of thinking about care, I go on to link care to the curatorial, both in terms of a history of care in exhibition making, the proliferance of programming on care in the midst of the pandemic, and in gathering the growing field of work on access and disability justice within art institutions. I discuss some existing artistic and curatorial practices which demonstrate concrete examples of how care theory and care work can translate to the work

of art institutions. I conclude the chapter with a proposal for what it might mean to care *well*, or as well as possible, as an antidote to the care fix.

3.1 Care as Maintaining Our World

The field of care is expansive, and its use within the work of art institutions is rarely directly connected to care work, or to a clear definition of what care might mean in this context. I want to begin here from the oft-cited definition of care by Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher, from their 1990 text 'Towards a Feminist Theory of Caring':

> In the most general sense, care is a species activity that includes everything we do to maintain, continue and repair our world so that we may live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web. (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 40)

I want to take forward this idea of maintaining, continuing, and repairing our world, as one way of thinking about what it means to care. Fisher and Tronto's description of what this world includes is also useful in charting the field of care, and how it tends to our bodies (in terms of healthcare, childcare, and social care), our selves (self-care as a revolutionary act or as capitalistic indulgence), and our environments (in more than human worlds and in the neighbourhood). These three aspects will structure the first part of this chapter.

In their definition of care, Fisher and Tronto note both its ubiquity ('human existence requires care from others', Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 35) and how its reality lies far from an often rose-tinted portrayal ('caring is often difficult, unpleasant, collective work', Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 37). They write how care permeates every aspect of life, as something that we have no choice over—although we might have some agency in how and for whom we care, and how much caring labour we outsource, for example. They articulate an essential link between care and power, in that, when we act politically, we also need to be sustained, and when we take care, we are engaging in negotiations

of power and conflict, equality, and trust (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 39). They note the obfuscation at play when we think of care as a kind of natural calling:

> The naturalistic interpretation of caring obscures its profoundly social and frequently problematic character. Caring is social because caring efforts speak ultimately to our survival as a species rather than as isolated individuals. It is problematic because it involves social interactions that contain the potential for conflict and because it requires material resources that might be difficult or impossible to obtain. (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 39–40)

This obscuring of the true character of care speaks to the theme of fixes, of window dressing and carewashing, which I will return to throughout this chapter.

Fisher and Tronto describe four aspects of caring: caring about, taking care of, caregiving, and care receiving. The first stage, *caring about*, is essentially noticing and taking an interest in something: to care *about* something, you do not necessarily take any concrete action. The second stage, *taking care of,* implies a further responsibility, that of involving oneself in the work of taking care of something or someone. It requires resources and time. The third phase, *caregiving*, is the actual work of care: 'the concrete (sometimes called hands-on) working of maintaining and repairing our world' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 43), which requires a detailed understanding and situated knowledge of the task at hand. Caregiving, then, might be organised by those involved in taking care of; by employing care workers, for example. Finally, *care-receiving* refers to the response from those who are taken care of. Fisher and Tronto note how 'the fragmentation of the caring process tends to alienate caregivers from both caring about and taking care of' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 44), as the work of care suffers from a lack of adequate time, resources, and remuneration.

Fisher and Tronto chart three ways that care has historically been organised: the household/community, the marketplace, and bureaucracy. They describe a pre-capitalist model in which care was primarily managed at home, with the household set up to care for its members, drawing on community members for support and sharing resources. This was overtaken by a capitalist model based on (primarily male) waged labour, with care work either done by women in

isolation or outsourced to other women caregivers. In this model, community assets are dissolved, whilst every form of care you might want is available to buy: 'those who care about a given need take care of that need by purchasing caregiving in the marketplace. Responsibility for caring means spending money. Caregiving means meeting a demand for labor' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 47). Finally, they describe a bureaucratic model of organising care reliant on large scale and hierarchical models, which provide standardised care at a basic level, although this is often substandard and fragmented (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 49) and requires those who *take care of* to manage it and advocate on behalf of those they care for. In each of these institutions, they note, women still take on the bulk of the work of caring.

Fisher and Tronto go on to examine three relational ideals that are often used in feminist writing as counter to patriarchal ideals: motherhood, friendship, and sisterhood. They hold that sisterhood—understood both as equality, and as kinship—is the most useful in rethinking care from a feminist perspective, as it both acknowledges how power shapes our caring relationships, and advocates for a more equitable, collective approach to care. Taking sisterhood forward as a feminist ideal for caring, they explore what impact this could have on bureaucratic forms of care. How could our institutions be rethought from the perspective of equality and kinship? In this, they attempt to revise the language of caring away from that of a so-called labour of love, towards 'a vocabulary that reflects our actual caring experience, and, at the same time, helps us to project a vision of caring that we want to realize' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 56). Their proposal is to reimagine social institutions as if care were enacted as we might hope:

> In order to reshape caring activities we ultimately need to re envision social institutions. [...] to build a feminist future we need to stretch our imaginations so that we can discover new visions of society in which caring is a central value and institutions truly facilitate caring. (Fisher and Tronto, 1990: 56)

Following Fisher and Tronto's definition of our world as our bodies, our selves, and our environments, I will now look to each of these as fields within care theory which might offer new imaginaries for more caring art institutions.

3.2 Bodies

a. The care crisis

Discussion on care has proliferated since the inception of the Covid-19 pandemic, whether in terms of performances of support for NHS staff (such as the weekly 'clap for carers' from doorsteps and balconies across locked down Europe, in the absence of actual policy change from governments), to widespread discussion and writing which determined that we were living through a *care crisis*. Emma Dowling's 2021 book *The Care Crisis: What Caused It and How Can We End It?* is emblematic of this strand of works which were written before, and published during, the ongoing pandemic—the crisis of care being something developing from many years of austerity logic and underfunding. Indeed, we can see how the pandemic itself functioned as a kind of rupture, making visible a rotten social care system. Dowling's concept of the care fix was introduced in Chapter 2. In this section, I will spend some time on her broader thesis, as it is this wider crisis of care which sets the context for my research.

Dowling holds that care is one of the central bedrocks of society, and defines care work as part of 'the labour of social reproduction' (Dowling, 2021: 37), not merely a one-directional resource, but an ethical social relation based on both affection and service, and manifesting in multiple ways (Dowling, 2021: 38). For Dowling, care is 'about the maintenance of life *for* itself' (Dowling, 2021: 45), not only for the purpose of reproducing workers. She writes that care encompasses both 'the physical activities of taking care, as well as affective relationships involving emotions, feelings and ethical concerns' (Dowling, 2021: 46), as two aspects which should not be separated, but often are. It is in the separation between the concrete labour of care and an affective ethics of care that Dowling situates a crisis. In this we can hear an echo of our earlier discussion of *parrhesia*: care is in crisis when actions and meanings are not in sync. She highlights the fact that 'tasks performed as part of caring labour may at times feel like anything but care' (Dowling, 2021: 22), noting that the

word care stems not from the Latin *cura*, as often cited, but the Old English *caru*, which refers to sorrow, grief, and anxiety (Dowling, 2021: 21). In Chapter 1, I outlined Egbert Alejandro Martina's contention that care is effectively a policing power, with care for an abstract public used to justify acts of discrimination. Dowling writes of another restrictive use of so-called care:

> It is also within disability rights movements that the narrow focus on care as a purely positive form of affection has been problematised, highlighting another issue—not just the unequal distribution of care burdens, but the patronising aspects of care within unequal power relations. Disability rights activists have voiced caution at the 'custodial overtones' of care and pointed to how, for people with disabilities, the reality of their exposure to existing care regimes has included restrictions to their autonomy. (Dowling, 2021: 44)

In Dowling's writing, then, we come to understand care as an essential part of how life is sustained, and also as something which is often painful, and sometimes weaponised.

Dowling charts the crisis of care as the structural dismantling of the health and social care system in Britain, from funding and pay cuts for healthcare professionals; to the privatisation of social care; to the growing number of unpaid carers, including child carers; to the institutionalisation of foodbanks; to the lack of regulations for, and resulting neglect of, migrant domestic workers. She holds that the care crisis is intrinsically linked to the global financial crisis of 2008 and its aftermath. She cites the rhetoric of the 'big society' coming from David Cameron's Conservative party in 2009 as an example of an *ideology of caring*, which was actually 'nothing but a smokescreen for austerity measures that cut community services while piously invoking civic engagement and social action' (Dowling, 2021: 43). The concurrent cuts to arts funding while tasking art institutions with providing civic services previously provided by the state may be viewed as part of this ideology of caring, functioning as a smokescreen. These ideologies of caring—which are often care fixes—are key to Dowling's analysis, which describes a number of discrepancies between what is presented in terms of public narrative on health and social care, and what is actually enacted by policy, functioning in a similar way to the discrepancies I have described in art institutions. She draws on research debunking the efficacy of austerity measures to outline how Cameron's big society was

actually a process of breaking up the welfare state. As Dowling writes, these 'voids created by austerity became opportunities for commercial expansion' (Dowling, 2021: 58), with austerity providing the perfect conditions for a privatisation of health and social care.

It is in this context of widespread privatisation and dismantling of care provision that Dowling situates a crisis of care. She notes how much of our care system—from the work of junior doctors, to adult social care workers, and unpaid carers—relies on, essentially, goodwill: care workers consistently working beyond the remit of their paid roles. The relentless cuts to both pay and allocated time for caring work *relies* on the fact that this work will still be carried out:

> The propensity to care and feelings of responsibility are mobilised, becoming what enables people to carry out their jobs under increasingly difficult conditions, precisely because they care. (Dowling, 2021: 66)

As Dowling notes, stopping to fund a service doesn't mean the service is no longer needed. Indeed, it creates unmet needs which were previously met (Dowling, 2021: 74). She refers to Christa Wichterich's term 'care extractivism', which outlines how care labour (both paid and unpaid) is exploited in the current neoliberal order (Dowling, 2021: 14). In outlining what she calls care ideologies (government rhetorics in the name of situating care in the community, for example) she shows how the lack of actual responses to the care crisis functions as a care fix.

Though highly critical of disingenuous calls for community care, which mask 'both the dismantling of social entitlements and the deprofessionalisation of care' (Dowling, 2021: 102), Dowling also holds that collective care in real terms might be one way to address the care crisis, through creating the means and capacity for new forms of care and mutual aid, outwith heteronormative household structures and defying financialisation. She notes the rise in alternative familial relations such as chosen and queer families, as well as a rise in local networks of mutual aid, as examples of new commitments we could forge, writing that 'caring for people who cannot care for themselves should not be a personal, familial responsibility, but the responsibility of everyone in

proximity' (Dowling, 2021: 201). Dowling's proposal is for a structural transformation of the institutions of care in our society (Dowling, 2021: 193).

Acknowledging the welfare state as the kind of institution which could organise such infrastructural change, Dowling asks: 'can a welfare system so intricately bound up with the developments of industrialised capitalism be anything but the latter? What might an emancipatory version look like?' (Dowling, 2021: 203). She proposes collaboration between worker co-operatives, trade unions, and local authorities, giving the example of *Buurtzorg*, a non-profit neighbourhood care system in the Netherlands in which self-managed nurses cooperate with patients, in order to maximise their independence (Dowling, 2021: 198). Finally, she refers to remunicipalisation movements in Europe, mentioned in Chapter 1, which have 'sought to reverse privatisation and bring services back into the public hands of municipalities and local authorities' (Dowling, 2021: 205) by devising alternative, assembly-based decision making models. Her proposal here is for an assembly-based collective care infrastructure connected to political participation in a municipality, a form of 'care municipalism' (Dowling, 2021: 204–5) which reclaims the means (and time) to care, and which I would argue that the art institution could be one part of.

Madeleine Bunting's 2020 book *Labours of Love: The Crisis of Care* similarly charts a care crisis through numerous interviews with those engaged in the work of caring. Bunting adds to our growing etymology of the word care, as also originating from 'the Old German world *chara*, meaning lament, or a burden of the mind [...] another root is the Old Norse *kor*, for sickbed' (Dowling, 2021: 38). In this she emphasises the extent to which care has always been connected to suffering, and its dual meaning of the action of caring *for* someone and the more emotional caring *about* them. Bunting spends some time on the ways care has been understood, from the belief of the Stoics that we become human by caring; to the goddess Care who, in Graeco-Roman mythology, built a human being from mud, and sustains all human lives; to Heidegger's use of the word *Sorge* (meaning care) as how we engage with the world, and how we inevitably open ourselves to sorrow (Dowling, 2021: 39).

Bunting describes care relationships as involving 'knotty issues of dependence, vulnerability, intimacy, risk, resentment and fulfilment' (Bunting, 2020: 2) and grounded in tacit knowledge (Bunting, 2020: 5). She describes an institutional culture of inaction, in which scandals appear in political life (from inadequate social care to the crumbling mental health care system) which results in commissioned reports and recommendations, 'but words pile up without effective action as the crisis is caught in a repetitive loop of alarm alternating with apathy' (Bunting, 2020: 4). Bunting's interviews cover those involved in all areas of care work, and she draws from these a sense of the importance of the gift economy (active in many indigenous societies) which works on the basis of the obligation to give, accept, and reciprocate. She proposes the recognition and institutional support of such an economic model as a way to reclaim care (Bunting, 2020: 278). While not specifically advocating for the assembly-like models proposed by Dowling, or Precarias a la Deriva (2004), Bunting's focus on reciprocal care is nonetheless still a call for a more collectively-thought approach to care in our society.

The Care Collective's 2020 publication *The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence* similarly describes how our current crisis of care has been incubated by forty years of the dismantling of the welfare state, with market logic leading to austerity policies, which in turn set the context for the Covid-19 pandemic and the failures in managing it. They chart the much longer history of undermining care work, and its devaluation as unproductive or feminine due to being associated with women's work (Care Collective, 2020: 3). *The Care Manifesto* also echoes Dowling's concept of the care fix, with what they describe as carewashing - when progressive statements disguise careless, even violent, policies. They give the example of India's Hindu-nationalist Prime Minister Narenda Modi, who 'introduced a welfare package called "PM Cares" as he continued to orchestrate the brutal clampdown on Kashmir and the delegitimization of Muslim migrant workers' (Care Collective, 2020: 3), as well as outlining how numerous governments and companies also *present* care, whilst their policies say otherwise. They hold that the care crisis is deeply connected to, for example, the climate crisis and structural racism, as 'each is connected to the market-driven lack of care at every level of society' (Care Collective, 2020: 7).

The Care Collective's suggestion for addressing this widespread condition of carelessness is through a model of universal care, embedded in caring communities, similar to Dowling's proposal of care municipalism. These caring communities would be characterised by mutual support, shared resources and local democracy (Care Collective, 2020: 46). They write:

> Universal care means that care - in all its various manifestations - is our priority not only in the domestic sphere but in all spheres: from our kinship groups and communities to our states and planet. Prioritising and working towards a sense of universal care - and making this common sense - is necessary for the cultivation of a caring politics, fulfilling lives, and a sustainable world. (Care Collective, 2020: 19)

I will return later in this chapter to The Care Collective's proposal of what they term *promiscuous care*. I will now give some examples of how these ideas of collective care have been tested and enacted, and how they intersect with the work of artists and arts institutions.

b. Community care

A collective approach to care infrastructure is modelled in the project *The Hologram*, by artist Cassie Thornton. The Hologram is a non-expert, horizontal healthcare system based on forming 'triangles' of support, with three people supporting the physical, mental, and social health of one individual (the hologram). Each individual in this system has their own triangle of support, and each triangle is also part of a wider, decentralised network which meets online to share learning about giving and receiving care. Based on models of experimental, non-financialised care enacted by Social Solidarity Clinics during the Greek financial crisis (Teloni and Adam, 2018), The Hologram describes itself as 'a robust multidimensional health network, collectively-oriented social practices, and trust that can outlive capitalism' (Thornton, 2020), but is also, in Thornton's words, an art project rather than a health or social science project (Thornton, 2020). Thornton's artist and activist practice perhaps sits within Graham's (2015) description of a para-site (discussed in Chapter 2), in that it utilises the space of art to model alternative futures with real impacts; The Hologram is a functioning model, delivering courses, with numerous members delivering and

receiving care through its framework. As a model with the ambition to develop long-lasting care systems that enable us to 'outlast the coming social, economic and planetary emergencies' (Thornton, 2020), its reliance on emotional and unpaid labour needs to be problematised, though it does have affinities with the notion of the gift economy explored by Bunting.

Another decentralised care resource that engages with the art sector is Pirate Care. The transnational research project, convened by Valeria Graziano, Marcell Mars, and Tomislav Medak is a network of activists, researchers and other practitioners working for a common care infrastructure. In the context of widespread defunding of the resources of the welfare state, Pirate Care is a gathering of initiatives and mobilizations for care as a collective political practice:

> For instance, in Greece, where the bureaucratic measures imposed by the Troika decimated public services, a growing number of grassroots clinics set up by the Solidarity Movement have responded by providing medical attention to those without a private insurance [sic]. In Italy, groups of parents without recourse to public childcare are organizing their own pirate kindergartens (Soprasotto), reviving a feminist tradition first experimented with in the 1970s. [...] Elsewhere, the collective Women on Waves delivers abortion pills from boats harboured in international waters—and more recently, via drones - to women in countries where this option is illegal. (Graziano, Mars and Medek, 2019)

Pirate Care operates adjacent to the art sector, taking part in numerous exhibitions, programming talks series and collaborating with art institutions, whilst also being deeply embedded in health care research. Their research, which since 2019 has documented forms of community care and initiatives opposing the privatisation and financialisation of care, is collated on their website as an open-source resource.

There is growing research proposing the decentralisation and de-financialisation of care, placing it instead within the community. Architect and Urbanist Julian Siravo is head of Urban Research at the think-tank Autonomy, which researches the future of work in the context of uncertain climate and economic futures. In 2019 they were commissioned to develop a strategy for the economic

future of the Valencia region in Spain, which has one of the fastest ageing populations in Europe. Led by Siravo, they proposed an infrastructure for elderly care as 'the site of radical social innovation' (Siravo, 2020: n.p.) through the creation of *centres de cura continuada* or long term care centres (LTCCs) as seen in Fig. 1.

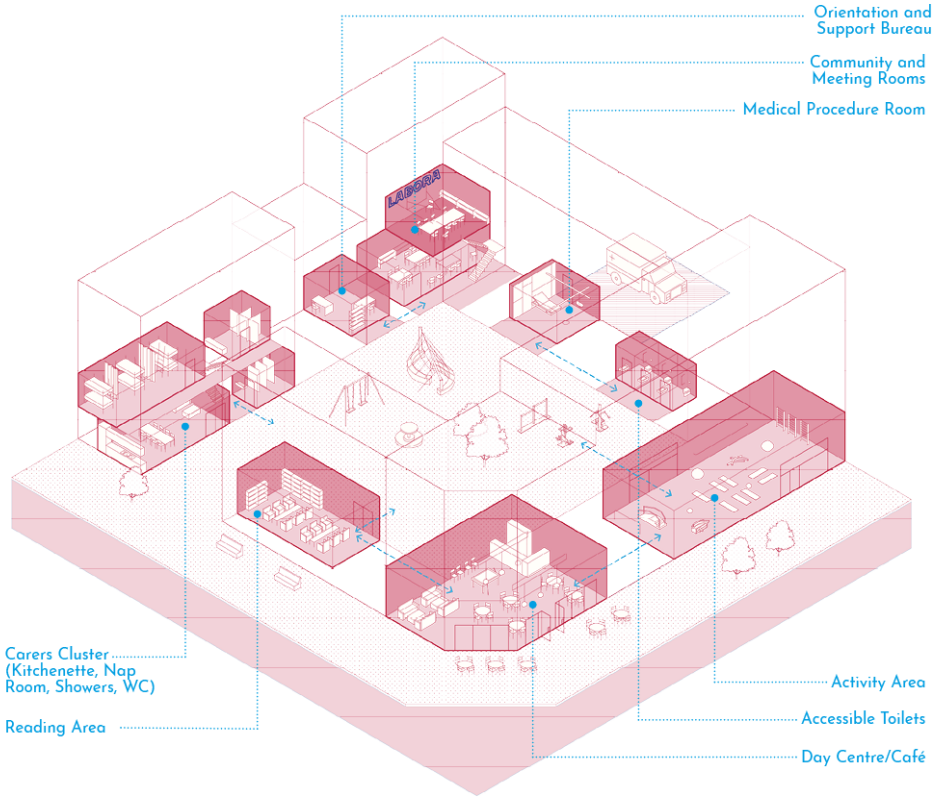


Fig. 1: Julian Siravo, Long Term Care Centre.

Working from the starting point that we are encountering a care crisis, rather than a crisis of ageing, Siravo's work proposes that cities are organised around care, rather than being primarily structured for work. This would entail investment in affordable community care, and building a solid economy of care work, through the formation of care cooperatives with remunerated, community-based roles. These cooperatives—the LTCCs—would be an infrastructure for the whole neighbourhood, but beginning from the needs of the most vulnerable residents. They would have space to medically train care workers, as well as infrastructure for the community including social space and childcare. Importantly they would also provide support for those doing the care work, from employment advice to everyday amenities (Siravo, 2019; 2020). Siravo suggests that the

need to rethink care structures and to institute a space between the home and the hospital is even more urgent in a UK setting, amidst rising loneliness, weaker family support structures, and a chronically underfunded NHS (Siravo, 2020: n.p.).

Francesco Salvini (aka pantxo ramas), as mentioned in Chapter 1, has also written on a rethinking of care that positions it within the community. This stems from his embedded research in Trieste, Italy, where in the 1970s the Basaglian movement dismantled the city's psychiatric hospital, part of the anti-psychiatry and institutional analysis work discussed in Chapter 2. Salvini coordinates the archive *Beyond the Garden*, for the Social Cooperative La Collina, which documents the dismantling of the asylum under the directorship of Franco Basaglia. Trieste exists in the legacy of the Basaglian movement, with the idea of care as something distributed among a community, a governing force of the social healthcare system in the city and wider region. In their text, 'The Right to Care: Entering Outside in the Southern European Crisis of Welfare', Marta Pérez and Salvini argue that 'Trieste can be addressed as a singular governmentality that has been experimenting practically with a different logic and functioning of the state-machine in healthcare over the last decades' (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 391). They write in the context of the research project *Entrar Afuera* (2016–18) which explored critical care practices across southern Europe, comparing the case of Trieste with Madrid and Thessaloniki. They note the risks inherent in closing the psychiatric hospital in Trieste, leaving patients without support systems or healthcare, but write that 'the result was different because the process was different' (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 393): an alternative form of care was instituted across the region, the 'Microarea' programme:

> The Microarea programme is a set of interventions into several vulnerable urban spaces in which healthcare programmes, social services, and housing provision intersect. Several local social networks are involved in designing public policies of care at the local level.[...] The Microarea is also a place, in the neighbourhood, open five or six days per week, where people can just show up to ask for support (on everyday life activities, such as shopping or medication), participate in the activities (for example of socialization) or actively collaborate in the social dynamics of the centre (for example organising the local food bank) (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 392)

Pérez and Salvini describe these micro areas as being located on the threshold between society and state, and so able to constitute 'another process of care' (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 392). Care moves outside of the institution to inhabit the threshold. In his text 'Caring Ecologies', Salvini describes the micro area as 'an *ecology of proximity'* in which caring is part of the ecology of the city - an active co-creator of its urban fabric (Salvini, 2019: n.p.). In this ecology of caring, he writes, 'the provision of care happens on the threshold, on the limit between the state and society, or between the worker and the citizen; it is a device that destitutes and institutes the norms of care' (Salvini, 2019: n.p.). This location *on the threshold* presents an interesting way to think of the art institution: inhabiting the threshold between art and care, or art and society, engaged in the work of modelling alternative worlds.

Salvini describes how the microarea programmes contest state boundaries by an act of trespassing - undermining the usual relationship between citizen and state by creating 'a collective ethos based on reciprocity, responsibility, and inclusiveness' (Salvini, 2019: n.p.). Again, this idea of *trespassing* speaks to a way of understanding how the art institution could operate in multiple sectors, as a space of care, of political imaginaries, of counterpublics.

Indeed, Salvini proposes the transversality of the ecology of care: 'beyond the politics of welfare, I want to propose [an] ecology of care as a way of naming a continuous practice of support, listening, attention, feelings, tangled up with a multiplicity of encounters' (Salvini, 2016a: n.p.). He notes that care is ambivalent territory, at once part of the capitalist machine, perpetuating 'exploitation, dispossession and abstraction' and also 'a space of autonomy and organisation that is capable of instituting new grounds of possibility' (Salvini, 2019,: n.p.). Whilst care is often used as 'moral marketing' (Salvini, 2019: n.p.) on behalf of neoliberal governments, Salvini draws on the work of Maria Puig de la Bellacasa in reclaiming the term. As Puig de la Bellacasa writes,

> To reclaim often means to re-appropriate a toxic terrain, a field of domination, making it capable of nurturing; the transformative seeds we wish to sow [...] reclaiming requires acknowledging poisons in the ground that we inhabit rather than expecting to find an

> outside alternative, untouched by trouble, a final balance—or a definitive critique. (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 11)

This sense of reclaiming a toxic terrain—working to make it capable of nurture, whilst also acknowledging its complexity—is one argument for continuing to work within the institution of art, despite its past violences and short falls, rather than searching for an outside alternative.

Pérez and Salvini write of the loss of control inherent in the micro areas programme, after the dissolution of the solidity of the institution. It is in this loss of control, however, that a rethinking of the institution becomes possible: 'the institution is no longer a rigid frame [...] instead [it] is invented by facing its contradictions and reformulating its rules, protocols, and procedures in order to reinstitute itself around the lives of the users' (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 393). They note how the tendency of institutions to revert to previously set rules requires an ongoing practice of critical work, to continuously reorient the institution towards the reproduction of society rather than of itself (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 393). In this translation outside of itself, they write, lies 'an opportunity for the institution to reinvent itself, its practices, and protocols, in relation to the life of the citizen, and to the life of the city in general' (Pérez and Salvini, 2019: 396). Indeed, Salvini writes that this is precisely where instituent practices emerge: '*in the moment of danger*, in the trespassing of borders' (Salvini, 2016b: n.p.). Circling back to our discussion of the crisis of care within art institutions, we can think of this in two ways. First, that the moment of danger could be the moment in which the institution speaks the truth of itself—exposing its internal workings whether through rupture or through an act of *parrhésia*. Second, that an act of *trespassing* (which might be, as Raunig described, *betraying the rules of the game*) enacted by a threshold institution, holding a space between art and social justice, for example, could be one way for an institution to embody care in real terms.

c. Working at the threshold

I want to pause here to reground us in this conversation of care, as there are some apparently conflicting narratives at play. I have described care in terms of the art institution as an act of

parrhesia, after Foucault: a reconciling of the *logos* and *bios* of the institution. I have followed this with a conversation on the care crisis in terms (so far) of health and social care. This wider conversation on care might seem at odds with the practices of art institutions. My contention here is twofold. Firstly, that art institutions are part of this wider crisis at the societal level, being as they are public institutions, and guilty of the same performative 'fixes'; as such they could be part of rethinking societal infrastructures as a whole. Secondly, that the very fact of institutions speaking about and making claims to care, in their programming as well as in their claims to be equitable organisations, necessitates a real engagement with care if they are to enact *parrhesia*. What could this look like? How could an art institution contribute to a care community, for instance? I will mention a few examples in this chapter of artistic work which begins to navigate this threshold.

One such example is outlined in the 2013 publication *Art + Care: A Future*, edited by Janna Graham, which draws on case studies from five years of the Serpentine Gallery's project *Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care,* which placed artists and other creative practitioners in dialogue with sites of elderly care, from care homes to hospices. Graham, who inherited the project when she began to work at the Serpentine, describes in her text 'Towards an Autonomy of Care' (2013) how *Skills Exchange* was subject to some of the narratives pervasive in social art projects at the time: at once conforming to bureaucratic ideals of intergenerational learning; ideas of artists helping older people through 'giving them a voice'; a neoliberal rhetoric, 'that artists could help older people to achieve greater 'social cohesion' with their neighbours or make them feel 'more comfortable' with top down changes to the institutions and neighbourhoods in which they lived' (Graham, 2013: 50); and finally an idea of 'quality' stemming from the terms of the art market, from producing 'quality' outcomes to the value of working with 'important' artists.

Graham writes of the problematics of such 'heroic, avant-garde or helping narratives in social art' (Graham, 2013: 51), and of claims to artistic exception in the context of social justice work. She describes two conflicting aspects of the work of the Artist Placement Group or APG, the group initiated by artists John Latham and Barbara Steveni with David Hall, Barry Flanagan and many others, active from 1966–89, which inspired and continues to inspire many social art projects with

its statement that *the context is half the work*. The APG, Graham writes, in their placements within corporate and government locations, made little differentiation between, on the one hand, 'identifications with managerial discourses, i.e. changes to social policy from above, and what might be described as a social or popular discourse, in which placement enabled people to instigate change from below' (Graham, 2013). Graham finds in the history of the APG a tendency towards projects in which the insights of the artist are prioritised over working with and centering the will of participants. She notes an exception in the APG's creation of 'a communication vehicle in Birmingham Housing Department, *with* residents–who, by their own desire—could speak directly to local government about the effects of housing policies on their lives' (Graham, 2013). The ambivalent potential of such social art projects, either playing into managerial logics or enabling real connection, is the focus of Graham's text: 'the mutable idea of the artist's autonomy can simultaneously open up a space for equitable and ethical collaboration and post the risk that the artist will effectively ignore or misunderstand the political stakes in the social field in which he or she is operating' (Graham, 2013).

One strand of the project, by design collective Åbäke, care worker Phyllis Etukudo and residents at Westmead Care Home in Westminster, takes as a reference *la grille*, the grid, the chart for organising tasks and activities at La Borde, discussed in Chapter 2. This project entailed both shifts in daily practices within the care home, and looking at how routines of staff and care residents reinforced segregation, instead working 'to map desires across the two institutions and enact points of convergence and exchange' (Graham, 2013: 54) with a programme of shared activities between staff and users of both the care home and the Serpentine. This particular project concluded with a proposal for longer-term work and collaboration.

Whilst the projects of Skills Exchange were by their nature short-lived (despite the four-year project, as Graham describes, being long in art terms) and did not always result in long-term work or impacts in their settings, Graham notes how this could be seen as symptomatic of the lives of participants, as 'care workers, culture workers and low income pensioners frequently operate in conditions of precariousness' (Graham, 2013: 55). The delicate line between what is presented as an equitable collaboration, but is really one-sided, and what actually *is* an equitable collaboration, is

linked to our discussion of a care fix in the art sector: claiming the optics of care without enacting this in real terms. This is, Graham notes, something shared between the fields of art and care, which 'share this cloak of the good, the noble and the satisfying while [their] practitioners work under conditions that bear evidence of the very opposite' (Graham, 2013: 52). Indeed, it is this potential for new solidarity that emerges as the most valuable outcome of the project: a shared understanding that caring, 'the kind of critical, equitable and resistant caring [described in Graham's text] is under threat in most aspects of life, but particularly in the places deemed as spaces of care today' (Graham, 2013: 55). It is this ability to trespass institutional norms, to navigate the threshold between art and care, that the project speaks to, and that is relevant to our discussion here.

3.3 Selves (and others)

d. Self-Care

Coming to Fisher and Tronto's second aspect of our world, *our selves,* there is a clear connection to our previous discussion of Foucault's definition of *parrhesia* as care of the self: speaking the truth of oneself, even in the face of great risk. I outlined a way of thinking about this in relation to the practice of art institutions in Chapter 2. At the surface level this Foucauldian care of the self is far removed from what we commonly understand as self-care, but it connects in some interesting ways. *Parrhesia* involves an openness about oneself, in an inhospitable context, which somewhat echoes the more radical understandings of self-care practices.

As discussed, for Dowling, self-care is another form of care fix: something capitalism encourages us to do (and spend money on), as a deflection from collective care and community. Whilst self-care has clearly been co-opted by capital, its roots are more radical. In her blog post 'Selfcare as Warfare', Sara Ahmed discusses the much-quoted sentence by Audre Lorde: 'Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare' (Lorde, 1988: 95). This sentence is from the epilogue to Lorde's 'A Burst of Light', a series of diary entries narrating Lorde's diagnosis with liver cancer. Self-care in this context, in Lorde's caring for herself amidst illness, is also an act of preservation of her life of anti-racist practice. As Ahmed writes, 'this is a

revolutionary, extraordinary sentence' (Ahmed, 2014), as it is a sentence that implies that survival is, for some, a radical act:

> Some of us, Audre Lorde notes were never meant to survive. To have some body, to be a member of some group, to be some, can be a death sentence. When you are not supposed to live, as you are, where you are, with whom you are with, then survival is a radical action; a refusal not to exist until the very end; a refusal not to exist until you do not exist. (Ahmed, 2014)

Ahmed notes a separation between those who have to be inventive to survive, and those who exist within a support system or privilege. In this context, for some, self-care is self-preservation: a mode of survival. This struggle for survival, seen by those whose survival is not in question, might look like self-indulgence (Ahmed, 2014). As Johana Hedva writes in 'Sick Woman Theory':

> The most anti-capitalist protest is to care for another and to care for yourself. To take on the historically feminized and therefore invisible practice of nursing, nurturing, caring. To take seriously each other's vulnerability and fragility and precarity, and to support it, honor it, empower it. To protect each other, to enact and practise a community of support. A radical kinship, an interdependent sociality, a politics of care. (Hedva, 2015)

Hedva is here similarly writing about care, including care of the self, in a particular framework of chronic illness and disability. Like Lorde and Ahmed, they connect self-care to something bigger than the self, noting the revolutionary potential of self-care for those who are not historically cared for. In this sense, there is power in self-care. But Ahmed also describes its co-option, through Lorde's work, how 'self-care can become a technique of governance' (Amhed, 2014)—an impetus for self-care obscuring a lack of resources for societal care, instead packaging care as something that we buy. Self-care as an obscurant is a kind of care-fix: redirecting attention from political struggle. But self-care as self-preservation, Ahmed writes, is not about happiness: 'it is about finding ways to exist in a world that is diminishing' (Ahmed, 2014).

In her text *Aphorisms on Self-Care*, writer Juliet Jacques echoes this belief in forms of self care that stem from struggles against discrimination—noting that most of the conceptual work done on the need for practices of self care in any long-term activist work comes from marginalised communities. She notes how late capitalism forces us to ignore our needs, turning everything into work: from tracking our sleep to being available 24/7. It is no surprise, then, that it has also co-opted the act of taking care of oneself. As Jacques writes, 'capitalism has proved so resilient because it can assimilate not just practically any challenge to it, but also any tactic designed to mitigate its efforts' (Jacques, 2019: 102). She charts how this plays out in the workplace, where self-care is an easier recommendation for a corporate manager to make than suggesting collective action such as unionizing, for example (Jacques, 2019: 102). Jacques describes the struggle to fight against capitalist systems in a way reminiscent of Ahmed's writing on Complaint, in that the repetition and amplification by politicians and the media 'of deliberately inaccurate information that requires constant rebuttal aims to stultify people into disengagement' (Jacques, 2019: 103). Jacques' contention is that these tactics are specifically utilised to induce activist burnout: 'It sounds obvious, but the turbo-charged trap of capitalism wants us to forget - no-one can meaningfully build towards social change if they are exhausted' (Jacques, 2019: 104). We can see in this an echo of the institutional exhaustion I outlined in Chapter 2: without a practice of self-care, of *parrhésia*, the institution cannot act at its full capacity.

Ultimately, Jacques sees self-care as an essential personal tactic, even as she advocates for collectivity as an anti-capitalist practice, as 'all collectives are ultimately made up of individuals' (Jacques, 2019: 104). Still, *radical* self-care is something done collectively: 'in a spirit of shared kindness that is conceived, as Lorde puts it, as an act of political warfare—partly for oneself, but primarily for one's comrades and for humanity as a whole' (Jacques, 2019: 105). How could an art institution practise radical self-care, for itself, its workers, and its wider publics?

e. Care as Kinship

As Jacques, Lorde, Hedva, and Ahmed indicate, caring for oneself is something done in connection with many others, often in relations of kinship, friendship, and community. Indeed, as Dowling writes:

> Even in the context of the heteronormative family, friendship, neighbourhood and other informal community networks are part and parcel of the care infrastructure within which an individual is embedded. Here, support and mutual aid are activated through choice and on voluntary terms, founded on shared values and shared social experiences. While ties might be loose or quite close, a sense of interdependency and reciprocity informs them. Consequently, these everyday relations of friendship and mutual aid are important sites of care, too. (Dowling, 2021: 77)

On this topic of friendship as a site of care, I want to bring in here the writing of artist Celine Condorelli, one of the original artist-directors of Eastside Projects, and a longtime collaborator of Wade. Condorelli's publication *The Company She Keeps* is a collection of conversations about friendship, as a form of solidarity, and as a position from which we might work. Condorelli connects this to her longer-term work on the topic of support, with her 2009 book *Support Structures* charting her collaboration with Wade as Support Structure (2003–9). Condorelli and Wade's collaborative practice is key to the formation of Eastside Projects and its initial vision, and indeed Condorelli mentions this working relationship throughout *The Company She Keeps*. Her description of cultural production as *making things public* is one which remains central to Eastside's work:

> Friendship, like support, is considered here as an essentially political relationship, one of allegiance and responsibility. Perhaps one of my favourite definitions of cultural production, and especially making exhibitions is that of 'making things public': the process of connecting things, establishing relationships, which in many ways means befriending issues, people, contexts. (Condorelli, 2014: 7)

Condorelli notes that working collaboratively can both create friendship and begin from friendship (Condorelli, 2014: 8), and throughout the conversations included here she develops an idea of working *in friendship.* In conversation with the philosopher Johan Frederick Hartle, Condorelli describes her research into the philosophical discourse on friendship, as usually written by men and depicting friendships between men, who meet as political equals—therefore excluding anyone who is not a free and equal subject, such as women and slaves (Condorelli, 2014: 13–14). Condorelli proposes a way of thinking about friendship as befriending ideas, and thinking together, drawing on how Hannah Arendt described her relationship with Mary McCarthy, as a *thinking-business*. This, Condorelli suggests, is 'work in friendship, and friendship in work' (Condorelli, 2014: 15). Hartle proposes Spinoza's theory of society as 'grounded in the physical potentials to form solidarity and friendship' (Hartle, 2014: 17), a model which sees friendship as key to 'the communal production of the common' (Hartle, 2014: 17). As Condorelli notes, there is emancipatory potential in friendship: 'the knowledge of engaging in a common project, of contributing to building the world, which is also how friendship leads to politics' (Condorelli, 2014: 20).

In a three-part conversation with the writer and educator Avery Gordon, 'The Company We Keep', Condorelli describes friendship as intimacy, in relation to both people and ideas (Condorelli, 2014: 35). Gordon notes how, in contrast to the abstracted writing on the friendship of men by philosophers, in many ways the excluded (women, slaves, migrants and the lower classes) 'provide one of the richest archives of friendship practices throughout history' (Gordon, 2014: 36); a history of friendship in action, through direct solidarity and support in hostile environments. From the bad worker, to the runaway slave, to women in the workhouse, friendships as a mode of survival is an often untold history, of how care for one another can be a vital form of support. Gordon cautions against the idealisation of friendship as a model, noting that it is 'not only a pleasure, an autonomous zone and sometimes a weapon of the weak, but also an important modality by which the powerful reproduce their power intergenerationally and within their ideological networks' (Condorelli, 2014: 83). Indeed, this thread of the capacity of friendship—when used as a model for politics—to be exclusionary runs throughout Condorelli and Gordon's conversation. How might we centre friendship as a site of care, without reinforcing its use as a tool of exclusion?

In a final conversation with the curators Polly Staple and Nick Aikens, Condorelli connects some of these ideas around friendship to her artistic practice. She outlines a strong belief in the potential of the exhibition as a format:

> I consider exhibitions as contexts in which relationships to the world take place, and can be adjusted–in which connections may be proposed, others undermined or even severed. Communities can be formed through exhibitions, just as much as they can be destroyed. [...] I think this is a very strong potential of the exhibition: imagining the world and future that you'd like to live in. (Condorelli, 2014: 108)

This capacity of the exhibition to model worlds and form communities (or publics) calls back to our discussion of the address of an art institution in Chapter 1. Condorelli's work suggests an address of friendship, or support, which is relevant both to our wider conversation here about how art institutions might practise with care, and to thinking about this specifically in relation to Eastside Projects and its connection to the Support Structure project of Condorelli and Wade. I will return to this in Chapter 4. Condorelli's work on friendship speaks to the potential for the exhibition, artwork or art institution to model new relations, sitting on this threshold between art and care. Nick Aikens mentions how Charles Esche speaks of *modest proposals*: 'small propositions that create a space in which to imagine the world otherwise' (Aikens, 2014: 109). There is potential in these modest proposals for the art institution to model working in friendship, as a site of care.

To return to The Care Collective's *Care Manifesto,* they make a case for caring kinships (with an expansive idea of kinship replacing a familial model) and what they term *promiscuous care*, writing that 'all forms of care between all categories of human and non-human should be valued, recognised, and resourced equally, according to their needs or ongoing sustainability. This is what we call an ethics of promiscuous care' (The Care Collective, 2020: 40). Their framing of promiscuous care draws its name from AIDS activist theory, specifically the text 'How to Have Promiscuity in an Epidemic' by Douglas Crimp, which put forward the idea of promiscuity in the sense of experimental intimacies and forms of care, and actually led to the development of safer sex

initiatives (The Care Collective: 41). They advocate for caring promiscuously, not in the sense of casually or indifferently (as, they note, neoliberal capitalism cares) but rather 'caring more and in ways that remain experimental and extensive by current standards' (The Care Collective: 41)—caring capaciously.

An expansive rethinking of care of course requires resources. The Care Collective name the sustained defunding of care under neoliberalism as the impetus for what they call 'paranoid and chauvinist caring imaginaries – looking after "our own"'', suggesting that 'adequate resources, time and labour would make people feel secure enough to care for, about and with strangers as much as kin' (The Care Collective: 42). Their proposal of promiscuous care is one that cares for all: from refugee communities to non-human entities, from communities to markets to the environment. It is also a question: how could promiscuous, universal, community care be resourced and infrastructured? As they write, 'to encourage promiscuous care means building institutions that are capacious and agile enough to recognise and resource wider forms of care at the level of kinship' (The Care Collective: 44). In the case of art institutions, then, how could we institute with capaciousness and agility?

3.4 Environments

f. Caring for the more-than-human

The expansiveness of care that the Care Collective refer to—in particular their descriptions of kinship towards non-human entities (The Care Collective: 40)–brings the more-than-human into our thinking about care relations. This engagement with posthumanism has been one key way that arts institutions talk about care: in terms of care for the planet, and for better climate futures. In her book *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds* (2017), Maria Puig de la Bellacasa notes the expansiveness of the field of care, ranging from health-related care (nursing studies, sociologies of medicine, health and illness, disability studies and activism, social work) to political thought (migration and labour studies, justice, citizenship, economics and policy) to the broadly environmental (food politics, animal rights, farming practices

and human-non human relations) (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 2–3). Puig de la Bellacasa's project is to develop a 'naturecultural politics of care' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 165), thinking of care as an ethical obligation in more than human worlds, without reinstating the moralism of anthropocentrism (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 13). She echoes the idea that care is ambivalent, noting that 'to care can feel good; it can also feel awful. It can do good; it can oppress' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 1). Whilst this is not the space for a deep engagement with Puig de la Bellacasa's hugely significant work, elements of her attention to the principles of permaculture and her redrawing of Tronto and Fisher's definition of care is useful to my project.

Puig de la Bellacasa undertook two weeks of intensive training in permaculture with the US based group Earth Activist Training where, she writes, she was 'introduced to permaculture technologies for ecological practice as a form of tangible activism based on a commitment to care for the earth' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 125)—these are practices which, as she mentions, are indebted to agroecology, biodynamic agriculture and indigenous modes of land care (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 126). She notes the three main principles of permaculture: earth care, people care and return of the surplus (elsewhere sometimes *earth care, people care, fair share*). Her connection of permaculture ethics with a feminist ethics of care centres care for *all* beings, and emphasises the interconnection between these three aspects of earth, people and resources, connecting this to Guattari's concept of the interdependent 'three ecologies' of self, the collective, and the earth, each requiring the existence of the other (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 150). Her description of permaculture as 'inviting us to think with the "edges"—of lands and systems' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 129) forms an interesting parallel with Salvini's invitation to institute *on the threshold*. In both cases these transitional sites hold potential for transversal practices, relevant to our concern of art institutions practising care.

Puig de la Bellacasa draws out two further elements of permaculture ethics that are useful here. Firstly, their situatedness, as she writes: 'the actualization of principles of caring are always created in an interrelated doing with the needs of a place, a land, a neighbourhood, a city, even when a particular action is considered with regard to its extended global connections' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 150). Connecting to the proposals for care at the level of a neighbourhood by Salvini, Siravo,

Dowling, and The Care Collective, permaculture advocates for situated practice. Secondly, Puig de la Bellacasa notes that permaculture ethics support collective practices of direct action:

> Permaculture ethics are thought also as forms of organizing – for instance, promoting forms of collaborative direct democratic sharing instead of competition. They are not about an abstract external vision of the practices of others but an intrinsic transformation of ethos. (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 151)

I want to highlight this last sentence in particular: *they are not about an abstract external vision of the practices of others but an intrinsic transformation of ethos.* This distinction between an abstract, external vision on the one hand, and an intrinsic transformation of ethos on the other echoes my description of the tendency within art institutions for progressive statements which do not result in actual transformative practices. Permaculture ethics, then, are akin to practices of *parrhésia* in that they promote this integrity between statements and actions.

Perhaps the most germane element of Puig de la Bellacasa's book for the present discussion is an edit she proposes to Fisher and Tronto's definition of care:

> Care is everything that *is done* to maintain, continue, and repair *the* world so that *all* can live in it as well as possible. That world includes *all* that we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web. (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 161; modified from Fisher and Tronto, 1990)

This edit moves from a human-centric 'we' to a more expansive phrasing: everything that *is done* rather than everything that *we do*; *the* world rather than *our* world, and so on. This is in line with a permaculture ethics of care in which humans are not only caring *for* the earth, but are instead *'in* relations of mutual care' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 161). I am most interested here in Puig de la Bellacasa's focus on the affectively charged 'as well as possible' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 4), and what she describes as 'as well as possible worlds' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 7). This taking forward of Fisher and Tronto's phrasing of living *as well as possible* speaks to the impossibility of a

permaculture ethics of care to be totally transformative, especially within a troubled present which is, Puig de la Bellacasa writes, 'deeply antiecological, and in many ways anticollective' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 165). The *as well as possible* also allows for inevitable missteps, as well as the fact that caring well will have different meanings and interpretations; as well as possible holds space for this complexity, as Puig de la Bellacasa acknowledges:

> Thinking with care also strengthens the notion that there is no one-fits-all path for the good. What as well as possible care might mean will remain a fraught and contested terrain where different arrangements of humans-nonhumans will have different and conflictive significances. (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 220)

In the context of both a wider crisis of care, and a situated crisis of care in art institutions, caring *as well as possible* is a paradigm that is capacious enough to hold attempts to care, and to acknowledge that the context and wider infrastructure does not always allow for us to care as well as we might - whether through limitations of funding, capacity, or socio-political contexts. It also allows for different understandings of caring well, between different institutions, or even at different times in the life of one institution. At the same time as holding this *as well as possible*, Puig de la Bellacasa writes that one of the tenets of permaculture is abundant thinking: not imagining modest or self-sacrificial futures, but futures of abundance (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 150). In modelling worlds that we could live in *as well as possible*, a caring institutional practice in these terms could also create space for radical imagination: modelling best possible care and imagining abundant futures.

g. Wild care in the neighbourhood

A further understanding of the environments that make up our world is presented by considering the political and social contexts in which we live. It is part of the ambivalence of care that it could be used in rhetoric for surveillance policies as much as in calls for police abolition; I discussed in Chapter 2 the way in which Agamben, Power, and Martina all discuss acts done *in the name of*. A caring society could just as easily be code for oppressive state control as it could be understood as

the radical rethinking of infrastructures in care-forward ways that I have outlined here. I have discussed a number of suggestions for re-situating care at the community level and at the heart of political organisation. Salvini's description of the caring ecology of Trieste, 'a city that cares and heals,' (Salvini, 2019: n.p.) is a proposal for care at the neighbourhood level, at once deeply situated in Trieste and a proposition to be taken up elsewhere.

Writing on the new municipalisms in Spain, Gerald Raunig describes their form of 'incompliant institutionality' (Raunig, 2016, n.p.), which even when needing to engage with institutional forms, for example in the case of Barcelona en Comú taking office, reformulated policies and working frameworks in order to retain the collective and open nature of the alliance. Raunig writes that 'precisely this dis/semblage is needed, an institutional and instituent machine, which does not close itself in its structure, but rather permanently produces breakdowns and breakthroughs, bifurcations and confluences' (Raunig, 2016, n.p.). What might an incompliant institutionality look like for the art institution? How might it contribute to the idea of a care community, or *cuidadanía*, as proposed by Precarias a la Deriva (2004)? Raunig's description of a queer, feminist care economy sounds much like those proposed by Salvini, The Care Collective, and Dowling:

> A queer, feminist form of care economy that departs from the subsistence of wild care in the neighborhood. [...] In and through the beehives cuidadanía spreads, as multiplicity of care relationships that does not function in a clientelistic, top-down, individualizing manner, not based on tax and debt of the *munus*, but as a new *municipalismo* based on sharing, care and mutual indebtedness, bad, wild, rotten debt that is not repaid, not repayable. (Raunig, 2016, n.p.)

In this idea of *wild care in the neighbourhood*, we can trace the connection between the organisation of publics, the practice of instituting, and care; as three interwoven aspects of cuidadanía. In her work on reshaping democratic politics, Tronto proposes a fifth phase of caring, caring *with*, as an addendum to her definitions of caring about, caring for, caregiving and care receiving. This fifth phase is concerned with the balancing of care roles at societal level, marking the obligations we have to one another. She writes,

> The first four phases of caring imagined a citizen as someone who is attentive, responsible, competent, and responsive; "caring with" imagines the entire polity of citizens engaged in a lifetime of commitment to and benefitting from these principles. "Caring with" is our new democratic ideal. (Tronto, 2015: 14)

What makes care equal, Tronto holds, is our ability to assume it will be reciprocated, which is not to say that we will have an equal need for care, or come to it equally, but that it has a base of reciprocity. Caring *with*, then, implies this shared commitment.

3.5 Care in the curatorial

The topic of care, as I have remarked, has been increasingly at the forefront of curatorial practice. It is, as often claimed, at the heart of what curatorial practice is, with the word curating stemming from the Latin *cura*, to care. Whilst this is due to the role of the curator as taking care of objects, in recent years it has been suggested by many that this be extended to taking care of artists, of ideas, and of publics. Further, care has become a programmatic concern: referring to topics as broad yet interconnected as those I have included here, from ecosystem care, to health care, to reproductive labour.

The recent project *Radio Ballads*, developed by the Serpentine Gallery's civic projects arm (Amal Khalaf, Lizzie Graham, and Layla Gatens) exemplified a depth of research and embeddedness which is often lacking from curatorial projects around the topic of care; the artists involved (Sonia Boyce, Helen Cammock, Rory Pilgrim, and Ilona Sagar) each spent three years collaborating with social workers, carers, organisers, and communities in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, resulting in the four films and bodies of research included in the exhibition. Building on the legacy of the Serpentine civic project *Art + Care* that we discussed earlier, the project explores how artistic practices can become part of systemic change. *Radio Ballads* borrows its name from a 1957–64 series of eight radio programmes (or *ballads*) broadcast on the BBC which

combined music and song with the lived community stories of workers. The commissioned works in the exhibition, as new ballads, explore how voices (individual, collective, sometimes engaged in song) can tell stories about care and labour in our communities. The exhibition included a 'map of relationships' making visible all those contributing to the project, and the following 'invitation to take care' developed with Meenadchi, a Decolonising Non-Violent Communication educator:

> The works in this exhibition explore vulnerability and brave resilience often in the face of deep pain and difficulty. It may awaken your own needs for care and courage in the context of journeys you have experienced, navigated, or witnessed. We encourage you to honour these needs as we share and celebrate this work together. This could look like: taking a deep breath; pausing to drink water; finding a comforting colour to focus on; stepping outside to sit on the benches at the front of the Serpentine North Gallery; taking a walk in Hyde Park or Barking Town Square. You can also find a grounding exercise in the exhibition guide and audio guide, to help orientate yourself within the exhibition or afterwards. (Serpentine Gallery Civic Projects, 2021)

With a similar sensitivity to our different experiences of caring labour, Helena Reckitt's 2016 text 'Support Acts: Curating, Caring and Social Reproduction' examines the role of affective economies of care and love in relation to curatorial labour, from the production of social networks and professional relationships, to an over identification with work and resultant risk of burnout. She notes the expectation that curators will be adept in maintaining social relationships with artists, funders and other partners, whilst little importance is given to the need to extend such relations to institutional colleagues (Reckitt, 2016: 2). Under the guise of 'love' for their work, Reckitt notes how curators and other cultural workers often work overtime, including unofficial affective labour, and neglect other aspects of their lives, all for low pay and precarious working conditions (Reckitt, 2016: 3). Whilst in certain cases, this curatorial emphasis on care may enhance the reputation of the curator, this is at odds with the often hierarchical structure of labour in art institutions, and the often-hidden caring labour of gallery education and public programme curators. As Reckitt states 'the curatorial emphasis on the positive, supportive, 'loving' affects of care suppresses curating's

more discriminating, controlling and exclusionary procedures' (Reckitt, 2016: 7). This claim to care can function as a care fix, obscuring the reality of real working relationships.

Reckitt's proposal is to instead take the affective dimensions of curatorial labour seriously (Reckitt, 2016: 21) and she mentions some examples of this, from Edinburgh based Arika's 2015 project *We Can't Live Without Our Lives* which gathered collective practices of social reproduction through a programme of workshops, performances and screenings around the question: if contemporary life leaves us feeling ill, exhausted and uncared for, how might we care for each other differently? (Reckitt, 2016: 16); to Casco Art Institute's *Grand Domestic Revolution* project, and specifically their 'unlearning' work with the artist Annette Krauss to redistribute and make visible the maintenance work of the institution; to artist Andrea Francke's project *The Invisible Spaces of Parenthood* which created temporary childcare within art schools; to various projects campaigning for fair remuneration of artists and art workers from, for example, Precarious Workers Brigade in the UK and Working Artists and the Greater Economy (WAGE) in the US (Reckitt, 2016: 19). She notes 'the limitations of curatorial and institutional initiatives that perform radicalism on a discursive or representational level, without addressing or transforming the political conditions under which they operate' (Reckitt, 2016: 21), speaking to the discrepancy which I have called a crisis of care in art institutions. Reckitt's suggestion is to reorient focus towards the 'behind-the-scenes' activities:

> Such an approach would question the sustainability of activities that, for example, rely on shipping objects around the world at vast environmental cost, or in the carbon footprint left by people keeping up with the art world's itinerant calendar. Recognizing that the art world is unsustainable if those working in it cannot reproduce their livelihoods, it would prioritize the need for support systems that sustain cultural production, from childcare, parental leave and provisions for people with disabilities, to fair pay and employment practices. (Reckitt, 2016)

In a more recent text, 'From Coping to Curious: Unlearning and Reimagining Curatorial Habits of Care', Reckitt reflects on her own institutional experiences, and the expectation to perform what

Jenny Richards has called 'the coping curator', writing that 'the pressure I felt to be hyperactive and visible, developing multiple programmes in a small team and under tight deadlines, left me little time or energy for relationships or activities outside work' (Reckitt, 2023: 2); 'close to exhaustion, battling insomnia, I nonetheless continued to project the persona of the coping curator' (Reckitt, 2023: 4). She also notes the complex nature of working to change such ingrained behaviours and cultures within art institutions, especially when cultural workers are often precariously employed–despite this, the bulk of the labour of rethinking care policies and encouraging institutions to take them on is held by these exact workers, as, Reckitt writes, 'having experienced a deficit of institutional care first hand, they recognise the need to work together and care for one another' (Reckitt, 2023: 14). She notes how, in recent years, this commitment to holding institutions to account for their toxic behaviour has proliferated on social media, providing public evidence of practices of racism and ableism (Reckitt, 2023: 7), an example of the moment of rupture I described in Chapter 2, which makes visible a crisis of care.

Curator and writer iLiana Fokianaki, director of State of Concept in Athens, developed the long-term research project *The Bureau of Care,* in part a response to the urgency with which care was treated in the arts during the Covid-19 pandemic, and a hope that this translate to the transformation of institutions in real terms. She writes, 'it is now time to actually change our institutions, taking inspiration from intersectional feminist, indigenous, queer, and black struggle and demanding the redistribution of care. We have to seize the possibilities enabled by the legacies of countless forms of collective care: healers, care workers, parents, social workers, educators, and cultural workers' (Fokianaki, 2020). *The Bureau of Care* includes a handbook and exhibition, as well as the bureau itself as an online and physical resource. It is a call for a restructuring of arts institutions which learns from the field of care, testing forms of horizontality, equitable pay structures, and sustainable practice.

In a recent text for Art Monthly, 'Care v Competition', artist and writer Morgan Quaintance suggests that the art sector's claims to care are undermined by its commitment to forms of structural competition, such as job application processes and major arts prizes. He briefly refers to The Care Collective's *Care Manifesto*, specifically their proposal for universal care, as something

the art sector is falling short of; he does not in this text grasp the complexity of their proposal–which is in any case, not a proposal for the arts, but for wider society–but this light touch engagement with their ideas is arguably a reflection of the shallow engagement with concepts of care taken by many art institutions. It is this claim of the sector to 'care', whilst the opposite seems apparent, that Quaintance takes issue with:

> It is in the clash between the recent projection of itself as a care-focused community versus the enduring functional reality of a hierarchical and exclusionary system that the actual character of the UK art world, its inertia and insensitivity, comes into view and what it looks like is a standard bureaucracy: indifferent, impersonal and frequently cruel. (Quaintance, 2023: 6)

Quaintance questions the need for the field to promote a socio-political outlook, arguing that this requirement for artists' work to have a political and egalitarian message is a double standard; whereas the artists of a staunchly patriarchal era ('mostly male, mostly middle and upper class, mostly white artists' [Quaintance, 2023: 7]) were allowed the privilege of their work being 'art for art's sake', younger artists in a now more diverse sector are not afforded the same luxury, instead instrumentalised as 'social workers, self-sacrificing artists, underpaid educators, psychologists... economists... shamans and so on' (Quaintance, 2023: 7).

Quaintance suggests that this pressure for art to be useful as opposed to what he terms 'the radical uselessness of contemporary art' (Quaintance, 2023: 8) is a subtle push towards the sector becoming more and more like a public service, making it fair game for increasing defunding and privatisation by a Conservative government. There are certainly echoes in what Quaintance describes of the push for art to take on work previously carried out by funded state services (such as mental health support, the provision of community spaces, activities for young people, and other local services) which has been a strong impetus in the UK stemming from the Conservative government's 'big society' campaign in 2010 mentioned in section 3.2 (an example of this would be the expansion of Arts Council Project Grants to local libraries). All but defunded by the state, their inclusion in those able to compete for ACE funding both turns a public service into one reliant on

fundraising, and depletes the funding available to artists and arts organisations, whilst functioning as a care fix that is cleverly placed: who would argue that libraries are deserving of funding? Whilst Quaintance's point here is an apt one–that art (and artists) should not be forced to fill a hole left by chronic underfunding—I would add that much of his own work argues for a more transparent, caring sector, and that this is something to hold on to as an ideal, only in real terms rather than performatively.

The primary argument of Quaintance's text is against the competition focused sector, both in terms of highly competitive application processes, requiring a huge amount of labour and often only responded to with stock replies, and in terms of the culture of major art prizes. His suggestion is that, as modelled in response to the pandemic in 2020, these prizes be made more democratic, with monies shared between numerous awardees:

> Put simply, if the temporary alteration of awards, bursaries and the like were partly due to an empathic response to the socio-economic and psychological difficulties caused by the pandemic, how can an allegedly 'caring' sector be deaf to the extraordinarily difficult conditions artists and cultural workers are presently struggling with en masse? (Quaintance, 2023: 8)

In highlighting the uncaring nature of such processes, Quaintance also notes the hesitation many will have with speaking widely about their experiences, for fear of ruining their future chances of such a life-changing financial award. He argues for the overall reform of these competitive structures at the heart of the sector (Quaintance, 2023: 9).

Also writing in support of a less competitive sector, Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez's 2017 text *For Slow Institutions* called for curators to 'imagine new ecologies of care as a continuous practice of support... to radically open up our institutional borders and show how these work—or don't—in order to render our organizations palpable, audible, sentient, soft, porous, and above all, decolonial and anti-patriarchal' (Petrešin-Bachelez, 2017: n.p.). Her text argues for the sector to be responsive to a time of profound ecological crisis, taking forward Isabelle Stengers' concept of 'slow science',

which suggests the decoupling of fast science and industry in favour of principles of degrowth and more considered, socio-politically engaged research. Petrešin-Bachelez suggests that, in contrast to a culture of competition and the progress-driven imperatives of neoliberalism, we might instead consider how art institutions could slow down, becoming less extractive and also less hierarchical. The ecologies of care that Petrešin-Bachelez suggests–imagining institutions as decolonial, anti-patriarchal and radically open–could be understood both as a practice of care internal to the organisation, and a practice of care for our place in a wider ecosystem[2]. Her call to 'radically open up institutional borders [...] in order to render our organizations palpable, audible, sentient' (Petrešin-Bachelez, 2017: n.p.) could be seen as a call for the radical truth-telling of a practice of *parrhesia*.

3.6 Care as Access Intimacy

Crucial to our consideration of practices of care within art institutions is the way in which those institutions relate to the needs of their staff, the artists they programme, and their publics. In Chapter 1, I discussed the insistence in much political theory of putting the body on the line, and Hedva's *Sick Woman Theory* as a counter argument to this. In Chapter 2 we saw how the impact of uncaring institutions is often felt physically: through the exhaustion of the complainant, for example. In this chapter, we have seen how the care of bodies is one part of maintaining our world (Fisher and Tronto, 1990). If a key way that art institutions make claims to care is via their equity, diversity, and inclusion policies, then the extent to which art institutions centre accessibility in their work is of direct correlation to their actual commitment to such policies. As such, one way in which care (or its lack) can be directly felt in the art institution is through access policy. Accessibility can take many forms: as well as, for example, step free access and wheelchair accessible buildings, it can mean structuring work in a way which doesn't centre productivity at all costs; programming with sensitivity to neurodivergent publics; budgeting for sign language interpreters

[2] As I have suggested, together with Alba Colomo, in the texts 'Institutions as Ecosystems', in *Who's Art For? Art Workers Against Exploitation*, postmedia books, 2019; and 'Cultivating la Sala', in *Instituting Feminism*, *On Curating Journal*, 2021.

and captioning; communicating in clear language and in more than one language; building in rest time to install periods.

The ideal of what this could be is what Mia Mingus has called *access intimacy*, defined as 'that elusive, hard to describe feeling when someone else "gets" your access needs' (Mingus, 2011: n.p.). Mingus was part of the disability justice collective (together with Patty Berne, Leroy Moore, Sebastian Margaret, and Eli Clare) who originally coined the term disability justice, naming the second wave of the disability rights movement. She describes access intimacy as a shared feeling among disabled and sick people who have an immediate understanding of the impacts of ableism: 'Together, we share a kind of access intimacy that is ground-level, with no need for explanations. Instantly, we can hold the weight, emotion, logistics, isolation, trauma, fear, anxiety and pain of access' (Mingus, 2011: n.p.). Access intimacy is not, she writes, the same as access, which can be experienced as an afterthought, a burden or a form of charity; it is an experience that feels freeing and builds connection. It does not necessarily mean getting everything right, and in fact sometimes means 'both of you trying to create access as hard as you can with no avail in an ableist world' (Mingus, 2011: n.p.). Moving towards access intimacy within arts institutions is one way to counter the tendency to put the body on the line—working against ableist, extractivist and capitalist approaches to wage labour.

Artist, writer and sometimes-curator Jamila Prowse works to create spaces of access intimacy, having herself left institutional curatorial roles due to their impact on her own disability. She wrote in 2020 of the complexities of living with a chronic mental health condition, often exacerbated by the working conditions of the art sector, noting that aspects of how the sector adapted to the pandemic afforded a great deal more access to those who were confined at home due to ongoing health conditions and disabilities, and calling for the continuation of this in non-pandemic times (Prowse, 2020). Prowse follows the social model of disability—that individuals are disabled by barriers in society, rather than by their impairment—and writes that 'the experience of being a disabled or chronically ill person in the world and connecting with sick or crip communities can be an affirming, expansive and fulfilling journey' (Prowse, 2021: n.p.). In her frequent writing on

access in the arts, she often speaks candidly about her own experiences of institutional harm and ableism.

Noting their importance in giving her 'a second chance in the arts sector' (Prowse, 2021b, n.p.), Prowse signposts to the resources made by disabled and chronically ill artists, such as *Access Docs for Artists*, a website created by the artists Leah Clements, Lizzy Rose, and Alice Hatrick during a residency at Wysing Arts Centre, which provides clear information on the nature of an access doc and how to write one, as well as giving examples and other resources. As the website explains,

> An access doc, or access 'rider' is a document that outlines your disability access needs. You might make one so that you can give it to galleries/institutions/organisations when you start working with them on a project, such as a gallery you're doing a show at for example, to let them know what you need them to facilitate to make sure you have equal access to work. You might want to make one if you are an artist or art worker and identify as sick/crip/disabled/D/deaf and have found that you have encountered barriers in your working relationships or ability to take on opportunities because of your disability. (Clements, Hatrick and Rose, 2018)

Another key resource is *Accessibility in the Arts: A Promise and a Practice* by artist Carolyn Lazard, an accessibility guide for small arts organisations based on principles of disability justice (described by Lazard as an intersectional model which defines disability as 'an economic, cultural, and/or social exclusion based on a physical, psychological, sensory, or cognitive difference' [Lazard, 2019]). It includes a list of recommended accommodations that art organisations can make to facilitate infrastructural change, 'proposing solutions for how institutions of varying resources, personnel, and building management might meet the call to eradicate access barriers' (Lazard, 2019) as well as sections on how to list access information, how to budget for access, and additional resources.

The activist and performance artist Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's book *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice* explores the politics and lived realities of the disability justice movement, centering the work of disabled and sick queer people of colour and the ways they

support one another. In the chapter 'Cripping the Apocalypse: Some of My Wild Disability Justice Dreams' she writes, 'our work needs to center disability justice and the activists at the core of it, where being sick, disabled, mad, neurodivergent/autistic and/or Deaf is at the heart of our radicalism' (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 124). Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha argues that true disability justice requires new infrastructures capable of supporting the scope of its practices. She describes disability as 'a set of innovative, virtuosic skills' (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 126), noting the persistence and resilience of the disabled community to work continuously against the odds in sectors that do not support them, writing that:

> this commitment to not leaving each other behind, the power of a march where you move as slowly as the slowest member and put us in the front, the power of a lockdown of scooter users in front of police headquarters, the power of movements that know how to bring each other food and medicine and organize from tired without apology and with a sense that tired people catch things people moving fast miss–all of these are skills we have. (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 126)

She notes that disability justice, much like Mingus' description of access intimacy, is not defined by the provision of access adjustments such as ramps and sign language interpreters but by long-term relationship building and trust (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 127), with the importance of this trust partly due to the experiences many disabled people have had with accepting care, 'because "care" has always been conditional, or violent–the invasion of social workers or Child Protective Services or psychiatrists with the power to lock you up' (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 132). Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's book instead puts forward an imaginary for 'communities of care, where caring for each other is something we actually practise and build the structures to hold' (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 131), and is an often joyful proposal for what this might look like.

I have mentioned in this and earlier chapters the American artist Johanna Hedva's 'Sick Woman Theory', which as they describe, 'redefines existence in a body as something that is primarily and always vulnerable' and holds that 'most modes of political protest are internalized, lived, embodied,

suffering, and no doubt invisible' (Hedva, 2016). Hedva writes that sickness as we understand it today is a capitalist construct, the opposite of wellness:

> What is so destructive about conceiving of wellness as the default, as the standard mode of existence, is that it invents illness as temporary. When being sick is an abhorrence to the norm, it allows us to conceive of care and support in the same way. Care, in this configuration, is only required sometimes. When sickness is temporary, care is not normal. (Hedva, 2016)

'Sick Woman Theory' instead argues for a restructuring of our world around a basic premise of vulnerability. In their more recent text 'Get Well Soon', written amidst the first wave of the pandemic in 2020, Hedva wrote that we were experiencing what happens 'when care insists on itself, when the care of others becomes mandatory, when it takes up space and money and labour and energy' (Hedva, 2020: n.p.). They chart the revolutionary potential of sickness: 'a revolution [...] might look like hundreds of thousands of bodies in bed, organising a rent strike, separating life's value from capitalist productivity' (Hedva, 2020: n.p.)—noting that this is known well by those living with sickness and disability as an everyday reality. Hedva's contention is that the feelings of collectivity in isolation experienced during the pandemic, an everyday reality of those living with sickness and disability, invalidate the capitalist myth of individual autonomy, showing the extent to which we are all interconnected (Hedva, 2020: n.p.). Whilst the common feelings experienced by many during the pandemic, and the access adjustments mentioned by Prowse, have not led to any apparent tangible steps towards a more accessible, caring sector, Hedva's text gives a glimpse into what it might look like for care to insist on itself. As demonstrated in this section, there is no lack of resources to be used by the arts in forming a more accessible sector. What, then, is the barrier?

3.7 Caring Well

To conclude this chapter, I want to pick up on the concept of living in the world 'as well as possible' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990) and the 'as-well-as-possible worlds' described by Puig de la

Bellacasa (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017). What could it mean to care *well*, or as well as possible, for *as well as possible worlds*?

In this chapter I have described a number of approaches to caring better, from care communities such as the micro areas in Trieste and the new municipalisms in Spain; to proposals for promiscuous care, radical self-care and working in friendship; to access intimacy and disability justice. I have situated this amidst a care crisis, which uses care fixes to obscure itself, and introduced a number of artistic and curatorial projects which engage with care in more or less genuine ways. I have argued along with Emma Dowling, Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, The Care Collective, and others, that care is or should be at the heart of our existence. Responding to and naming a related crisis of care in the art sector, characterised by claims to care which are not enacted at the level of policy, I have proposed that instead caring *in real terms* would go some way towards modelling more caring practices at the societal level.

Given the ambivalence of care, and its potential to be violent (as a justification for policing; or as sometimes experienced in forms of social care), how could we reclaim care (as Puig de la Bellacasa describes, making a toxic terrain capable of nurturing), by instead speaking of caring *well*, or as well as possible? J.K. Gibson-Graham (the shared pen name of feminist economic geographers Julie Graham and Katherine Gibson) in collaboration with Jenny Cameron and Stephen Healy have written on what Gibson-Graham terms *surviving well*:

> Surviving well together is a collective endeavour engaging multiple elements–individual happiness and well-being, and the happiness and well-being of others and the planet on which we live. The term survival might seem too linked to material sufficiency, but for us it gestures towards the maintenance of life conjuring up the human and non-human others that contribute to this delicately balanced process. (Cameron, Gibson-Graham, and Healy, 2016: 123)

Gibson-Graham and her collaborators contend that humans are not surviving well: we are working more, consuming too much of the earth's finite resources, and reaching burnout (Cameron,

Gibson-Graham, and Healy, 2013). In order to survive *well*, they write, we need a combination of material, occupational, social, community and physical well-being, with sufficient resources, a sense of fulfilment, close relationships and supportive social networks, involvement in a community, good health and a safe environment (Gibson-Graham, Cameron & Healy, 2013). Their proposal is for ethical community economies, in which we support one another and the environment, looking at the ways in which our current work undermines our ability to survive well.

Caring *well*, then, would move away from the temporary, sub-standard care of the care fix, instead aiming to care in ways that are abundant, equitable and long-lasting. In invoking the idea of the *as well as possible*, after Tronto and Puig de la Bellacasa, we can at once allow for processes of learning (and sometimes misstepping), and for radical imagination, towards *as well as possible worlds*. In the chapters that follow, I will describe my attempts to care well with Eastside Projects, and propose some ways that they, and art institutions more broadly, might practise care as well as possible.

4

The Doors of the Administration Building are Open

Policy at Eastside Projects

Fig. 2: Liam Gillick (2008) *The Doors of the Administration Building are Open*. Eastside Projects' opening billboard commission as part of the inaugural exhibition, *This is the Gallery and the Gallery is Many Things.*

Following my central research question—how might art institutions care well?—the previous three chapters have defined some preliminary conclusions which allow me to refine my question. These are:

1. The address of the institution, its means of forming publics, is in its workings, and as such the institution should care for its staff as well as its publics and artists;
2. In order to practise care of the self, as a form of *parrhesia*, the institution should reconcile its *logos* and *bios*: it should act as it speaks, with integrity;
3. Art institutions are in a crisis of care, characterised by a discrepancy between external statements and internal workings, and the prevalence of the care fix;
4. Instituent practices—as an ongoing process of instituting, retaining porosity—are a potential means for the workings of institutions to remain responsive;

5. Caring *with* is reciprocal and equitable. To care *well*, as the inverse of the care fix, is to enact genuine (not superficial) practices of care. These practices of care are essentially acts of maintenance, of each other, our bodies, our selves, and wider, interconnected ecosystems. To care well—with integrity—these acts of maintenance need to be rethought, to divorce them from the performance of progressive neoliberalism, carewashing, and profit.

Thus the central question may be put like so: to what extent do instituent practices enable environments of care? Following these preliminary conclusions, in this chapter I answer this question using the case study of Eastside Projects (EP), and specifically the project *Policy Show*, which I co-curated with Gavin Wade. In order to do this, I situate the project in the wider work of the organisation, describe our intentions for the project, and how it actually unfolded. It is in the comparison between these aspects, of intention and reality, that I reflect on whether the process was one which embodied care, while also analysing what a caring environment might look like, anchored in the discussion of the previous three chapters. *Policy Show*, as an experiment in instituent practice, a public exploration of an organisation's policies, and an example of an organisation experiencing a rupture (the loss of the EP building 2017–18), is a fitting case study through which I will answer this question.

In what follows, I first introduce the context for the project, both in terms of the background context for EP, referring to their ongoing *User's Manuals* and 2011's *Public Evaluation Event*, and in terms of the wider context in arts funding and programming at the time that we developed *Policy Show*. Contextualising the work of EP, I introduce the practice of Future of the Left, a collaborative project by Andrea Francke and Ross Jardine which was engaging with ideas of evaluation and policy around the same time. Secondly, I explain how the project unfolded and the impact of the sudden closing of EP's premises in June 2017, which refocused my research around the potential of such a moment of rupture in terms of facilitating instituent practice. Thirdly, I reflect on the project via interviews I conducted with staff and artists, particularly looking at the organisation through the lens of the wider crisis of care in the sector as discussed in Chapter 2, and whether *Policy Show* functioned as another example of a care fix or was successful as an attempt to care *with*

the organisation. In this analysis, I question whether an environment of care is actually one which *feels* caring, and how this could be defined otherwise.

4.1 Policy in the Arts

During the period we were developing Policy Show, 2016–2017, EP, along with other existing and prospective Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) across the country, were writing their business plans and proposed artistic programmes for the next round of NPO funding (2018–22). Part of this was a heightened focus on articulating how the organisation would meet targets related to Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity, with organisations given a 'creative case rating' assessing their level of diversity. ACE note that they 'recognise diversity in its broadest sense but as in previous years the data [used to report on organisations] focuses on four protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010: race (referred to here as ethnicity), disability, sex (referred to here as gender) and sexual orientation' (Arts Council England, 2018–19: 4). With this push to increase diversity across the sector—in a way that could be measured through business plans—policy was a way to state intentions for future work and often included quotas for levels of inclusion. There were a number of projects and reports which added to this conversation: through illustrating a lack of diversity in the sector; through problematising the framework with which diversity was assessed; or through engaging with policy as a topic for art production and programming.

An example of a report which speaks to this tendency is the project by Create London, *Panic! It's an Arts Emergency* which ran from 2015–18, resulting in the publication of the research paper 'Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries' (Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor, 2018) a sociological study on social mobility in the cultural industries exposing significant exclusions across the cultural and creative industry sector of those from working class and BAME backgrounds. Their publication of workforce demographics within the sector was at once a powerful call for a more inclusive sector, and part of a further push towards a quota-based way of thinking about diversity as a form of positive discrimination aimed at achieving targets set by funders, with the incentive of retaining or increasing financial stability.

The topic of policy was also present in the work of artists at this time, and I want to briefly mention here the artist Rosalie Schweiker, who would go on to become part of *Policy Show*. Since starting to work as an artist, Schweiker has made an annual publication, both reflecting on the year's work and formulating a set of policies for the year to come, which she calls 'terms and conditions'. These terms and conditions function as a tool to navigate freelance work, articulating certain values and commitments, for example policies such as not travelling by plane for work, always asking organisations about their childcare provision (even though this didn't directly impact her), and always inviting a second person to collaborate with her when invited for a talk or workshop. In this context, when EP invited Schweiker to lead a workshop in early 2017, she invited the curator/arts administrator Teresa Cisneros to join her. Together, they led a conversation about personal policy, administration and working practices, which ultimately led to our inviting them both to be part of *Policy Show*. Schweiker's framing of policy—as self-determined rules by which we might live and work—juxtaposed with Cisneros' contention that policy and administration had the potential to facilitate change was a productive friction that fed into how we imagined *Policy Show*, and the different ways that policy might function and be understood, depending on context.

Aspects of how we work together and with best practice in arts institutions were also taken up in a number of projects happening around the same time as *Policy Show*. Future of the Left (FOTL), the collaborative project of artists Andrea Francke and Ross Jardine, was built around a shared interest in structures of policy and administration within art institutions. Their collectively authored paper 'Bureaucracy's Labour: The Administrator as Subject' (2017) reframes administrative work as akin to domestic labour. Whilst sympathetic to critiques of administration and bureaucracy from writers such as David Graeber and Mark Fisher which resist the spread of 'admin' through every aspect of our everyday lives ('From passport control to binary gender categories on job application forms, administration gently pushes us into ideologically assigned roles and positions and then traps us there. We are consistently expected to self-manage, to self-assess' [Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.]), Francke and Jardine's focus is on the administrative worker as an invisible worker, who, when systems run smoothly, is nowhere to be seen. They write: 'administration renders these figures invisible. To be deemed successful in their task the

administrator must adhere to a range of standards and style guides that mask their identity with that of the institution through policies of best practice and standardisation' (Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.). The administrator, and their work of maintaining systems of administration, is only visible when these systems fail, when things break, 'by the sudden absence of infrastructural flow' (Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.). Whilst their work may be infrastructural, they are human, and make errors—and it is in these errors and system failures that, according to Francke and Jardine, there is a powerful potential, the capacity to interrupt the flow of capital. When bureaucracy fails (in a way which may be likened to the series of ruptures I outline in Chapter 2) infrastructures are exposed, including the humans whose work it is to administer them.

Francke and Jardine draw a connection between the administrative worker and the domestic worker, 'not only through the invisible nature of the work, also in how they both maintain, support and reproduce more valued types of labour' (Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.). Finding in this comparison some examples of tools for self-organisation amongst workers, Francke and Jardine propose that administrators exploit the political and productive possibilities of the workplace as a space to organise, and a resource:

> This acknowledgement of the potential to shape and utilise the space of production could offer some insight to what is possible if administrators embrace informing their practices through their political engagement and also recognising the production potential of the administrative space. Not only in its world-making capacities, but also in the practical using-the-copy-machine-to-publish-pamphlets way. (Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.)

This use of the administrative workplace as the means of organising and political emancipation echoes Graham's concept of the para-site (2015), in which social justice work is carried out through the resources of an institution that does not necessarily hold the same values. Francke and Jardine remind us that, while the administrators may not often decide policy, they are likely to be the ones who write it and enact it, and thus hold the capacity to derail it. They make reference to the work of queer activist and legal scholar Dean Spade, who positions administrative systems and policy as key sites for political transformation, exactly *because* they are so prevalent within our lives as often

disciplinary forces (Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.). Indeed, for Francke and Jardine, the administrative worker is key to political or system change. They write:

> There are moments in time where the solidity of the systems we recognise as everyday life start to flicker, when opportunities for change and for a redefining of our shared understanding of the world become possible. If change is going to happen it will inevitably depend on the development of radically different administrative and bureaucratic systems. [...] For revolution to happen we need administrators on our side. (Francke and Jardine, 2017, n.p.)

As FOTL, from 2018–20 Francke and Jardine spent two years developing an evaluation framework for the London arts organisation Gasworks' participatory residency programme. The resulting framework centred around the creation of an evaluation board made up of 'current and former participants, current and former artists, representatives of the institution and critical friends with a specific individual or institutional expertise' (Francke and Jardine, 2020a). Central to their proposal was that evaluation be an ongoing process, happening alongside, rather than after, the project in question, so that it might be allowed to actually influence project processes and outcomes. Francke explains that, whilst the evaluation board does use some standard evaluative methods such as surveys and qualitative interviews, the data that these methods produce is used as a starting point for group discussions rather than as conclusive information for external reporting. She asks:

> How did we end up with evaluation processes that reward the production of impressive numbers, mapping of impacts, projects emotional and wellbeing scales, and then end up in the archive of a funder, being valued over a process that enables everyday change at the local level? (Francke and Jardine, 2020a)

The focus of FOTL's report and proposed framework is therefore not on evaluation for the sake of reporting externally, nor for justifying financial spending, but instead on a collaborative process,

defining shared values through collective analysis and learning, and applying these values to live projects.

In addition to the final report, evaluation framework and a mid-term report, FOTL sent irregular newsletters to subscribers during the two-year process, which provide an honest and critical reflection on carrying out evaluative work in the arts. Along the way, Francke reflects on the temporality of evaluation as being akin to that of care: 'I've always thought that evaluation should exist in the time of maintenance and care. Because if it's well done, evaluation should be a practice of maintenance and care. Repetitive, relentless, endless' (Francke and Jardine, 2020e). This is evidenced in the creation of the evaluation board, as a proposal for an ongoing process of evaluation as maintenance. Francke also discusses the quality of reflections written by researchers with direct involvement in participatory arts projects. These reflections are often conflicted and messy, but are able to illustrate the complexities and failures of such work, allowing for genuine learning. Reading Francke's reflections on this process was helpful in understanding my own direct involvement with EP as both co-curator and researcher. In another newsletter, Jardine articulates an interest in new municipalisms as an example of democratic knowledge production, giving citizens a more direct role in shaping policy, as I described in Chapter 2. Jardine is interested in the ways in which more direct forms of knowledge production (for example, 'recognising lived experience as a vital type of knowledge', [Francke and Jardine, 2019]) could influence participatory practice in arts organisations, through the recognition of local knowledge.

One of FOTL's reflections most relevant in the present context is Francke's description of the need to hold on to a state of confusion or shared instability, and to think collectively from this state. She asks, 'how do you create an object that not only creates a space of shared instability but that it actually refuses to return you to a state of stability when you leave it? How can an evaluation report which is by nature a tool for closure refuse to accept that closure is a thing?' (Francke and Jardine, 2020c). The question of how to remain open and responsive—how to institute porosity—in order to undertake instituent practice was central to my thinking around *Policy Show*.

Thinking with FOTL, and with Cisneros and Schweiker, the fields of policy, administration and evaluation appear as a space with the potential for radicality, a possible antidote to the overwhelmingly exclusionary field evidenced in reports such as Create London's. However, thinking back to our discussions of superficial fixes, we have seen how policy is often experienced as either a roadblock or an empty promise. We can call back here to Ahmed's description of institutional policies as a way of performing good practice, 'as if having a policy against something is evidence it does not exist' (Ahmed, 2021: 52). The process of complaint, she writes, often makes visible which policies are real and which are empty. In her study of the lived experience of diversity-led initiatives, *This Work Isn't For Us*, Jemma Desai writes of the language and implementation of policy around diversity, specifically the use of diversity quotas to signify progress:

> An imagining of me by people writing such policy might be that I am a statistic of progress for the sector, and that my participation in these schemes and institutions is, in part, a symbol of change. My experience of the cultural sector and what comes out of it problematizes those statistics. Whilst they may appear a helpful advocacy and accountability tool, the struggle I have experienced to be seen in the totality of my experience whilst working in the cultural sector is a negation of them. I believe the picture is much more troubling than those statistics can communicate. (Desai, 2020: 6)

What Desai illustrates is how, as Ahmed alludes to, policies can sometimes obscure lived realities, instead functioning as something of a smoke screen. At the same time, a lack of *genuine* policies which safeguard workers (for example, around accessibility, cultures of overwork, and forms of support for sickness and/or caring) is exacerbated, rather than aided, by a culture which rewards the visibility of hiring marginalised bodies, without building in infrastructures of support or equity. Desai draws on legacies of Black feminist thought from Audre Lorde and bell hooks to Ahmed, as well as on testimonies from cultural workers, to interrogate schemes designed to address disparities of representation in the sector. She notes, 'such schemes create much attention, and appear to present a solid commitment to change' (Desai, 2020: 6) whereas in reality they do nothing to

address either the experience of those already working in the sector, or the wider structural inequity and harm which has led to such a lack of inclusion.

Desai's position on diversity strategy is aligned with the work of Angela Davis, who, when invited to lecture at the University of Southern California's Black Student Assembly in 2015 stated:

> I have a hard time accepting diversity as a synonym for justice. Diversity is a corporate strategy. It's a strategy designed to ensure that the institution functions in the same way that it functioned before, except now that you now have some black faces and brown faces. It's a difference that doesn't make a difference. (Davis, 2015)

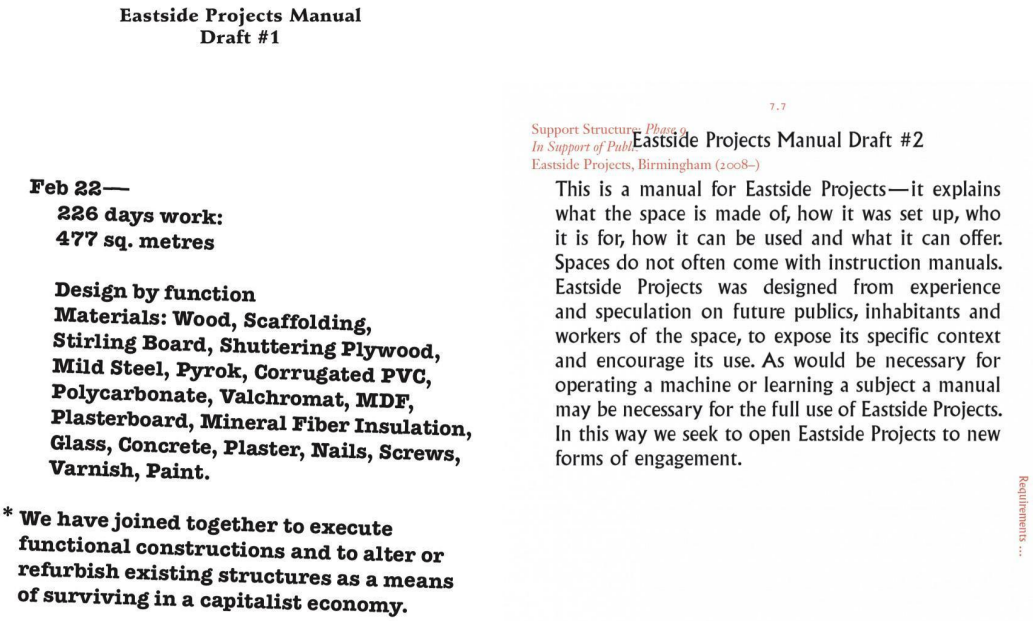
Davis' statement here that diversity policy is '*a difference that doesn't make a difference*' (Davis, 2015) also chimes with Ahmed's work on diversity, something which is referenced by both Desai and FOTL, who also critique the push towards diversity quotas. As Francke writes, 'creating evidence is actually much easier than doing something. For example, it is much easier to get your diversity numbers up than to actually figure out what being an anti-racist organisation would look like' (Francke and Jardine, 2020d). Creating evidence in the form of quotas can be used as proof that an institution does not have a diversity issue, without actually committing to address long-standing inequity. Looking back to the focus of both the Creative Case for Diversity, and the *Panic*! report, which is firmly on the use of quotas as a marker of increased participation, we can see again how some forms of policy obscure the actual issue, providing clear targets and assessments rather than instituting slow and difficult processes of reflection and change.

4.2 Precursors to Policy Show

Within the context as described in section 4.1, I was interested in the potential for *Policy Show* to facilitate a genuine conversation about the policy of EP, as a model for the wider sector. It felt important that these conversations included people with lived experience of the organisation from multiple perspectives, such as staff members, board members, publics, and artists, as well as drawing on external expertise. In the same way that previous exhibitions had left legacies in the

building in the form of long-term works, our intention was for the creation of long-term artworks as policies, which would be written into the policy manual. The prospect of EP's openness to thinking through policy in public felt like a rarity in the sector, and one which could lead to genuine shifts in the organisation, also acting as a model for the wider context. Having experienced the opposite in previous roles, I was struck immediately by EP's apparent openness to talking about itself in public. Amidst the context of a crisis of care within institutions, EP was opting into this internal view, rather than their hand being forced by adverse circumstances. This openness is also part of a longer trajectory, which can be traced through their user's manuals and public evaluation event, both of which I will briefly introduce here.

a) User's manuals



Figs. 3 and 4: *User's Manual Draft* #1 and #2.

Since opening in 2008, EP have published *User's Manuals*: a series of small publications which share how the organisation was set up, its organising principles, and how it operates, as well as particular projects, as a means to engage with the gallery: 'As would be necessary for operating a machine or learning a subject a manual may also be needed for you to fully use Eastside Projects'

(*User's Manual Draft #2*). Each manual is a numbered draft, building on the work of the former, rather than presented as a finished object. The manuals (especially manuals 1–5, which use the same format) are thus a representation of EP's artistic approach, layering cumulative outputs of the organisation in a highly designed format. As both a part of the organisation's output and an invitation to look more closely at how it operates, the manuals are key to understanding EP, but more because they accurately portray the organisation's multi-layered, sometimes self-referential approach ('a conceptual, co-operative and process-led approach to exhibition production' [Fite-Wassilak, 2015: 203]), than because they actually clarify what it is or does, to a reader without all of the background knowledge.

In his text 'Drafts, Acts and Lapses: Eastside Projects', Chris Fite-Wassilak notes how the manuals operate as a web of references, at times hard to access, in a way that is somewhat antithetical to their framing:

> It is a conscious self-mythologising that requires incessant documentation and discussion and the constant clarification and re-qualifying of statements. It is a porous system, but not an open one [...] there is a discernibly authorial tone that is predominantly curatorial. Its density promotes a quasi-hermetic involvement, rewarding sustained attention and repeated exposure, frustrating the casual observer. (Fite-Wassilak, 2015: 212)

Nonetheless, as a curatorial or artistic gesture the *User's Manuals* are highly effective, claiming the organisation itself and the collective vision of its co-directors as equally important as (and a part of) its artistic programmes. As Fite-Wassilak notes, something about the organisation seems to reward repeated exposure, and there is significance in this: EP is an organisation that invites you to engage with its work in a way that is far from superficial, and indeed asks staff at all levels to become a real part of the organisation and its history, something articulated in the simple but still unusual act of including in the *User's Manuals* the names of all those who have worked with the organisation since its inception.

In their content and form, the *User's Manuals* are a key precursor to *Policy Show*, illustrating the trajectory of the organisation's operations and programmes, as a public output in themselves; as Fite-Wassilak notes of EP, 'it was conceived from the start as an artwork [...] the physical space, the transformation of the gallery, is both the context and the subject [...] the gallery's programme is the gallery itself' (Fite-Wassilak, 2015: 203–4). *User's Manual Draft #5* addresses directly both the artistic importance and intended self-questioning of all aspects of the organisation's work: 'Eastside Projects seeks to continuously question its status as an organisation and respond to the pressures of becoming an institution. Our ambition is to incorporate the methodologies of art-making at all scales and functions of the organisation' (*User's Manual Draft #5*, pp. 26–7). In my interview with Wade, he speaks of the connection between the *User's Manuals* and *Policy Show*:

> From the start of Eastside Projects, we actually did call one of the statements on the very first user's manual policy number one. So I think I was interested in it, but in a sort of autodidact way of imagining, coming up with something that has an element of being a manifesto, provocations, instructions—I've been interested in the idea of user's manuals for quite a long time. [...] And manuals are not necessarily full of policies, they are full of instructions, how to do things—so a kind of open approach to what policy might mean has been part of the process of Eastside Projects for many years. (Wade, 2020)

EP has, from the beginning, been concerned with rethinking the role of the gallery and its functions. From the initial design of the space by Wade and Condorelli, to the organisation's series of Function Shows (*Trade Show*, *Display Show*, *Narrative Show*, etc.), the gallery has always been a large part of the work; as Condorelli writes:

> People seem to need to create a difference between what is considered artwork and what is not, as if the gallery context itself was not work and could be ignored. It is difficult to explain until people come to Eastside Projects; the space just makes sense when you are part of it. Perhaps this is because it is so far from a white cube, and all the layers of the making of the space are apparent and overlaid, making it too complex to read from a distance. (Condorelli, 2010: 91)

Condorelli and Wade's collaborative project *Support Structure* which ran from 2003–9 is in many ways foundational to EP. Engaging with the role of support in art and architecture and as an understudied area of research, the project's many outputs ('phases') develop the idea of 'a universally adaptive Support Structure in support of artefacts, information and human activities', as the opening statement of their Support Structure Manifesto states (Condorelli and Wade, 2004/2009). Their idea of support is visible throughout EP's early work, whether in the architectural designs for the space, the user's manuals, or the ongoing use of display structures in Wade's work (and particularly in *Display Show*, 2015): supporting as displaying, propping up, hosting, holding, explaining, collaborating. Condorelli's 2009 book *Support Structures*, produced in collaboration with Wade and Designer James Langdon, includes the *User's Manual Draft #2* as a phase of the *Support Structure* project, titled 'Phase 9: In Support of Public'. One entry in the manual reads:

> Artworks as Existing Conditions
>
> Eastside Projects considers design, organisational structures and architecture to be an integral part of its programme; each aspect of the gallery is in process and constant evolution. Existing conditions are constructed through and with the exhibition programme. Artists are invited to set the existing conditions for the gallery. Work may remain. Work may be responded to. (*User's Manual Draft #2*)

Policy Show engaged directly with this statement that Eastside considers *organisational structures* as an integral part of its programme, by quite literally placing organisational structures and policy at the centre of the artistic programming of the organisation. Our thinking around the project—and my research towards this thesis—also owes a debt to the *Support Structure/s* project and book in that Wade and Condorelli's work on support (from which we can draw a clear line to Condorelli's later work on friendship) was an early call for the recognition of those who support, foregrounding the work of maintenance, care, administration, framing and so on, which is often unseen in arts institutions. In putting the behind-the-scenes workings of the organisation to the forefront, *Policy*

Show was always engaged with the support acts of Eastside Projects. As Condorelli and Wade write in the foreword to their book:

> *Support Structures* is a manual for what bears, sustains, props, and holds up. It is a manual for those things that encourage, give comfort, approval, and solace; that care for and provide consolation and the necessities of life. It is a manual for that which assists, corroborates, advocates, articulates, substantiates, champions, and endorses; for what stands behind, underpins, frames, presents, maintains, and strengthens. (Wade and Condorelli, 2009: 6)

This ongoing interest in the infrastructures of arts organisations—from display, to support, to a manual for operating the gallery fully—set the scene for our work on *Policy Show*.

b) Public Evaluation Event

I want briefly to mention here another previous project of EP that relates directly to *Policy Show*, namely *Public Evaluation Event* in 2011. *Public Evaluation Event* was framed as a public discussion of the organisation's work, with invited speakers and artists such as Mick Wilson, FormContent, and the collective Freee giving presentations and reflections on EP, as well as speaking more broadly about evaluation (and the production of value) within the arts. A planned publication bringing together the various talks from the two day event remains unpublished, with some elements of the event included in the design of the fifth *User's Manual*. As part of the event, the design studio An Endless Supply (Robin Kirkham and Harry Blackett), who had worked at EP in its first few years, gave a performance compiling various complaints about operations, instals and the workings of the building. They began with the following statement:

> It is a proven business strategy to incentivise the recording of consumer complaints, as a successful way of challenging the way an organisation runs, the services it provides, and how it thinks about itself. It is in such a spirit that we present the following backlog of complaints. (An Endless Supply, 2011)

In a text reflecting on the event, Mick Wilson writes that 'the most articulate and considered criticisms of Eastside's processes seemed to come from those who had been professionally formed and educated within the operational culture of Eastside' (Wilson, 2011: 5), noting that Blackett and Kirkham provided 'a very important counterpoint to the rhetorical formulation of Eastside Projects in their rehearsal of the pragmatic operational issues that shape the day-to-day life of the exhibition and production space' (Wilson, 2011: 5). Wilson also credits representatives from Extra Special People (EP's artist development program) as being adept in their reflections on the nuances of working with Eastside. He writes:

> There was a critical acumen manifest in the contributions made by these groups that indicated the ways in which Eastside Projects had generated within its own field of operations a critical community that was able to bridge the terms of curatorial mission and artistic vision with the prosaics of everyday operation and workaday realities (e.g., the simple but fraught workaday tensions of the removal of waste from the site). (Wilson, 2011: 5)

Specifically, Wilson focuses on the critical feedback which calls for 'Eastside to attend to the points of divergence between operational reality and curatorial vision' (Wilson, 2011, 6). As he notes, this critique is given sympathetically by those who clearly identify with and value the organisation, and represents the seriousness with which participants have taken EP's call for public evaluation. It is those with the most lived experience of the organisation who are able to most clearly see these discrepancies between its vision and reality.

4.3 Devising Policy Show

Policy Show was a project already imagined by Wade when I began to work with EP. In common with much of Wade's work (from *Support Structure* to EP itself), central to the project was a reference to an existing work, in this case by Artist Placement Group:

> at the back of my mind was also artist placement group, and the way that they had operated, and particularly a meeting point that they made which is called *The Sculpture*, which effectively was a big table and some chairs, and a camera crew and meetings where they met each other, the artists, but also invited politicians, and other people, to talk about the project. So I had started to think about a show taking over the whole gallery space which would just be about debating and developing policy. (Wade, 2020)

Policy Show similarly began from the idea of bringing together artists, academics, activists, and other practitioners and using the gallery space as a working space, framed around a central table. We planned to expose a billboard structure built into one of the walls of the gallery space, displaying a succession of policy proposals made by the artists involved. In referencing the work of APG, Wade was specifically interested in how artists intervene in societal forms and contexts. Thinking about the organisation's policy together with artists was, for EP, simply an extension of an approach laid out in *User's Manual Draft #5*: 'our ambition is to incorporate the methodologies of art-making at all scales and functions of the organisation' (*User's Manual Draft #5*, 26–7). More interesting to Wade was a less bureaucratic and more performative, gestural way of thinking about how artists and artwork could intervene in the field of (and act as) policy. One of his intentions for the project was to create 'policies as artworks', which he defined as works engaged in 'setting a rule to act or live by—and the scale of that ranges from a personal policy to an organisation policy to a principal of a national policy or a global policy [...] a guiding rule or principle' (Wade, 2020). Thinking of the reference point of APG, and the idea of embedding artists within the organisational policy of Eastside Projects, it felt important to me that this be a genuine engagement and collaboration with the context, connecting to the lived experiences of staff at all levels of the organisation.

For my part, embarking on this research with EP, I was interested in the potential of the project to undertake a process of what Nina Möntmann called 'stocktaking', as I described in Chapter 2: beginning from the structures and working practices of the organisation itself and attempting to divest of neoliberal strategies (Möntmann, 2008: 5) and centering artists in this thinking, as co-producers of the art world and its institutions, of particular resonance in the case of the artist-led EP. I was interested in the capacity of the organisation to institute on the threshold of art and

policy, as described by Salvini (2019), and to explore the political potentials of the space of administration, as introduced by Francke and Jardine (2017). Wade and I spent some time researching the structures of policy making in UK politics, meeting with Lara Hayes, a policy advisor at the cabinet office, and Stephanie Kleynhans, an advisor to Shabana Mahmood MP. Following Wade's initial idea of a core group of artists who would lead us in an internal and public process of examining and rethinking the organisation's policy through a series of meetings with invited guests, we invited the artists Rehana Zaman, Christian Nyampeta, and Ciara Phillips, and the curator and arts administrator Teresa Cisneros, to make up this core group[3]. I will briefly introduce here each of their practices, at the time we invited them to join the project in 2017.

Cisneros' curatorial-administrative practice is deeply embedded in her roots in the Mexico-Texas border, 'La Frontera', describing herself as a *curandera*, drawing on familial legacies of caring and healing practices. She is currently Senior Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practice Manager at the Wellcome Trust. At the time that we invited her to be part of this core working group for *Policy Show*, she had been working for some years together with the artist Barby Asante as *agency for agency*, consulting on policy, cultural equity and decolonial processes at a number of museums and galleries across the UK. She was also at the time working as Curatorial Fellow at the Showroom, London, where she curated the project *Object Positions*, researching colonial administrative practices within the UK's cultural landscape. Whilst we had originally planned for a group of four artists, we invited Cisneros based on her expertise in administration and policy, as well as her experience in working together with staff teams to rethink museum practices. She and I had a shared interest from the very beginning of the project in developing policies of care for the organisation.

Artist Rehana Zaman has a predominantly moving image based practice, but which is often developed through long-term group work, conversation and co-operative methods, and is deeply

[3] Given the nature of *Policy Show* as part of my research, and thus the artists as research participants to some extent, I want to be transparent here about the selection process. The artists were selected by myself and Wade through a standard curatorial process, consistent with the work of EP, in which we discussed a series of artists whose practices we were interested in and who related to the themes of the project, and contacted each individually to ascertain their interest and availability. From this early stage, artist participants were aware of my role as both co-curator and PhD researcher.

influenced by radical pedagogy and Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, 1985. Her work speaks to the intimate, familial and personal, with forms of kinship placed against the backdrop of hostile environments, colonial and environmental extraction, and violent policies. From 2016, Zaman was involved in running the Women of Colour Index (WOCI) Reading Group with Samia Malik and Michelle Williams Gamaker, based at the Women's Art Library at Goldsmiths College, London where she is a lecturer. As part of this, Zaman was involved in conversations about 'how arts policy is shaped according to support certain demographics of people, and excludes and occludes many other contributions, largely black women and women of colour' (Zaman, 2021), and notes how the group became 'a holding space, and a space to witness one another' (Zaman, 2021). I had a long-standing interest in Zaman's work, its use of narrative and emotional intelligence in speaking to conflicted histories and contexts. Through the various strands of her work, both as an artist, an educator and an organiser, she came to the project with an interest in changing organisational structures, and brought to *Policy Show* a depth of experience in group dynamics and an interest in supporting a group of people to work together 'without glossing over the potential fractures' (Zaman, 2021).

Christian Nyampeta is an artist and researcher, who makes scripted film works, drawing and installation. His work investigates what it means to be human, and the ways we live together, specifically in the wake of ruptures and amidst structural oppression. He is interested in the use of language, and forms of communication we might use when existing languages are not sufficient. Part of his work has been concerned with how to name collective histories, at a time when the naming of things, and the search for new names (from streets, to monuments, to cultural institutions) feels both fraught and urgent. His film works often merge fictional and historical narratives, drawing on African philosophy. His long term project *Evening School* explores cinema as a place for collective learning in a public, accessible content, referencing the work of the Senegalese writer and director Ousmane Sembène who described cinema as *cours du soir*, evening classes. Nyampeta, like Sembène, is informed by 'traditions of orality, sensuality and conviviality within the realm of art learning and making' (Nyampeta, 2019) and emphasises the collective production of cinema through collaborative making, with workshops on collective script writing and film making often forming part of the process towards his films. We were interested in the ways in

which Nyampeta's work made propositions for new futures and alternate realities—a thread which is also present in Wade's and EP's work—and in his use of collective forms of learning. His work is also visually really powerful, both in terms of his films and the installations in which they are presented, often including working and resting space.

Finally, we invited Ciara Phillips to join the project, being the only one of the core group who had a long standing relationship with Wade and with EP, having exhibited at the gallery with Poster Club, a group of Glasgow-based artists working collaboratively on printmaking, in 2011. She was someone who EP had hoped to work with again, and we were keen to have someone in this group with a longer standing connection to the gallery. Phillips is a printmaker, and uses a range of different techniques from screen printing to woodcut to relief printing, valuing the process of printmaking as key to the work. Her text and image based prints speak to the relationship between printing, activism and propaganda, engaging with current socio-political contexts. Exhibitions of her work often include collective printmaking workshops, exploring the potentials of what she calls *making together,* both in terms of collaborative decision making processes, and as an opportunity for conversation. These collective making spaces are central to how her work is presented. Phillips also has a long-standing interest in the artist, educator, and activist Sister Corita Kent, active in the 1960s. Kent was head of the art department at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles and was deeply involved in community activism, making print works which referenced consumer culture, feminism and civil rights. For Phillips, Kent's work was a key reference throughout *Policy Show*, specifically the set of rules she wrote for Immaculate Heart College (Kent, 1965).

Within this core group, we felt there was an artistic and political sensibility that we could place trust in to guide EP in a process of rethinking its policy: a great deal of relevant expertise and research interests, with skills in community organising, collective decision making, and group dynamics; a commitment to decolonial, equitable, accessible practice; wide-ranging interest in policy and administration; as well as incredibly dynamic and beautiful art-making practices.

4.4 A Rupture: Losing the Building

Before the project took place, EP went through a major upheaval, as the building and gallery space was closed by Birmingham City University (BCU) during a routine (but long overdue) building safety check which flagged it as not fit for use by staff, students, or members of the public. At the time, in the first days of June 2017, a number of staff members including myself and Wade, as well as Cisneros, were on a residency at Kunsthal Aarhus in Denmark, developing the *Policy Manual* publication. The sudden loss of the building began a long process for the directors, with a great deal of uncertainty as to whether the organisation would need to close, whether the building would be able to be made habitable again, and what the future looked like for themselves and their staff team. For other staff members, they saw their roles change overnight, as there was no longer a building to programme exhibitions for, volunteers to manage, etc. Working together with K4 Architects, and with a financial investment from BCU, ultimately it was possible to re-open the building, after a year-long total refit and redesign process. EP spent this year working from two rooms in the offices of K4 Architects, hosted by then chair of the Eastside board, Bob Ghosh. As such, *Policy Show* became a nomadic project, taking place in this year in which Eastside was outside of its usual home. Understandably, this is something that is reflected on by numerous staff in my research interviews both in terms of the project having to change its shape and not having an exhibition element which could be visited by the public, and in terms of the mental capacity of the directors, and stress levels of all staff members. The level of distress caused by this is well articulated by Claxton:

> Losing the building—it was like a bereavement—like a really seismic bereavement I think—and it just made it very very challenging, and I think kind of knocked staff into a slightly different headspace where they were unsettled, everyone was unsettled, we didn't know where we were going to be, and I guess people weren't really sure if they would have jobs, because it was quite hard to see how this organisation, at some points, was even going to carry on. (Claxton, 2020)

This level of upheaval and shock was also echoed by Wade, who commented that 'across that year period—it took extra effort to do everything. Partly because of the stress of the rupture that happened with the building, and the not knowing, and the having to spend a huge amount of

energy on just putting it all back together again' (Wade, 2020). Other staff members commented on the loss of privacy created by moving into a much smaller, temporary office space, the intensity of this new working environment, and the resultant change in expectations in their job roles (staff interviews, 2020–21).

While this also presented a significant challenge to my doctoral research—as a total shift in the conditions of the object of my work—it also presented an interesting case study of an organisation experiencing the kind of seismic shift or rupture that I had been interested in, destabilising the organisation and potentially creating the conditions both to take stock and reflect on its usual working practices, and to facilitate a process of instituting. *Policy Show* as it was planned so far seemed the ideal project to come at a time of rethinking what the organisation could be, and how it could not just survive this situation, but survive well. With this in mind, the project became more directed towards the policy of EP, rather than policy more broadly, as an opportunity for a process of introspection, embracing the adverse conditions we found ourselves in.

Whilst both directors emphasise the challenges of this upheaval, they also appreciated the opportunity to redesign the building for the organisation that EP was now, albeit in such difficult circumstances (Claxton, 2020; Wade, 2020). Some staff found the change of setting and dynamic to be a positive one, with smaller, collective working spaces more conducive to working collaboratively (staff interviews, 2020–21), and a number of staff noted the potential that this rupture could have, as a moment to slow down and rethink, with one stating:

> I think there was actually a potential for it to be really useful [...]. After 10 years of running an organisation one way, and losing a building, they're two big hurdles. I think to then clear the diary (which is possible because you're not running any exhibitions) and sit down and think this was the organisation then, this is what's changed in that time, this is who I have now, and this is what I might like to do in the future. [...] How can we reshape something that works for the space, for the people, you know, because I don't think there's been any space for critical reflection on what the organisation is. (staff interviews, 2020–21).

This speaks to an ongoing theme of *Policy Show*, where staff felt the project had a huge amount of promise, but under very difficult circumstances—to some extent the project in its propositional nature was always an overpromise. I will return to this later in the chapter.

4.5 Unfolding of Policy Show

I will briefly describe here the key events of Policy Show, as relevant to considering it as an attempt in instituent practice, and assessing how it engaged with ideas of the care fix and caring well.

May/June 2017: Aarhus residency

A group of Eastside staff (me, Wade, Vanessa Boni (then Offsite Curator), James Langdon (then co-director and graphic designer), Emma McKinney (then Distribution Assistant), and Teresa Cisneros) undertook a week-long residency at Kunsthal Aarhus in Denmark, as part of a multiple stage exhibition, *The Timeshare Project*, which included a number of other small organisations who all worked with publishing. Our residency was focused around devising the latest draft *User's Manual*, one part of which would be the *Policy Manual*, a working document which contained all of the organisation's existing policies for the first time. We held video calls with the rest of the staff, company directors, board members, and *Policy Show* artists, collated the organisation's policies and co-designed the *Policy Manual*. Cisneros led us in a workshop reflecting on our individual experiences of working with EP, and we hosted a workshop with Kunsthal Aarhus staff discussing their internal policies.

June 2017: Loss of building

When we returned from the Aarhus residency, EP's Heath Mill Lane premises had been closed by BCU's estates team.

July–September 2017: Project is revised

Working together with the artists, we revised the plan for *Policy Show* to take place across Birmingham. As a group we decided the framework of the project, that the working group would be described as a '~~think tank~~', that is, taking the form of a think tank in the sense of researching and potentially making policy together, but with the term under erasure as a way of denying some of the more governmental/bureaucratic overtones. Through a series of working meetings, we settled on a structure of three public meetings, each of which would bring together the working group with members of the public and invited experts to discuss three areas of policy that intersected with EP's work. Each event was structured to allow for two internal sessions with the working group, before and after the public event, across two days. The purpose of these somewhat performative public meetings,as well as being the public output of the project, was to feed into the discussions of the working group, and each meeting was 'scribed' by Nyampeta and Phillips, recording statements and policy proposals. We invited guests to join each event as part of the working group, each of whom were expert in the fields we were discussing, from council members to activists to researchers. The events were planned as open, semi-structured discursive meetings to discuss policy around these topics. We planned this to result in both policy commitments by EP, and potential outcomes in the form of policy-as-artwork. We planned to annotate and update the *Policy Manual* throughout this process. We also had an octagonal table fabricated with a blackboard top, for annotation and note making throughout the project (Fig. 5)

September 2017: First public event

The first event (Fig. 6) took place in our temporary premises hosted by K4 Architects. We launched the *Policy Manual*, and the event focused around its contents: the existing policies of the organisation, which had previously not been made public in this way, examining which of these the organisation might want to adapt, rethink, or let go. The press material for the event asked the questions: 'Who cleans the bathroom? How much should we be paying artists? What is the lifespan of an art organisation? What works? What doesn't work?' (*Policy Show* press release, 2017). It was a semi-structured conversation facilitated by artist Rosalie Schweiker, with invited guests Amahra Spence (founder of local Black-led art and social justice organisation MAIA) and Anna Horton Cremin (an artist and EP board member).

Fig. 5: Policy Show Table.

Fig. 6: Policy Show Meeting #1: Unspoken Policies of the Art Organisation.

Fig. 7: Policy Show Meeting #2: Unspoken Policies of Housing.

Fig. 8: Policy Show Meeting #3: Unspoken Policies of Education.

October 2017: Second public event

The second event focused on housing, connecting to Eastside Projects' long-term Artist's House project, which was being developed with Heather and Ivan Morison, and took place in the Birmingham Council Chamber (Fig. 7). The event was held in a large room with a central platform and circular raised seating, with microphones and interactive voting stations at each seat, allowing guests to ask questions and vote on proposals. The event was facilitated by artist Kathrin Böhm, whose work explores alternative economics and forms of community organisation, and who has an ongoing professional relationship to Wade, having previously worked with EP. Nyampeta was unable to be present, and he invited the sound artist Ain Bailey to be part of the ~~think tank~~ in his place. Building on our first event, the framing question of the event was: what would a policy of care around housing look like? We invited guests with different areas of expertise to join the event, these included: Councillor Peter Griffiths; Andy Reeve, co-founder of Impact Hub, an urban economist who was working on multiple self-build projects; Afzal Hussain, of Witton Lodge Community Association; Nic Bliss, Head of Policy for CCH, the confederation of co-operative housing; A representative of the Digbeth Residents Association; and researchers from the University of Birmingham Housing and Communities Research Group. The discussion covered housing policy, social housing, self-build projects, co-operative structures and CLT (community land trust) models, considering how art could intervene in these areas.

December 2017: Third public event

The third event focused on education, taking place at BOA Birmingham Ormiston Academy, and connecting both to EP's status as part of BCU and to a wider conversation about pathways into the arts, with a longer-term view to diversifying the organisation and the arts across Birmingham, which primarily employs white staff, not at all reflective of the makeup of the city. The full-day event was again facilitated by Schweiker, and involved a series of workshops with art students at the school led by Phillips, painting policies onto t-shirts (Fig. 8). For the public event, we had invited guests from Beatfreeks, a Birmingham-based engagement agency connecting young people to funders and opportunities; students and faculty members from BCU's MA Art & Education

programme; staff from arts charity Create London, which invests in cultural infrastructure projects connected to local communities; staff from Rhubaba, an artist run space in Edinburgh; PhD students working in education; students and faculty from MA Black Studies, BCU; president of the BCU Speak Out poetry society; members of Kick the Dust, a National Lottery Heritage funded project working to make heritage relevant to the lives of young people; and representatives of Arts Emergency, a mentoring charity working to support young people to get a fair start in the arts and humanities. After this event, we invited Schweiker to join the ~~think tank~~ group for the remainder of the project, as she had been a key part of our internal conversations.

September–December 2017: Internal meetings and staff intervention

Throughout the project, the most interesting and challenging conversations took place outside of the public events, in internal meetings with the ~~think tank~~, email correspondence, and staff conversation. Drawing on the provocations of the public events, together with the artists we had a series of expansive and rich conversations, and frequent disagreements, that to me represent the most interesting aspect of the project, as an experiment in rethinking the organisation's policies together. We hit a number of roadblocks in the process, mostly through the constraints of time, money, and organisational capacity, but also through an inability to reach a consensus on policy changes and what to take forward. I want to mention a few of the more interesting and significant parts of the process here.

The first event, focusing on Eastside's own organisational policy, and specifically thinking about care policies, fostered an in-depth conversation amongst the ~~think tank~~ group, and went on to shape the entirety of the project. While the other two events were interesting conversations, they were somewhat tangential to the wider process of rethinking the organisation's core policies—following the first event, a number of the artists were keen to continue with this theme for the remainder of the public events, although these had already been programmed. As a group, we decided to continue this work alongside the rest of the project, working together on a revised care policy for the organisation, as a long term piece of work. From this first event, the ~~think tank~~ formed four policy proposals. The first, which was abandoned very quickly, was a proposal from

within the group that Eastside's policy of 50% women (across staff, programme, etc.) be changed to a policy of *ALL WOMEN*, which would be a programme commitment to only work with women. This was a provocation from one of the artists which both spoke to the absurdity of quota based policies, and also aimed to address an ongoing lack of representation of women artists. The proposal was vetoed for its potentially exclusionary language—not being clearly inclusive of all who identify as women, and not addressing the various intersections of class, race, and ableism—and was also problematic in its proposal to separate this out as a programming only policy, not impacting on the staff or board. As I will come to in the next chapter, despite being vetoed by the ~~think tank~~, this proposal did impact on the organisation's programming in the years that followed the project.

Three working proposals for policies were agreed on by the ~~think tank~~:

> CARE CONSORTIUM
>
> Create a 'consortium' of sorts, of other art organisations with whom we have a relationship, to share existing care policies, develop these further, and potentially lobby for arts council change. As part of this we would rethink our approach to statutory policies, i.e., sick leave and maternity.
>
> HONESTY/TRANSPARENCY
>
> Implement a policy of honesty. This would be something we add to our policy manual which describes a way of working between artists and institutions which allows for open discussion of the needs and expectations of each party. We have been thinking about how to encourage honesty, something like a line when we approach artists which asks if there are any barriers to them being able to work with us (which could be: childcare costs, language, needing to meet closer to where they live etc) and reserving a small amount of project budgets to address this.
>
> ACCESSIBILITY

> Reconsider accessibility with our new/old building: can we make an accessible door? should we use multiple languages? Can we work with artists to develop useful solutions?

I will return to these in my discussion of *Policy Show* outcomes in Chapter 5.

During this period, there was also a moment of staff intervention in how the project was unfolding, which took place the day after the first public event. As I have described, *Policy Show* had been devised as a quite performative series of public meetings, which would result both in the creation of 'artworks-as-policies' and potentially in some proposals for policy change, at EP or to be championed by EP. The think-tank group was made up of the artists, Gavin and me as co-curators, with a rolling list of additional contributors from invited experts to staff and board members. Policy proposals stemming from the project would then be posed to staff and board members. During a closed meeting between the ~~think-tank~~, the staff members who were working in an adjoining room, along with Claxton, intervened in our meeting to state that they wanted more involvement in the process: they felt that decisions that would impact their roles were being taken without them being sufficiently included or consulted. This event highlighted some difficulties with the project, and failures in our communication of it. While this phase of the project was essentially a research phase in which the artists would respond to both the public conversations and the input of invited guests and staff, before making proposals to the organisation, the ambiguity in this process, and the fact that it was increasingly focused on the organisation itself, coupled with the practical situation of staff being in an adjoining room, led to a growing sense of dissatisfaction among members of EP's staff.

The intervention highlighted a very common occurrence—the project curators meeting with the project artists, while other staff members carried out their own work—which, in this case, felt very different, as staff members believed that the outcomes of these meetings would directly impact their workplace. To me, this was a really important part of the development of the project, and I see it as a failing on our part to have not had the continual involvement of staff in our meetings (as had been the case with the Aarhus residency). It was in part a result of the practicalities of staff needing to

continue work which kept the organisation going, especially amidst the upheaval of this year without a building, and was also a casualty of the rush to revise the project.

Responding to this intervention, we worked to open the process further, by articulating an invitation to all staff to be involved in project discussions with the artists, and communicating more clearly our intention that artist proposals would be made to all staff. A significant outcome of this was the instigation of regular whole-team staff meetings, both for programming updates and for general organisational check-ins. This was something that EP had previously resisted, with the directors preferring to work more organically, whereas staff at the time wanted more of a formal structure. As part of this we created a system for submitting anonymous comments that could be discussed in these meetings. This process was frequently referred to by staff as allowing them to feel that their voices were being heard in more meaningful ways (staff interviews, 2020–21). This instance is also interesting in relation to an ongoing issue of the amount of agency that staff had in the project (and in the organisation itself), which I will come back to later in this chapter.

January–March 2018: Policy proposals

Having struggled to come up with a collective set of proposals, in early 2018 we invited the artists to each submit three policy proposals that would then be worked through by the staff team. Zaman, Cisneros, Nyampeta, and Schweiker each submitted three proposals, whilst Phillips did not feel comfortable doing so individually, at the end of what had been a very collective process. We also discussed other outcomes of the project, including the Care Consortium idea, working on a publication together, and the possibility of further stages of the project depending on fundraising. I will spend some time with these policy proposals in Chapter 5. They are also included in full in appendix 2.

July 2018: Policy residential

Cisneros and Schweiker led a two day staff residential for the team, which was planned as an opportunity to think through the policy proposals made by the artists, to make some commitments

to feasible policies to implement at EP, and to devise a long-term structure for accountability, including for example further policy reviews and staff residentials.

Over the course of the two days, Cisneros and Schweiker led a series of workshops, which included collectively reading the organisation's business plan and discussing the narrative of the organisation. They had asked all staff to come to the residential having thought about the following questions:

> What is Eastside known for? What is the institutional narrative? What is your version of this narrative? How do you service the institution's narrative?
>
> What are your privileges? What do you not have to think about?
>
> What are the good/bad habits you have developed while working at Eastside projects? What are Eastside projects good/bad habits? (Cisneros and Schweiker, personal correspondence, 2018)

They also led us in a series of trust-based exercises. Each staff member was given space to contribute. The residential is held up by a number of staff members as a useful experience which helped them to grow in confidence both within the organisation and within their own practice. However, the residential did not focus on the artists' policy proposals, instead resulting in an entirely separate set of working points which were displayed in the directors' office, with a plan to work through them over the following months, in the lead up to a second staff residential led by the two artists. These were of a more practical tone, and rather than being policy proposals as such were closer to a set of short-term organisational tasks, including things such as 'build in more structured reflective time' and 'fundraise for new roles (managerial and administrative)'.

Following the residential, Wade and Claxton planned to work on the artists' proposals together with staff. At this point, my time working with the organisation concluded (having spent the first two years of my PhD studentship working at EP) and I was no longer part of planning for the next

steps that the project might take. In Chapter 5, I will explore the various outcomes and legacies of the project, as they have unfolded since this point.

4.6 *Policy Show* as Instituent Practice

In analysing interview material from staff and artists, this section will focus on two questions pertinent to the central question of this thesis. Firstly, I will look at whether the rupture presented by the loss of EP's building, and by *Policy Show* itself insofar as it afforded an internal view of the organisation, made visible a crisis of care in the organisation. As I have discussed, this crisis of care can be characterised by a discrepancy between public statements and internal workings. Secondly, I will explore whether *Policy Show* as an instituent practice was successful in facilitating an environment of care, using the frameworks I have introduced, of caring well versus the care fix. I will explore in Chapter 5 the outcomes of the project and impact on the organisation; this chapter is concerned with the process of *Policy Show* and to what extent instituent practices enable environments of care.

a. A crisis of care?

As I have outlined, the view of EP's internal workings and policy facilitated by *Policy Show* was not the result of a break such as staff complaints or accusations of wrongdoing. Whilst in some ways the loss of the building did function as a rupture, this was due to its destabilising impact on the organisation, which placed directors and staff in a position of vulnerability and uncertainty. Amidst this, *Policy Show* offered the chance to utilise this as a possible moment for instituent practice, akin to Francke's description of 'a space of shared instability' (Francke and Jardine, 2020c). While not born out of crisis as such, therefore, the loss of the building and our work with *Policy Show* did afford an internal view of the organisation, and so an opportunity to apply the framework of the crisis of care to EP.

A repeated theme in interview content does speak to this sector-wide crisis, with interviewees often citing differences between the way the organisation presented itself, and the reality of working

there. Staff noted how, whilst the content of the artistic programme often seemed progressive in its presenting of work dealing with, for example, mental health issues, and artists were commissioned from a diverse range of backgrounds, this did not seem to translate into working relationships, noting times when they felt unsupported with health concerns, where they were misgendered, or where they didn't feel adequately supported as a non-white staff member or volunteer. Staff also note some physical impacts of their work such as worsening eyesight due to poor lighting and a lack of screen breaks. These incidents are not presented by staff as uniquely the case at EP, and in many cases have been experienced across multiple workplaces, but are remarked upon by staff due to their contrast with the organisation's programme. It's important to note also the timing of the project, when the organisation was under a great deal of stress, and working outside of its usual context. It is interesting given our topic that the majority of these reflections concern care in one way or another, and specifically an expectation of a particular care relationship, directed from the organisation towards its staff.

Interviewees continually link this to a wider context in the sector:

> [I]t's just part of an ecosystem of presentation
> One thing I know is that what is made public is often not a true reflection of the internal workings of an organisation
>
> I think as an organisation we're good at saying that we do a lot of good things. I'm not sure that we are any different from any other organisation, we don't do anything special
>
> ...and this happens with any space, it's not Eastside specific, that you realise that what they are projecting on the outside and what's actually happening behind closed doors is a completely different story. (staff interviews, 2020–21)

I want to focus on one staff comment in particular here: 'Eastside Projects [is] a very aesthetic experience. The shows are very aesthetic, the presentation of thought is very aesthetic' (staff interviews, 2020–21). This comment was made in the context of speaking about how EP can

sometimes function as 'an ecosystem of presentation' (staff interviews, 2020–21)—with outputs not necessarily reflected in how the organisation actually works. What's interesting here is the ambiguity of this statement, especially in the context of an arts organisation. EP is certainly an aesthetic experience, with cohesive, thoughtful design; shows referring back to and engaging in dialogue with past projects; and display structures just as considered as the works which they hold. An ecosystem of presentation is perhaps one thing we might imagine that a contemporary art gallery could be. Whilst always propositional in its work, EP as an artist-led organisation has always foregrounded artistic imagination, rather than its use value. In a way, *Policy Show*'s discussion of organisational policy, and topics such as care and equity, changed the organisation's output in such a way that what it was presenting, in an aesthetic manner, was suddenly a very different conversation.

In some ways, then, *Policy Show* added to, highlighted, or exacerbated concerns about the discrepancy between internal and external workings of EP. Due to its happening at a time of such upheaval, and amidst a period of high staff turnover, with a number of relatively new staff, there was a general lack of institutional memory in the organisation other than that held by the directors. In this context, *Policy Show* had a particular impact on the staff team. It seemed to promise a great deal: the possibility to rethink the organisation together. One staff member stated:

> *Policy Show* was perhaps everything I hoped a project could be, at the beginning. The promise of *Policy Show* is amazing. It has the opportunity to do so much, to reach so much, to include so many people and options. To open up to criticism and change, particularly after 10 years, when you probably do need to change because the world's not the same. I think it's really exciting and promising that an organisation will say here you go, let's talk about this. And policy doesn't have to mean, government agenda. It can mean small things—there are things that Eastside does do like everyone should empty the dishwasher, so policy really can affect everything. Even the title *Policy Show* is really inviting as to what it could be. I think initially I thought it was going to be big issues. Like having a role in directorship for example, or designing the new building together, or how we work on a flat hierarchy, like big things. (staff interviews, 2020–21)

Both staff and artists reflect that the project felt important, and as such it was crucial that it translate to real, measurable outcomes for the organisation. It was a significant promise for a relatively small project taking place while the gallery was without a building, and the weight of this was felt by staff and artists alike. As the project progressed, it became increasingly difficult to make a collective decision about which aspects of our conversations and policy proposals be taken forward or made public. As Zaman stated, 'it did seem to chime a little bit with this tendency in the artworld to enjoy talking about the thing without actually doing the thing' (Zaman, 2021). It was a challenge to balance both the sense of urgency in publishing some aspects of our work, and the equally felt sense that these conversations around policy should not be rushed. This led to frustrations from all sides, as policies were discussed but not put in place.

One staff member notes: 'it doesn't really matter if they are great policies if no one's really enacting them. It's almost like—a wallpaper. It just sits there and ages gracefully' (staff interviews, 2020–21). This of course links to Ahmed's discussion of policies as window dressing (and indeed a frustration with quota-based policies at EP was also widely reflected upon in the interviews). Notably, however, part of the root of these frustrations is that the organisation was discussing and proposing policies that both staff and artists found potentially transformative, 'some important conversations [...] some difficult conversations [...] and some uncomfortable encounters' (Zaman, 2021). Zaman states:

> I did feel a little bit frustrated by this feeling that the conversation was very open ended and that what we had been discussing would just be performative, and yeah like how do we anchor this in actual real structural change, or how do we make [these] conversations a bit more visible and sit with this discomfort in a public way? (Zaman, 2021)

A key theme in interview reflections is that of *agency*. Staff credit the project with giving them a sense of agency, while at the same time ultimately feeling that they had less of a voice in the project than they would have hoped. The directors both note that *Policy Show* gave staff a *sense* of agency, which was perhaps misplaced, especially in its particular context. Claxton writes of the process:

> I think it created a [false impression]—gave people the impression of agency that they weren't really ever going to have, because there's no way we were going to be able to respond to anything at that point, because we were in the middle of trying to work out if we would even exist. (Claxton, 2020)

This is interesting in relation to the staff intervention that took place during *Policy Show*, as a key moment in which this sense of agency (or lack thereof) was created. Though this incident seemed to me to be a moment in which our conception of the project failed, through not being sufficiently collaborative, it was arguably in our response to this that staff gained a feeling of agency, perhaps ultimately misplaced. It is also interesting that this intervention was supported by Claxton, both in terms of supporting staff to take this action and in terms of a questioning as to who was present around the table, but that on reflection she notes that staff 'weren't ever really going to have' (Claxton, 2020) this level of agency. Wade reflects on this aspect of the project:

> I think definitely some staff didn't feel involved enough, and treated it like it was some new internal committee where everyone has control over it and decides what it should be in the future and—so I think there's probably something quite interesting there. Treating the show as if it's a staff committee. And in one way—everyone treated it as if, this is real! And I'm not sure if my voice is completely involved in this. So it sort of blurred this idea of being a curated project with artists who were then responding to other publics. So the staff became a public in effect, for the project, and I think definitely some people had gripes and complaints and decided to use *Policy Show* as the mechanism to explore the issues that they had with the organisation. Which I think is probably, also looking back on it, that's fine. You know it clarifies whether people still want to work together or not, and I think in some cases they didn't want to work together anymore. But it's quite interesting that that show would have that impact. (Wade, 2020)

As Wade notes, part of this tension lay in how seriously staff took the project; they believed it had the capacity to change the organisation, and this was a conversation they wanted to be part of.

Similarly, the policies discussed with artists felt important, difficult, uncomfortable—real engagements with how an organisation thinks and works. This level of seriousness from all involved was certainly a source of tension, as despite collective processes, the decisions about policy change for the organisation ultimately lay with the directors and board members, and were also bound by the constraints of funding, staff capacity, a lack of infrastructure and diverted attention to retaining the building. In some ways it seems unavoidable that the project would highlight difficulties with the organisation, in that it was framed from the beginning (also in press material, cited above) that the project would ask questions about the workings of the organisation, and the *Policy Manual*, in laying out existing organisational policies, invited comment on these.

The process of *Policy Show*, then, *did* make visible discrepancies in the *logos* and *bios* of the organisation, in line with a wider crisis of care across the sector. However these discrepancies are not necessarily in this case displaying a purposeful act of, as Ahmed would say, window dressing; rather, they seem to display an organisation that has not quite caught up to its intentions, that is involved in a long and difficult process of rethinking. This offers an opportunity to refine my earlier point, that a discrepancy between the *logos* and *bios* of an institution represents a crisis of care.

If we think of instituent practice as an ongoing process of becoming—of self-creation—this is, necessarily, projected in time. As such, it would seem to be the case that there will be a necessary disconnect between that which an institution is becoming, and that which it already is: a period of time in which its statements about itself (its *logos*) might be at odds with its working practices (its *bios*). Returning to the idea of *parrhesia*, practising care of the self through being courageous enough to disclose one's personal truth, might the act of being open about this potential disconnect be in itself a caring act? This implies a great deal of risk, if we imagine the parrhesiast being open both about uncomfortable, sometimes harmful realities, and the wish to change these: perhaps, for example, a director speaking to their funders. To hold on to this possibility for productive instability, we need to hold on to the possibility for *logos* and *bios* to be misaligned without functioning as a care fix, the difference being a meaningful connection between the two, rather than an intentional act of masking one with the other.

b. A care fix—or caring well?

I will spend some time now on exploring whether this process, as an instance of instituent practice, was one which facilitated an environment of care. I want to begin by looking at some extracts from interviews which evidence experiences of care. Particularly in interviews with staff members, there is a great deal of reference to feeling cared for within the project, from their colleagues and from the artists. One staff member states that the organisation is 'genuinely quite liberal and kind' (staff interviews 2020–21). Staff refer to the project as fostering a stronger relationship between colleagues:

> Yes, I encountered care in the process, particularly from some of my colleagues. This manifested through positive affirmations, listening and sharing thoughts and concerns.

> It's not perfect now—but I think that [*Policy Show*] really did help. And it meant that there's more trust within the smaller side as well, people are able to say what they need to to each other and trust that it goes no further, get it off their chest, and try and move on, or try and work with whatever that issue was.

> [*Policy Show*] felt like it was for the staff and we're listening to you. And we're listening to every one of you no matter what your position is. I think that that really helped particular members of staff who perhaps felt vulnerable in their positions for whatever reason, perhaps have faced more oppression in their lives than other people, it just felt like a safe space. And that seemed important, it seemed caring, it seemed generous - and it seemed like that's what we should be doing, and we should be doing it more often. (staff interviews, 2020–21)

Wade reports receiving care during the process, stating: 'I reckon I probably got lots of care. But it's quite hard to think of a specific example. I think I had—lots of attention was paid to me during that process. So I would feel cared for, listened to' (Wade, 2020). Claxton states that the organisation is caring towards their staff: 'actually we treat people well, we pay them fairly, we give

them decent holiday, we make sure they take it, we make sure they don't do loads of hours over' (Claxton, 2020). She describes the care that she, Wade, and board members gave to the organisation itself:

> So we looked after Eastside Projects in that sense. We kept our mental health, just about, and we kept Eastside Projects. So—we had to look after Eastside really, let alone anything else. And the staff were doing their best to look after it too. (Claxton, 2020)

The residential is named by multiple staff members as a time they felt cared for and listened to, describing it as safe and generous. One staff member notes:

> And you [LL], Teresa, and Rosalie created a safe space for some of the members of staff to feel that they could be who they wanted to be, say what they wanted to say, to someone that wasn't then going to judge them or pass that information further. And there were a lot of those moments when staff needed that safe person and safe space to happen. (staff interviews, 2020–21)

Artists also report feeling cared for by EP staff and their fellow artists, with Schweiker noting that 'I think there was great care taken for me [...] there was a relationship that developed between us through that, caring for each other in that process' (Schweiker, 2021). Cisneros cites 'continuing conversations' as an example of follow up care, stating that 'we shared vulnerabilities through the process of [*Policy Show*]. And I think for me, that's the process of care. [Allowing] other people to be vulnerable enough to admit things' (Cisneros, 2019). I would argue that the level of seriousness with which staff, artists, and publics treated the project was a form of 'taking care of' EP, as conceptualised by Fisher and Tronto (1990).

On the other hand, there were various comments which spoke to the opposite being true. Claxton felt that the process of *Policy Show* was not always caring towards the organisation itself, at a time when it was 'just about standing up', stating that:

> There were tensions in the organisation that *Policy Show* just amplified [...] I think everything was uncertain and so then to throw in a process that ended up making everything more or implying that there were all these problems, without offering any solutions, was really quite tricky. (Claxton, 2020)

Staff mentioned that the organisation was 'not particularly caring or sensitive to staff', with the well-being of the institution at times prioritised over the well-being of staff, and noted that there was not an adequate support system for either staff or directors (staff interviews, 2020–21). There were varying opinions on what this should look like, with one staff member stating: 'what's interesting is that at Eastside Projects they see HR as a negative thing. I see HR as a problematic thing, but I think that in institutions you need a space where you can go and talk sometimes' (staff interviews, 2020–21). This speaks to the ongoing tension around levels of bureaucracy at EP, which I will come back to later in this chapter. Speaking specifically about *Policy Show*, a number of staff felt that higher level staff (and specifically the director) were centred in the project, and that it should have included all staff at an equal level, noting that 'the problem was there wasn't an equal voice, and there wasn't an equal stake' (staff interviews, 2020–21). Artists also mentioned being aware of clear power dynamics within the organisation. As I cited from Wade's reflections earlier, it is an interesting aspect of *Policy Show* that staff at all levels felt so engaged in it that they wanted to have an equal role in decision making—something which was clearly invited as part of this process (albeit not to a level of parity with the directors) but which would typically not be part of a curated exhibition at the gallery.

I mentioned in the previous section certain discrepancies between how EP programmes, and how this relates to the staff experience. One of the most significant critiques in this regard was of the experience of being witness to the creation of quota-led policies and programming decisions, by staff members who identified with these specific identities (i.e., LGBTQIA+, POC, or disabled staff members). This was not presented as a straightforwardly negative or harmful act, but one that was insufficiently thoughtful, and disappointing given the radical intentions of the organisation. One staff member noted:

> Wherever we go, our bodies appear as quotas. And I think that was really difficult to—I understand that people want to enact, and I completely respect the fact that there needs to be much more visibility for bodies which are seen to be transgressive of societal and institutional standards. I guess the issue was though, that it always felt that we had to make sure that this was happening without a reflexive thought pattern. We're like, we're doing this, and that's it. We're not thinking about why we're doing this. (staff interviews, 2020–21)

These various testimonies don't provide a straightforward indication of whether *Policy Show* facilitated an environment of care, if we take care in terms of *feeling* cared for. While staff reported an improvement in team dynamics, it's clear that the project brought attention to (and at times exacerbated) tensions within the organisation. In sometimes projecting an ideal of what the organisation could be—and the level of involvement that staff could have—*Policy Show* promised more than the organisation could deliver, at least in the short term. It created an environment in which staff concerns could be raised, and as such was felt to be presenting problems, without always having the ability to solve them. Ahmed describes how the complainer is often positioned as the problem: by noticing the problem, you are seen to create the problem (Ahmed, 2021). I would argue that something of this is at work in *Policy Show*. By creating the conditions for the organisation to be examined, in public, by its staff members, inevitably problems, interpersonal difficulties, and various tensions came to light; as one staff member puts it: 'by shifting the conversation internally, you're gonna hear people's qualms. By offering up moments of support from external bodies, people can do something more like this, where it's less of a rant and more of a challenge [...] a good challenge' (staff interviews, 2020–21).

In the same way, as we have discussed, a process of caring may not always *feel* caring. I want to return here to Dowling's reminder that the work care stems from the old English *caru*, meaning sorrow, grief, and anxiety, and her statement that 'worry and stress can be just as much a part of care as feelings of love and affection [...] tasks performed as part of caring labour may at times feel like anything but care' (Dowling, 2021: 22). Arguably, the aspects of the *Policy Show* process that

felt the most challenging, represented acts of care in real terms: genuinely engaging with the organisation and working to make it more equitable. For example, one staff member notes that:

> One of the most important issues that was raised during *Policy Show* was the whiteness of the organisation. The ~~think tank~~ was vital in holding the institution to account, about the lack of diversity within the organisation's workforce, alongside the lack of inclusive or intersectional policy-making. (staff interviews, 2020–21)

Both staff and artists frequently mention the generosity with which critiques were given. This is something also recognised by Wade, who noted that 'if someone is arguing with you, it means they are listening to you. I think even that was done in a well-meaning way' (Wade, 2020). Cisneros was, throughout the project, a strong advocate for the potential of policy, if written thoughtfully and actually enacted, and she framed accountability as an act of care: caring for the integrity of the institution across its lifespan. She stated in our interview:

> I think the potential for policies is quite radical. But it's only as radical as the person who is ensuring they're being embodied is gonna be. And that person is then the person who's trying to hold people accountable to the behaviour through policy, and accountability is a really difficult one for people to follow through on—because there's a lot of spaces of uncomfortability—that you actually have to tell someone—you're not doing this, or, do you know how to do this? Or, have you actually read it? And no one wants to admit that they don't know how to do it. Or they feel ashamed, they feel like they're being accused. [...] And people can see it as policing, or you could see it as a form of care. (Cisneros, 2019)

I want to end this section with this idea from Cisneros of *spaces of uncomfortability*, which connects to Francke's description of holding onto spaces of shared instability. Part of my intentions for *Policy Show* as a researcher was to utilise this moment of rupture to explore how we, the artists and staff team, might intervene in the workings of the organisation and explore how it could be put back together differently, while holding onto some of this moment of openness, with a view to

holding the organisation in a state of porosity and responsiveness–an ongoing instituent practice. As Francke notes in her newsletter,

> [I have learnt] to value those moments in which my system of meaning has collapsed, and I haven't yet found a way to rebuild it. Those moments are not really pleasurable or happy, but they are bearable once you get used to them. When you claim the space those moments create, you can think what was unthinkable, you can do what was impossible, and sometimes, if you are lucky, you can even share that space with someone. (Francke and Jardine, 2020e)

It was in this spirit—not always with ease, and sometimes uncomfortably—that *Policy Show* was able to enact care, *as well as possible*; in which, after Tronto and Puig de la Bellacasa, we can allow for both moments of error and forms of radical imagination.

4.7 From a Care Fix to Caring Well

I will close this chapter with some concluding comments on whether *Policy Show* functioned as a care fix, or was successful as an attempt to care with the organisation. In its public statements about rethinking organisational policy, the project was always going to be one which made certain claims, which in turn needed to be actualised to avoid becoming superficial. As I detailed earlier, the project promised a lot, which inevitably created a moment in which there was a disconnect between the *intentions* of *Policy Show* and the reality of the organisation during the period in which it was working towards these intentions. At the same time, a level of performativity which is a core part of how EP works (through narrative, design, and proposition) perhaps became jarring when in dialogue with conversations around policy, with all of its personal and professional implications. The framing of *Policy Show* implied a level of administrative-bureaucratic thinking which is actually often at odds with how EP views policy, as something propositional and poetic. Although artists and staff members took this very seriously, in the absence of a commitment to long-term work, the project did in some ways function as a fix: a visible discussion of care policies which may

not have resulted in actual policy change. The project held genuine intentions, but a wider context of a lack of funding and time pressure contributed to insufficient resources for its continuation.

Drawing on my earlier conclusion that, at times, a discrepancy between *logos* and *bios* may not represent care being in crisis, but may in fact represent an act of self-creation or a process of *parrhesia*, we can similarly conclude that at times there may well be an ambiguous situation between caring well and something functioning as a care fix. Rather than a simple or binary choice between the two, a process of instituting can *seem* to involve elements of both. And this is precisely because a process of caring well takes time, and means embarking on a continuous process of reflection and of sincerely confronting real ambiguities, failures, and successes.

a. Policy as policing?

I want to pause to think about *policy*, and whether this was the right frame for our project. As with the capacity of care (or acts done in the name of care) to be violent, policy is something often experienced as harmful, whilst framed as being in the national interest. In Chapters 1 and 3, I discussed Egbert Alejandro Martina's text 'Policy and Intimacy', in which he describes so-called *behind the front door* policies, covering 'a broad range of proactive care-giving programmes, such as "interference care" and "outreach work" which give citizens [...] unsolicited assistance' (Martina, 2015, n.p.). These paternalistic care policies in effect police certain publics and counterpublics. The idea of national interest, Martina writes, is moralistic, making a judgement on what is favourable, or detrimental, to the nation: 'a lenient migration policy, for instance, is not considered to be in the nation's interest' (Martina, 2015, n.p.). In this way, policy, similar to policing, is concerned with public order, and what Martina describes as 'the twin concepts of order and safety' (Martina, 2015, n.p.). As I have discussed in some length in earlier chapters, justifications in the name of the public good, or indeed the national interest, are necessarily enacted with a particular, imagined *good* public in mind.

In their book *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*, Stefano Harney and Fred Moten frame a tension between planning and policy. They define planning as 'self-sufficiency at the

social level', efforts to seize and/or invent the means of social reproduction (Harney and Moten, 2013: 76). Planning takes place in the undercommons: beneath, beyond, outwith the institutions that govern us; it is enacted by those who are marginalised by these institutions,planning experiments with new worlds, perhaps akin to Warner's description of addressing publics and counterpublics as *poetic world-making*. Harney and Moten write:

> The plan is to invent the means in a common experiment launched from any kitchen, any back porch, any basement, any hall, any park bench, any improvised party, every night. This ongoing experiment with the informal, carried out by and on the means of social reproduction, as the to come of the forms of life, is what we mean by planning; planning in the undercommons is not an activity, not fishing or dancing or teaching or loving, but the ceaseless experiment with the futurial presence of the forms of life that make such activities possible. (Harney and Moten, 2013: 74–5)

Opposed to planning is policy. Policy, to Harney and Moten, is 'dispersed, deputised command' (Harney and Moten, 2013: 76). They describe how policy makes *citizen-deputies* of those who are willing—for the sake of proximity to power—to break apart and destroy forms of planning, 'as once it was necessary to de-skill a worker in a factory by breaking up his means of production' (Harney and Moten, 2013: 76). Policy is correction directed at 'the incorrect, the uncorrected' (Harney and Moten, 2013: 78), the counter- or bad public. It is an imposition of correction where it has not been sought; the logic of the settler. According to Harney and Moten, 'policy posits the public sphere, or the counter-public sphere, or the black public sphere, against the illegal occupation of the illegitimately privatized' (Harney and Moten, 2013: 81). It is concerned with asserting a problem and performing a fix ('policy's vision is to break it up then fix it, move it along by fixing it' [Harney and Moten, 2013: 81]), thus inscribing policy as for the national good.

Whilst EP's understanding of policy was, as I have articulated, something quite propositional in form, it's worth considering how the naming of *Policy Show* implied something altogether different, and more bureaucratic, which in turn led to it performing a kind of fix, in that it purported to do something that it then did not. This similarly plays into an ongoing tension within

the organisation at the time around levels of bureaucracy, with the directors resisting becoming a typical institution, and staff wanting more formal structures and protocols. In this there is an echo to some degree of the case of Bétonsalon: an organisation that, in taking on some of the trappings of becoming an institution (with staff, regular funding, high profile programming) did not have the necessary tools (such as managing and supporting staff) that are required at this level of operation. In Harney and Moten's description of policy as determining a problem in order to fix it, they speak to something of the performativity implied when we talk about policy: often itself a care fix, the broad brushstrokes claim that is not reliably translated into action. What would it have looked like to instead frame a project around *planning*, as experimenting with new worlds? Thinking back to FOTL's reframing of administrative workers, what might be the quiet power held by the deputies, and how might they be brought into alliance with the planners?

b. Institutional integrity

In answering the guiding question for this chapter—to what extent instituent practices enable environments of care?—I have explored what an environment of care (caring with, as a reciprocal and equitable relation, and caring well) might look like. As a counterpart to the care fix, caring well is to act with integrity, and to speak the truth of oneself despite the potential risks. For the art institution, it is the opposite of survival- or growth-at-all-costs, and is instead characterised by radical transparency, which might mean reckoning with uncomfortable truths. At the same time, through holding on to a space of shared instability, and engaging in a practice of self-creation or instituting, caring well might at times look ambiguous; might need to hold its logos and bios in a state of disconnect for a time. This is distinguished from the care fix in that it is not a disconnect for the sake of carewashing, profit or progressive neoliberalism, but is a genuine long-term reckoning with and rethinking of institutional infrastructures. We can thus conclude that instituent practices enable environments of care to the extent that they initiate and embody processes of addressing a discrepancy between *logos* and *bios*, thereby enabling a process of *parrhesia*.

5

Performing the (Caring) Institution

Leading on from the conclusion of Chapter 4, that instituent practices enable environments of care to the extent that they engage in real reckonings with institutional forms, this chapter looks at the potential for these reckonings to actually change how existing institutions work, focusing on the concept of critique. I look at *Policy Show* as an instance of Foucauldian critique, and so pick up and expand on Foucault's concept of critique as having the capacity to change the arts of governance, as mentioned in Chapter 2. In examining the various outcomes of *Policy Show*, I ask to what extent Eastside Projects' governance was changed through this process. I then return to McAnally's idea of the prefigurative institution, through the example of Isola Art Centre in Milan.

My overall research question is: how might art institutions practice care? I propose here a refinement of the question: how might art institutions practice care, *as well as possible*? I answer this through a focus on the idea of 'as well as possible' described by Puig de la Bellacasa (2017), as introduced in Chapter 3, as both a practical consideration, and one of radical imagination. In this I also draw on Athena Athanasiou's concept of performing the institution (2016). I then propose some shifts in practice at Eastside Projects (EP), and in the wider sector, that would move towards practising care as well as possible.

5.1 What is Critique?

In Chapter 2, I briefly introduced Foucault's concept of critique, from his 1978 lecture 'Qu'est-ce que la critique?', as a process of questioning dominant forms of governance. He wrote, 'we identify a perpetual question which could be: how not to be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them' (Foucault, [1978] 1997: 28). This sense of critique is not a simple declaration or judgement of something as 'good' or 'bad' but rather a process of considering the limits of a certain institution or infrastructure; indeed, critique for Foucault exists only in

relation to something other than itself. In her text 'What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue', Judith Butler notes:

> The primary task of critique will not be to evaluate whether its objects —social conditions, practices, forms of knowledge, power, and discourse—are good or bad, valued highly or demeaned, but to bring into relief the very framework of evaluation itself. (Butler, 2001, n.p.)

Critique is thus not an evaluative process as such, but rather a consideration of the limits of a particular form of governance, and a practice of imagining another possible way to operate. As Butler notes, it's worth considering the point of such a practice: 'what good is thinking otherwise, if we don't know in advance that thinking otherwise will produce a better world?' (Butler, 2001, n.p.). For Foucault, a practice of critique is necessary when the reigning forms of governance or discourse are no longer coherent, have hit an impasse; as Butler explains, 'one asks about the limits of ways of knowing because one has already run up against a crisis within the epistemological field in which one lives [...] and it is from this condition, the tear in the fabric of our epistemological web, that the practice of critique emerges' (Butler, 2001, n.p.). An instance of crisis or rupture necessitates critique, as a practice in inhabiting these limits and imagining alternative futures. And whilst this becomes necessary, it nonetheless has no hold on how these new futures or forms of governance will unfold; Foucault writes that critique is 'a means for a future or a truth that it will not know nor happen to be, it oversees a domain it would not want to police and is unable to regulate' (Foucault, 1997: 25). Once again, critique is not about becoming ungovernable, nor about anarchy, but rather 'how not to be governed *like that*' (Foucault, 1997: 25).

Given the objective of critique, to transform operational structures, it is necessary to engage with the limits of the existing system, in order to understand how it works (or how it doesn't). As Butler writes, it is necessary 'to track the way in which that field meets its breaking point, the moments of its discontinuities, the sites where it fails to constitute the intelligibility for which it stands' (Butler, 2001, n.p.). There is of course a delicate balance at play when, for example, instituting one form of

governance in place of another, or as Foucault writes, 'the complex interplay between what replicates the same process and what transforms it' (Foucault, 1997: 58).

If we take the internal and internally focused parts of *Policy Show* as an act of critique—inhabiting the limits of the organisation, at a moment of rupture, and attempting to imagine something other—it becomes pertinent to ask, to what extent was this process of critique able to shift the forms of governance (or the infrastructure, or the working cultures) of EP? And is this something that a practice of critique, where it coincides with a practice of *parrhesia*, is capable of doing at all, within an already existing art institution? This chapter will focus on these questions.

5.2 *Policy Show* Outcomes

Staying with my case study of *Policy Show*, I will outline here the outcomes and legacies of the project, and its impact on EP. These include some small shifts in organisational practice, the set of policy proposals made by the artists involved, and the longer-term impacts and inheritances from the project, as seen after a period of critical distance from the organisation. I will report these outcomes in this section, and turn to their analysis in the following sections. There were three immediate outcomes or areas of change that staff consistently reflected on in their interviews, which I will look at first.

a. Immediate outcomes

i) Improvements in working relationships and working structures

Staff reported that *Policy Show* had resulted in a more open team dynamic, where they felt able to discuss sensitive issues and felt supported by their colleagues:

> The staff have been able to talk critically, openly, in smaller numbers about things that are affecting them from the gallery working policies or structure, when I don't [know] they would have necessarily felt like they could do that if it wasn't for *Policy Show*.

> So, if it hadn't been for [*Policy Show*], I don't know what the staff feeling would be like now. I think actually there would be a lot more resentment, I think a lot of people would find it harder to work there. It's not perfect now - but I think that really did help. And it meant that there's more trust within the smaller side as well, people are able to say what they need to, to each other and trust that it goes no further, get it off their chest, and try and move on, or try and work with whatever that issue was. (Staff Interviews, 2020–21)

A significant part of this improvement in working relationships is the implementation of staff and programming meetings. Whilst this seems like a minimal change, staff at all levels mention it as a positive development in working dynamics. Wade reflected:

> I think a good institution should be meeting together and that was one of the things that came out of it, more regular meetings! Not too many! But just more regular sharing of ideas and future things to do. (Wade, 2020)

ii) Implementation of care package policy

The most concrete outcome of the process of *Policy Show*, as mentioned by all interviewees, was the implementation of what is commonly described as 'the care package policy'. As a result of working together on *Policy Show*, EP invited Rehana Zaman to guest-curate their next exhibition. Zaman proposed within this a policy shift, which has been taken forward in every project since. This policy is worded as follows in the exhibition guide for Zaman's curated exhibition *The Range*:

> Artist Healthcare: On the occasion of *The Range*, Eastside Projects will ring fence £450 (£75 per artist) towards artist healthcare and wellbeing. This nominal amount may be redeemed for any services that support and develop the social, physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of good health. This includes, though not exclusively so, counselling meetings and workshops, mental health support, dental care, eye health, occupational health support, financial advisory services. Access to this fund will be facilitated by Gavin or Ruth

> at Eastside Projects and payments will be redeemed through an invoice process or as direct payment (upon prior agreement with Gavin or Ruth). The process and details of making this claim will remain a confidential agreement between Gavin or Ruth and the artist unless otherwise agreed. (Eastside Projects, *The Range* Exhibition Guide, 2018)

This is now included in EP's fees for every exhibition, framed as '£75 care package', with the amount not relative to the project but a fixed rate of £75. Wade reflects on this in his interview:

> We asked Rehana Zaman to curate the next show, and that, I think that was a continuation of *Policy Show*, and she implemented a version of one of the policies, which is the artist care package which we offer artists. We offer artists £75 to spend on something that benefits their mental health, and that's ongoing. And I still think it's a very unusual thing, and it's something that artists mention, that they really appreciate that they're being offered this, and a moment to think about that and to consider. Because I think a lot of artists are in quite stressful situations, and quite complicated, messy relationships with organisations and institutions. So, it's a really good outcome that we have that. (Wade, 2020)

iii) Increased transparency

During the first *Policy Show* public event, one staff member asked for more transparency around staff salaries, leading to these being shared publicly during that event, and from that point being published on the EP website. This was a significant outcome for staff, and one that is frequently referred to in interviews. It is part of a wider movement towards the organisation being more transparent, with *Policy Manual*'s publication of all organisational policies a key part of this, and the subsequent sharing of more extensive policies on the website. Claxton reflects:

> The thing I think is one of the best things is the policy manual, actually, and just being very transparent with that. And certain things like, we've now started publishing salaries on the website [...] and you know, having things like that, that are trying to show how the system works. (Claxton, 2020)

b. Policy Proposals

A direct outcome from *Policy Show* were the policy proposals made by artists (included in full in appendix 2). These were planned as material for EP staff to work through and ultimately look to implement in some way, which has not to date been taken forward. Nonetheless they have impacted on the organisation in various ways, as I will come to. Three proposals were made each by Cisneros, Nyampeta, Schweiker, and Zaman, and were titled as follows:

Cisneros:
A Policy of Care: Reflecting on Policy
A Policy of Considered Pay: Transparent Pay Structures
A Policy of Curating: Considered Creating
(see appendix 2.a)

Nyampeta:
A Policy of Translation
A Policy of Distribution
A Policy of Summaries
(see appendix 2.b)

Schweiker:
economic transparency policy
who is not here policy
air quality and atmosphere policy
(see appendix 2.c)

Zaman:
Policy 1: Decolonizing Eastside Projects
Policy 2: Radical Childcare

> Policy 3: Rethinking Mental Health in the Workplace
> (see appendix 2.d)

Of these policies, EP has made most progress with regards to Cisneros and Schweiker's policies around economic transparency, through the publishing of staff salaries and artist fees on their website. These two policy proposals read as follows:

> A Policy of Considered Pay: Transparent Pay Structures
> Eastside Projects makes transparent how the organisation's pay structure is informed/decided with consideration of staff, freelancers, artists, talks, commissions, interns (all payments from Eastside Projects) - fees/salaries. This information is available on all agreements, staff handbook, and website. Pay structure information lists resources used such as governmental guidelines, a-n artists pay, ACE pay guidelines, annual budget breakdown etc in order to make the process transparent and uses language that is easily understood. For clarity, there is a visual breakdown in the form of charts or graphics which clearly indicates fee breakdowns. (Cisneros, 2018, appendix 2.a)

> economic transparency policy
> make public and explain the budget for each project, including fees, non-monetary exchanges and voluntary contributions (Schweiker, 2018, appendix 2.c)

Whilst not taken to the extent that either policy proposal suggests, the publication of fees and salaries was informed by these proposals. Some policy proposals have also had lives outside of EP. Zaman reflected in her interview that the policy proposals she had made as part of *Policy Show* had gone on to impact her work as a trustee on the board of LUX Scotland, feeding into conversations around organisational policy, stating 'Were my hopes for the project met? To some extent they were met, but not at Eastside' (Zaman, 2021). Similarly, a policy proposed by Cisneros (below), and the process of working with EP in general, fed into her publication *Document 0*, which includes a set of reflective questions for art workers and institutions to ask of themselves.

A Policy of Curating: Considered Creating

Eastside Projects staff take a vested interest and responsibility of how it curates and why it curates through a set of 'fundamental questions', a document that staff co-develop on a yearly basis. The questions consider cultural equity, personal interests/networks, aesthetics, contemporary politics, art histories, knowledge networks, room for development, room for learning, room for experimenting, etc. This policy recognises stakeholders, the arts and the world at large to be in a constant state of change. (Cisneros, 2018, appendix 2.a)

c. Longer term outcomes

Over the course of the years since *Policy Show* (the five years 2018–2023), a period of time which of course also included the Covid-19 pandemic, a heightened attention to the Black Lives Matter movement following the murder of George Floyd, and ongoing austerity policies in the UK, the sector at large has, as I have detailed earlier, felt the pressure to respond to such events with claims of care, access, and anti-racism. These events have also fed into the shifts in practice that have been visible at EP, but I would argue (as is cited by interviewees) that some of the groundwork laid by *Policy Show* has impacted how the organisation was able to respond. In 2020, EP extended Zaman's Artist Healthcare policy as an opportunity to members of their artist development scheme, EOP:

> Eastside Projects invites EOP members to apply for up to £100 towards artists survival, healthcare and wellbeing during the COVID 19 crisis. Care packages may be used to pay for essentials like food or rent but can also be redeemed for any goods or services that support and develop the social, physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of good health. The EOP care package is inspired by Rehana Zaman's intervention in Eastside Projects' exhibition contracts when curating The Range. Following her lead, since 2019 we have offered artists who show with us, up to £75 towards artist healthcare and wellbeing in addition to their exhibition fee. (EOP website, n.d.)

In the same year, as part of a response to Black Lives Matter, membership to EOP was made free to certain groups:

> Membership is free if you have Global Majority* heritage, or if you are disabled, D/deaf, or chronically ill**.
>
> * We define Global Majority as a collective term that refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialised as ethnic minorities.
>
> ** This membership is for people with complex or intersecting support needs or disabilities that have substantial and long-term adverse effects on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (EOP website, n.d.)

This was part of a wider response committing to several targets in becoming an anti-racist organisation. Whilst this was widespread at the time, it is part of a longer shift at EP, the roots of which is attributed by many staff to the process of *Policy Show* and specifically the provocations of the artists involved. Staff consistently mention the involvement of Cisneros throughout the project and Zaman's policy proposal Decolonising Eastside Projects (detailed below) as acting as impetus for the organisation to think differently about its whiteness.

> Policy 1: Decolonising Eastside Projects
>
> This policy seeks to challenge the legacies of colonialism and racism within the arts by:
>
> a) Dismantling structural inequalities - in the first instance within the institution of Eastside itself through employment procedures and Eastside's organisational structure. We will invite Dr Karen Salt[4] as a consultant to assist us in engaging with the far-reaching consequences of this aim.
>
> b) Through the promotion of global intellectual traditions of artmaking that extend beyond Europe and US. We acknowledge that our own research interests and experiences may be limited in this capacity therefore we will seek to develop partnerships with individuals and groups that express this expertise through lived experience or academic study. We commit to sharing resources that we have been privileged to receive (where others have not been so lucky) and will remain vigilant towards the creeping effects of white

[4] Salt is an academic at the University of Nottingham, where she directs the Centre for Research in Race and Rights.

supremacy that have become ossified and largely unchecked within so many of our 'progressive' institutions.

c) Through a sustained and sensitive engagement with local communities of Black, Minority Ethnic and working-class background in Birmingham and beyond. Our commitment towards this aim will be demonstrated by centring this work as the main activity of the gallery rather than peripheral or satellite activity that exists at the margins through an education programme, public programme or offsite project. In order to create longevity and real impact within our local community we will invite members of this community to become part of our organisation at board level or in an advisory capacity (this role must be at least living wage paid employment to acknowledge the precarity often faced by people of BME and working class background who increasingly have little access to the elite academic routes that afford one a paid career within the arts). (Zaman, 2018, appendix 2.d)

While this has not been implemented in the organisation (particularly section a), there has been a resulting shift specifically in approaches to programming stemming directly from *Policy Show*. Following the abandoned 100% WOMEN policy which had been proposed during Policy Show (and was therefore never published) EP did, without stating this publicly, only programme women (inclusive of all who identify as such) for solo exhibitions from the point of reopening in 2018 until mid-2020 (Lady Skollie, Monster Chetwynd, Lindsey Mendick, Sofia Niazi, Freya Dooley, Sonia Boyce) as well as only including those identifying as women or non-binary in the ten year group exhibition *This is the Gallery and the Gallery is Many Things X*, in 2018.

Since *Policy Show*, there has been a similar increase in the proportion of non-white artists the organisation has programmed. From 2020 onwards, EP has published on its website, and consistently updated, an Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan. As well as articulating targets, this includes progress reports, one of which states that in the years 2021–23, 77% of the artists the organisation worked with identified as women or non-binary people, and 87% had Global Majority Heritage (Eastside Projects, 2023). The document also details efforts in diversifying the staff team and board, which have been slower processes, but nonetheless resulted in

significant shifts: whilst in 2018, only 8% of EP's board members had Global Majority Heritage, by 2023 this was true for 44% (still below the target of 50%). It is also reported that whilst the staff team had an increase both in terms of non-binary individuals and those of a Global Majority Heritage, this was entirely within entry level and fixed term roles. The 2023–26 Action Plan includes a commitment to inviting artists to share Access Riders at the beginning of working relationships. This quota-based approach (in part developed due to the requirements of Arts Council England NPO application processes) although not proposed by the *Policy Show* artists, was nonetheless adapted drawing on their provocations, and is noted by staff to have had a tangible impact on the organisation. Claxton reflected:

> I suppose some of *Policy Show* informed [subsequent programming] in terms of the people that we invited, who were perhaps different to who we might have invited previously, and the kind of conversations we had, so conversations around diversity, invisibility and who's in the room, which actually, probably the seed of is *Policy Show*.
>
> I learnt a lot from Teresa. Thinking about how white and Eurocentric my perspective on how things should work was, not necessarily on programming but like structures, so maybe I think more about that now—or like where the barriers might be—I think about that more now, or slightly differently. (Claxton, 2020)

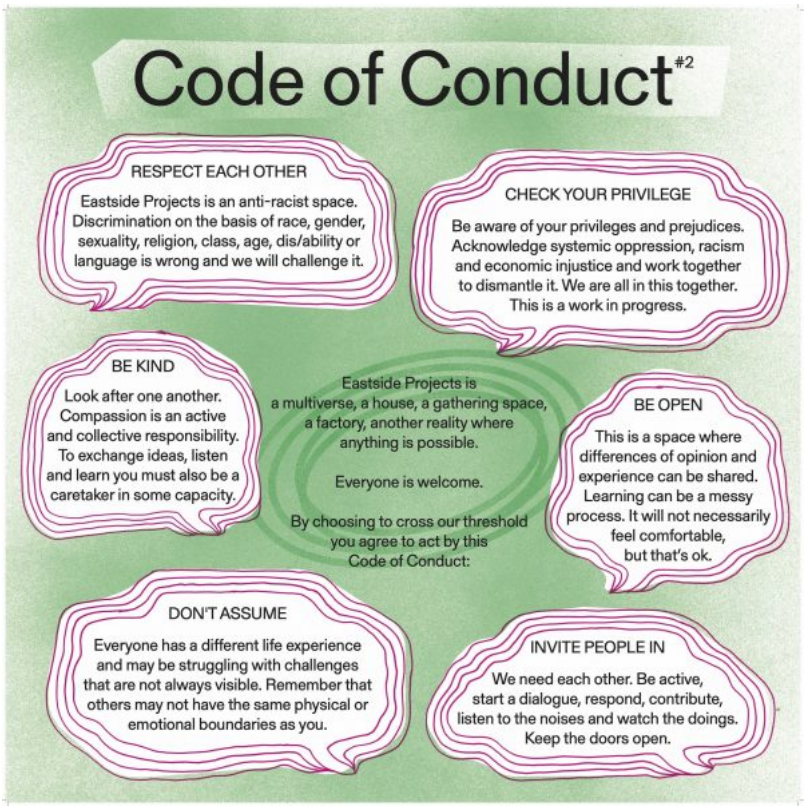
A line can also be drawn to these later developments from the following policy proposal made by Schweiker:

> who is not here policy
> when possible, as an element of shows, events, meetings, discussions (etc), think about who is not in the room and why (Schweiker, 2018, appendix 2.c)

This is reflected in Claxton's 2020 interview:

> I think the stuff that we are doing around thinking about where people who are not us are represented in lots of parts of the organisation, I think we've done pretty well at thinking about that, and we've got a good creative case rating now.[5] And that's a direct result of some of this work over the last few years, thinking about who we are. Which I think is partly coming from some of the conversations that started in *Policy Show*, and also just part of the landscape we're in, which has made us think differently. Or think harder—I think we always thought about it but not as consciously. (Claxton, 2020)

Claxton also notes the impact of *Policy Show* conversations on the targets and quotas developed for the organisation's Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation business plan, noting that quotas can be quite a blunt approach, but nonetheless one which gave EP tools with which to hold themselves accountable (Claxton, 2020). These shifts in practice and organisational culture are also evidenced to some extent in the implementation of EP's Code of Conduct, first written in 2020, which is displayed outside the gallery. The current (2023) version, minimally updated from the original, is included here (Fig. 9).



[5] Arts Council England's Creative Case Rating system scores organisations against targets for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Fig. 9: Eastside Projects, Code of Conduct #2.

The final organisational shift I want to mention here is one with less direct connection to the conversations facilitated by *Policy Show*, but which has relevance for the wider focus here. As of 2023, EP transformed its programme structure, moving away from the model of group and solo exhibitions programmed in the gallery space, to inviting three or four artists to take on the role of Incidental Artists, for the period of a year. An announcement on the EP website frames this as a further exploration of the work of the Artist Placement Group, who 'made strenuous efforts to radically transform artists' relation to society' through the role of the incidental artist, who would get involved 'in the processes of other organisations, from steel factories to government offices' (EP website, 2022: n.p.). EP describes their invitation to the Incidental Artists (each paid an artist fee of £10,000, with the same available for production costs), as 'work[ing] with us as allies, collaborators, agents of wider change, and attention magnets in a variety of contexts over an extended period of time' (EP website, 2022: n.p.). To create these opportunities, in particular the substantial fee for each artist, EP has reworked their organisational resources and significantly altered their programme, so as to be responsive to the kind of work that Incidental Artists wish to pursue. They close this statement with the following paragraph:

> We believe that context is more than half the work and that artists and organisations have to adapt as times and value systems change. After the end of continual growth, the end of freedom to continue colonial practices, but still amongst the cultural contradictions of capitalism, we are heading beyond the multi-modernism of post-information smart societies into a contested new emergent society, or emergency societies, of degrowth, rebalance, reparations and re-attentiveness. Things must change and so must we. (EP website, 2022: n.p.)

As introduced earlier, Artist Placement Group were a significant reference for Wade when conceiving the structure of the *Policy Show* project. In many ways, this development takes forward one of the key ideas of *Policy Show*: that artists become part of organisational thinking. The Incidental Artists are invited to work in relation to the organisation in a way of their choosing. It

also addresses the ongoing question about artist's fees, something that EP has attempted to increase on multiple occasions, through building a fee increase into ACE applications. The incidental artists expand the artistic core of the organisation, now that its original structure of six co-founding company directors has all but dissolved (with just Claxton, Wade, and Tom Bloor remaining). This shift comes at the same time as a significant change in the staff structure of the organisation. Due to rising rent and bills coupled with standstill funding, EP made its Offsite Curator role redundant in mid-2023, and has opted not to rehire for the role of Artist Caretaker (the role managing the EOP artist development programme) when the current staff member chose not to return from maternity leave. With this shift, the core staff team of the organisation will be solely made up of the two directors, and a rolling appointment of artist-curator trainees. Incidental Artists and EOP members will feed into programming.

This shift may be seen in many ways as an entirely coherent expression of an ongoing tension that lies in EP not wanting to become an institution proper; for the organisation to contract in this way is both a result of the financial strain of the current economic situation in the UK, and also a step which is in line with the many times that the EP directors have reflected that they are not interested in the organisation being a site for career progression, that they are not particularly interested in managing staff teams, and that they see the organisation as quite separate to the usual model of a publicly funded arts organisation. As Claxton reflected in her interview:

> I learnt that I don't want to be like another institution. Or I knew it already, but [*Policy Show*] very much confirmed that! And that any kind of conversations or criticism of Eastside can't have that as a frame, somehow. Which I think is quite a tricky thing to do. (Claxton, 2020)

With the Incidental Artist roles, EP has found a way to expand and diversify the artistic thinking of the organisation (in a manner similar to the founding collective of artists) but without this being formalised as a staff role, attached to the quotidian tasks that such a role entails. From the perspective of the community of art workers, this is a sizable loss to secure arts opportunities in the

city. However, it is a decision that reflects a specific dimension of how the organisation wants to work.

In Janna Graham's reflections on the work of Artist Placement Group, she posed a specific concern: that artists placed into other organisational (often industrial) contexts did not always engage deeply with the political and social realities of these workplaces (Graham, 2015). If EP's changing roster of Incidental Artists are to feed into artistic and organisational thinking and decision making, and especially in the absence of permanent, non-directorial staff roles, it will certainly be a challenge (and not one which they should obviously be tasked with) to keep the day-to-day experience of working in the organisation at the heart of this thinking.

To return to my focus here: to what extent was this process of critique able to shift the forms of governance (or the infrastructure, or the working cultures) of EP? We can conclude that there *was* a substantive shift (or shifts) in the organisation stemming from the process of critique enacted by *Policy Show*, namely in working culture, and in a significant movement towards more equitable and inclusive practices and programming. These shifts were primarily something which fed into the longer-term thinking of the organisation, appearing some years after the project had formally ended; as Ahmed writes, 'impact is a slow inheritance' (Ahmed, 2021: 310). At the same time, there were numerous proposals which were not enacted, in part due to a wider context of available funding, time and resources. The structure of the staff team itself has considerably shifted, but the leadership of the organisation and its forms of governance remain consistent. It is also important to note the impact of the closure of the project, and as such the closure of this process of critique (again in part due to available funds and staff capacity). This was at odds with the intentions of many individuals involved in the project, including several of the artists, staff team and myself. It was a concern of a number of the artists throughout the project, which was in many ways borne out, albeit not altogether intentionally. Nonetheless, EP did go through a number of transformations which have their root in *Policy Show*.

5.3 From the Prefigurative to the Fight Specific

I want to change focus at this point to consider some other, more extreme cases, where processes of critique, evaluation and transformation have been built in from the founding of an institution, before returning to the case study of EP. I will reconsider here James McAnally's concept of the prefigurative institution, and how this relates to a specific institutional narrative, that of Isola Art Centre in Milan. As introduced in Chapter 1, the concept of the prefigurative institution (stemming from the prefigurative practices of autonomous politics) holds that 'the form of one's organizing must be inseparable from the eventual goal' (McAnally, 2017, n.p.). Prefiguration, then, requires a similar reconciling of working structures with organisational purpose as we have determined that a practice of *parrhesia* must entail.

As well as a dedication to working structures which echo an institution's politics, for McAnally a component of prefiguration is the imperative for institutions to actively engage in the struggles of their constituencies and publics, despite the risk that this may incur. This commitment is of particular weight in the context of St Louis, the city where he co-founded arts organisation The Luminary, and co-directs Counterpublic Triennial, and which has been the site of ongoing police brutality and the nexus of the Black Lives Matter movement across the USA. McAnally writes:

> The future of the institution requires an orientation towards love in its fullest form—that is to say, a love which also accounts for justice. Far from a passive position, to care for a friend —or to care [curate] for the institution—requires a stance not just for the friend, but against that which harms them. We organize in and against systems that have failed us; to envision a world differently is inherently oppositional. However, rather than maintaining the reduced stance of institutional critique, these prefigurative practices critique through building, creating sites of creation, circulation and exchange that materially alter the situation for those involved. (McAnally, 2017, n.p.)

The thread of this prefigurative practice can be seen throughout McAnally's curatorial (and institution-building) work, which is deeply rooted in St Louis. Directly after the *Policy Show* staff residential, I spent two months in St Louis on residency with The Luminary in 2018, during which I was struck by that organisation's embeddedness in its neighbourhood, visible in the number of

people with no formal connection to the arts as such who would pop in for a cup of coffee or to talk about their day. I learned about how this space had attempted to be a good neighbour, and a welcoming space, to its local community, in part through its response to the Ferguson uprising in 2014. Despite a deep engagement with contemporary art and theory, The Luminary seemed to be able to address multiple overlapping publics; this was in contrast to many of the Northern European institutions with which I was familiar. During the residency, I found a commonality with McAnally in the grounding of his work in the theory of Michael Warner and specifically the idea of a public as poetic world building. In the idea of publics as poetic world building is something akin to the idea of the prefigurative that McAnally speaks of, in that addressing a public is a form of speaking a new world into being, and prefiguration builds new worlds (and ways of living in them) by embedding politics into processes and infrastructures.

It is apt, therefore, that McAnally's current venture, which describes itself as a triennial scaled to a neighbourhood, is named 'Counterpublic', after Warner's concept discussed in Chapter 1. Writing for the journal *MARCH* (of which he is co-editor with Sarrita Hun) as part of the series 'Triennials out of Time', McAnally writes of the slow formation of Counterpublic, and a wish 'to stop working *like that.* To not create work for others *like that*. To not perpetuate *that* art world, internally or institutionally' (McAnally, 2023, n.p.), in a way that echoes Foucault's formulation of critique as the wish not to be governed *like that*. Considering building a new institution, which in turn may address its own poetic worlds, McAnally asks: 'what is the world our institutions are making?' (McAnally, 2023, n.p.) Can its values be built into its very structure? He writes:

> Through the slow cycle of building this triennial, I started to think about a structure that sits alongside cultural institutions, civic structures, and community organizers equally, acting as a neighbor to each of these while remaining a step outside the house. A structure that brings material change to bear as a core component: a world-making public that is not poetic, only. (McAnally, 2023, n.p.)

In line with this ambition of enacting material change, Counterpublic 2023 began with a year-long community engagement process, including 800 individuals, before programming began. Its

programme, to give a few examples, gave a platform to (and made demands for) 'land back' initiatives in St Louis, and co-created a park in the only neighbourhood along its route without one.

Counterpublic is an attempt to embed an institution in its immediate context, through living by its politics. A notable example of an institution of this kind is Isola Art Centre in Milan, whose story is captured in the 2013 publication *Fight-Specific Isola: Art Architecture, Activism and the Future of the City*. When the organisation's home, an occupied factory known as Stecca degli artigiani, was demolished, Isola did not cease activity nor relocate to a new permanent home; instead, the organisation embedded itself in the already existing infrastructures of its neighbourhood, becoming 'a dispersed center [...] hosted by other spaces in the district including a bookshop, a clothing store, a musical instrument shop, a restaurant and a number of cultural associations' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 21). Whilst this shift to occupy the neighbourhood was born out of necessity and crisis, this 'traumatic event' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 19) in turn expanded how Isola Art Center was able to operate, leading to 'a multiple, hybrid kind of institution that keeps on shaping itself to the requirements of the day' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 20). Perhaps key to this hybridity was that Isola Art Center operated horizontally, managed by an open platform of artists, curators, and local groups, with decisions made not by a director but by all those who take part and are invested in the local struggle: 'the criterion for participation (and for exclusion) is participation in the battle for public space, with the neighbourhood associations' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 131). This cyclical nature is one of the ways that Isola Art Centre was able to continue, without a fixed location or team, but with multiple sources of energy and enthusiasm which waxed and waned.

In having aligned itself absolutely with a neighbourhood struggle against gentrification and urban cleansing, Isola offers a clear example of a prefigurative institution (its politics built into its very infrastructure, or lack of) and of an institution practising *parrhesia*, with a deep commitment to living and working by those things it claimed outwardly to support. It is worth noting, then, that this level of integrity carries with it a kind of impossibility: to access the kinds of funding and institutional support which sustain most art organisations. As Brizioli and Theis write:

> Isola Art Center has no stable institutional ties. This is because dependence on fixed financing and public or private decision-making structures often leads to phenomena of censorship, self-censorship, compromise and bureaucratization. Moreover, Isola Art Center, by inserting itself in a context of struggle against the urban planning decisions of the City of Milan and the Lombardy Region, excludes a priori any hypotheses of financing on the part of these public agencies, the very source of most of the backing for other non-profit spaces in Milan. (Brizioli et al., 2013: 132)

There's a clear risk to this approach, in terms of organisational and financial stability, and relationships with local and national governance—both of which Isola effectively denied through their commitment to their neighbourhood struggle, genuine relationships with their local community, political integrity, artistic and curatorial autonomy, and the openness of what Isola might become. It is not that they began as a formal institution, but rather that their work was always in and of its context. They designated this, rather than as site-specific, as '*fight-specific* art' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 140), meaning forms of art and arts organising which doesn't simply respond to, but are inseparable from, their fight. In the case of Isola, this fight was the larger movement in Milan which refused the real estate and financial capital-led transformation of the urban area. A fight-specific practice is 'not addressed to an existing community, but creates a new community, consolidating it by fighting' (Brizioli et al., 2013); it addresses and builds counterpublics.

The case of Isola is one that seems to articulate a number of concepts in the practices of arts institutions and as such to occupy the imagination of practitioners and theorists. In conversation with Theis, Gerald Raunig, Isobel Lorey, and Charles Esche each reflected on some of the concepts stemming from the organisation's practice. Raunig drew a connection between the decade-long (or longer) time scales of Isola and that of Park Fiction:[6] 'it's not just one idea that is then prolonged, repeated, slightly developed; it's an instituent practice, instituting ruptures and duration,

[6] A community/activist art project in Hamburg, begun in 1994, in which artists, local families, activists and squatters occupied a site due for re-development, imagining and fighting for a self-determined green space (a fiction of a park) amidst a district undergoing rapid redevelopment by the city council. The park was eventually built in 2005.

permanently' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 268). A further concept attached to Isola is that of the dispersed art centre, adapted from Esche's concept of the dispersed museum, or institution. Esche writes:

> In Isola, I felt for the first time that I really saw the idea of the dispersed institution in action. In a bookshop you do a reading, there is a music event in a music shop, in the 2 restaurants in the area people eat and talk. In this way, you don't need to build the dispersed institution but you use the existing infrastructure, where art and gathering of people can simply take place. (Brizioli et al., 2013: 276)

For Esche, the idea of the dispersed museum (a term he uses in relation to the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven) stems from that of a Greek architect who imagined 'a house in which the various rooms were distributed across the city, so you would have your bedroom by the sea and the kitchen in the middle of the market, and so on' (Brizioli et al., 2013). According to Esche, this dispersal of the activities of the institution effectively expands its infrastructure without the need for private ownership.

Lorey notes that this dispersal also allows for publics to be multiple and themselves dispersed. However, this prospect—of an art centre without a centre—presents another challenge to the institution's ability to survive. As Lorey poses it, there is a question of 'how to deal with this notion of dispersed museum without getting the museum's doors locked tomorrow, because there is no more money? (Brizioli et al., 2013: 279). For Esche, there is an inevitability in this: that the dispersed museum will likely receive less money in a future in which the public sphere is of decreasing significance. It becomes feasible, then, that a museum, institution, or other organisation which doesn't accept funding outside of its political allegiances might be forced to close. As Esche notes, 'closing the museum or sharing its collection are all possible for me if it makes something more urgent or vivid possible in the process' (Brizioli et al., 2013: 279). For Isola, this proximity to the possibility of closure was always apparent, being as they were so invested in a specific civic struggle.

5.4 An Impossibility

Whilst the case of Isola is in many ways a highly specific one, it presents an opportunity to push at the limits of my question. How might an art institution care well, if caring well entails reconciling *logos* and *bios*, or making genuine steps towards such a reconciliation? Taking into account the material realities facing art institutions, there is a sense in which a practice of integrity or care in its fullest sense is impossible. Art institutions, and particularly those in receipt of government public funding under the political and economic regimes currently in power, are functionally operatives of progressive neoliberalism, and beholden to funding systems that bear the brunt of austerity and extreme privatisation. The alternative of private finance is equally, if not more, tied into geopolitical conflict. If, amidst a wide-scale care crisis, funding structures require institutions to document their commitments to, for example, widening access, addressing the climate crisis, and hiring a diverse workforce, whilst at the same time precluding them from actually enacting these in genuine ways (through providing time and money for expansive thinking about, for example, reparations, reckonings with colonial violence, embedded hierarchical and patriarchal structures of work, and how to deal with a widespread mental health crisis in the workforce), then a reconciliation of statements and workings becomes not just a challenge, but impossible to enact. In other words, if the structures that make the institution possible at all also make it impossible to act with integrity, then one way to do so is for the institution to cease operations entirely.

Seeing how this impossibility arises could be done in a number of ways, but it helps to think it through using some fictional examples (any similarity to specific institutions is unintentional). We'll look at some imagined scenarios facing institutions which I'll call 'W', 'X', 'Y', and 'Z':

> Institution W has a genuine commitment to its mission to support the LGBTQ+ community, and its programmes address publics who care about or identify with the concerns of this community. However, Institution W's main source of funding is found to have connections to regimes which persecute trans individuals. In order to continue to operate by their ideals, Institution W cuts ties with their funding source. After multiple unsuccessful attempts to source alternative funding, they are ultimately forced to close.

Institution X exhibits primarily landscape painting by white European artists working in a particular era. Its director has written a book on the topic, defining a particular stylistic group. When Institution X applies for public funding, it is advised that in order to be successful, it needs to fulfil a number of objectives which set out commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to meet these targets, Institution X hires a gallery assistant with Global Majority heritage and posts a statement on its website about anti-racism. It has not made structural changes, and nor would the delivery-dependent funding it has obtained allow for the work this would entail. If the director of Institution X was to be honest about the aims of the institution, they might risk their ability to obtain funding, in a context where public funding requires Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to be prioritised at policy level, albeit not embedded in actual operations.

Institution Y has a renowned programme of exhibitions and research and is widely recognised as a leader in its field. Because of this, it has established a basis of secure and ethical funding. It is frequently held up by artists as an example of when they have felt their work has been well supported, largely due to the dynamism of the institution's director, and the comparatively generous fees and hospitality that the institution is able to provide. At some point it comes to light, through an open letter, that a large percentage of staff over an extensive period have suffered significant physical and mental illness as a result of extreme stress, burn out, and bullying from within the leadership team at the institution. A petition is circulated that calls for the closure of the institution, and as a result, it loses its funding.

Institution Z is a publicly funded art institution in the north of England run by a collective of co-directors, who began the organisation with a wish to provide supportive opportunities to artists and to build reciprocal relationships with their neighbours in the small city in the region where they are based. Over the years, they have suffered a number of funding cuts, at the same time as they are required to produce more and higher quality outputs, for the same or less money. They fundamentally disagree with the push for their work to fulfil services previously provided by the welfare state, especially in the context of

shrinking funding, and they have had to cut artist's fees to a rate lower than the real living wage. They don't want to stop their work, but they struggle to live up to their intentions, due to overwork and exhaustion.

In each instance, there is a certain degree of impossibility with regards to continuing to operate *with integrity,* whether through the limitations or corruptions of funding sources, a pressure to perform something other than the actual aims of the institution, or a conflict between progressive programming and toxic working culture. Amidst the widespread crisis of care that I outlined in Chapter 3, there is a sense in which art institutions cannot practise with care, and to claim to do so would be to perform a care fix in an uncaring system, which precludes caring in real terms. There is, for example, a kind of impossibility, or at least a significant level of risk, in some of the policy proposals made by *Policy Show* artists. Let's look to one of the proposals made by Zaman, below:

Policy 3: Rethinking Mental Health in the Workplace

a) Eastside Projects acknowledges the detrimental effects of current exploitative conditions of work upon the mental health of its employees – that ill mental health is an issue of disempowerment, situated in a context of decimated collectivity. Eastside will address its current hierarchical structure and instead implement one of collective ownership with democratic control over the apparatus of the organisation.

b) Eastside projects will be the first organisation within the arts in the UK that will critically redress the negative impact of excessive working hours (that often extend into the evening and weekend) and curtail the length of the working week to three days (absolutely no work-related activities or admin on the remaining 4 days). The impact of these working hours will require a radical rethinking of what constitutes 'excellence' within the arts and a commitment to abandon the insidious professionalisation and corporatisation of art practice. An out of office message will be drafted collectively. (Zaman, 2018, appendix 2.d)

This proposal is undoubtedly a powerful one and one which would make a significant impact on the lives of the staff of the organisation, as well as setting a wider precedent across the sector. As a provocation, it challenges the organisation to engage with the part it plays in the wider care crisis, and to acknowledge the impact of work on the health of its employees. If taken forward by EP (and we should keep in mind that this proposal by Zaman was intended to be discussed and adapted by the staff team), the implementation of such a policy might have been more than the organisation was able to commit to, whilst still operating. It would restructure the workforce, requiring either the approval of ACE for staff to work fewer hours whilst receiving the same salary, or alternatively would present a large cut to staff member's monthly income; it would acknowledge a widespread mental health crisis, but without having the resources to provide staff with mental health support; it would make a claim to support staff wellbeing, which may not have always been the experience of staff, and would require comprehensive training; it would also be a completely new organisational structure, one of collective ownership, which current staff may not be willing to pursue, and which would require a new agreement with both ACE and Birmingham City University. It is possible that the institution would no longer be able to afford to exist, or that it would become an entirely different institution.

None of these challenges constitute criticisms as such of the proposal, which presents a possible answer to a widespread crisis. Nonetheless, in the context of how the wider sector operates, it would represent a risk on multiple levels for EP to commit to practise in this way. In this sense, were EP committed to the statements of this policy proposal, it would represent a true act of *parrhesia*: declaring not only the sector as a whole, but the institution itself, to be detrimental to the mental health of art workers would be speaking truth to the wider sector (and its powers) at great personal (institutional) risk.

To conclude that the caring institution cannot exist, or that a practice of *parrhesia* is all but impossible in the current context, perhaps seems a bleak conclusion to reach. But this is not so much an end point, as a ground from which to begin. There is still another route, of an institution which accepts a state of impossibility, and keeps going anyway. Such an institution might identify with Graham's concept of the para-site: redirecting its resources to its long-term commitments,

working with integrity, whilst accepting that the terms of its existence (funding, partnerships, governance) are not aligned with its work. This institution occupies an infrastructure that is not quite fit for purpose, but finds ways, within this, to challenge the wider sector. Despite the impossibility of a caring institution in the context of (and beholden to) uncaring infrastructures, there is still an imperative to *move towards* this impossible thing because the alternative (perpetuating a care fix, altogether ignoring the necessity for change, or even widespread cessation of operations) is significantly worse than a reality of striving, attempting, failing, working towards practices of care. The act of living in times of crisis necessitates continuing to move towards (and fighting for) a more equitable world—even when this appears impossible.

5.5 As Well As Possible

Given an acknowledgement of this impossibility, and at the same time acknowledging a need to work towards the impossible, in order to care well in this context, we can instead ask: how might art institutions care *as well as possible*? This is both a pragmatic question and a prompt for radical imaginings. Returning to Puig de la Bellacasa's focus on living in the world 'as well as possible' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 4), and her framing of 'as well as possible worlds' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 7), I outlined in Chapter 3 how she holds together both an acknowledgement of the impossibility of care within a troubled present, and at the same time the need to imagine abundant futures (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 150).

Asking how art institutions might care *as well as possible* holds a similarly double meaning. In the first instance, it allows us to ask, how might art institutions care as well as possible, given the circumstances? Given the limitations of existing institutional forms, a wider crisis of care, the climate crisis, a context of widespread austerity and progressive neoliberalism, significant and ongoing cuts to arts funding, how can a particular art institution enact the best possible care, within its means?

At the same time as these more practical steps towards caring as well as possible, it is also imperative to hold space for imagination, both artistic imagination, and the imagination of abundant futures.

With this in mind, to return to our question, the second meaning of caring as well as possible is a more expansive one: caring as well as we could possibly imagine. This meaning, which connects more so with the *as well as possible worlds* which Puig de la Bellacasa takes from Tronto, is concerned with 'as well as possible' in terms of imagining a best possible world, and speaking this into being. This 'as well as possible' steps outside of the specific institution, with its various constraints, and aims to institute anew. The concept of radical imagination has a long and rich history in Black feminist and abolitionist thought, as practising towards a world free of oppressive violence. Ruth Wilson Gilmore describes abolition as 'life in rehearsal' (Wilson Gilmore, 2020), a practice of collectively imagining futures not determined by carceral geographies, instead 'building life-affirming institutions' (Wilson Gilmore, quoted in Brown, 2020: 2). This might look like Moten and Harney's description of planning (as the counterpart to policy/policing): the modes of organising of the undercommons. In conversation with Paul Gilroy for a 2020 podcast, Gilmore spoke of 'the possibility and the intensity of being able to [...] rehearse the future, rehearse the social order coming into being' (Wilson Gilmore, 2020). We could see this as akin to forming a (counter)public through address: calling the future into being. Indeed, as Warner writes, 'all discourse or performance addressed to a public must characterize the world in which it attempts to circulate, projecting for that world a concrete and liveable shape, and attempting to realize the world through address' (Warner, 2002: 81).

Athena Athanasiou's text 'Performing the Institution, As If It Were Possible' explores the possibility for acts of resistance from within certain conditions of apparent impossibility (for example, deeply ingrained capitalism). She suggests that,

> [...] instead of treating the interminable question of the capacity to act in terms of 'possible versus impossible' we examine what it might mean to institute 'otherwise,' politically and performatively, 'as if it were possible.' (Athanasiou, 2016: 679)

This *as if it were possible* is close to what I am suggesting in terms of instituting with care, as well as possible. Amidst acknowledging impossibility, working as best as possible towards care within this, we also need the imaginary of as well as possible worlds - and to hold onto the need to call these into

being. For Athanasiou, it is also crucial that our critique of public institutions does not result in their closure; as in losing a public institution, she writes, 'we also lose the possibility of collective mobilization in response to what interminably remains to be resisted, reinvented, reformed, and re-instituted' (Athanasiou, 2016: 682). In this sense we are met with a dilemma:

> we need public spaces, homes, parks, schools, hospitals, libraries, and art institutions to sustain the possibility of living and being-in-common. And yet, at the same time, these institutions, with all their classed, racial, ethnic, and gendered inflections, are technologies of normalization and disposability. As they determine and regulate livability, they also compromise or negate the sustainability of certain modes of life. (Athanasiou, 2016: 683)

Instead of closure, then, Athanasiou advocates working with the institution as 'a historically situated and contingent work of resistance' which constitutes 'a work of instituting otherwise' (Athanasiou, 2016: 683). Her position is that performing the institution *as if it were possible,* whilst simultaneously engaging in acts of (anti-capitalist, anti-racist, queer, etc) resistance, is crucial to the very possibility of 'transformative collective acts and arts' (Athanasiou, 2016: 683) amidst times of crisis. In other words, it is the embodiment and tireless work towards those worlds which seem impossible, which allows us to live in the impossibility of the present.

We can perhaps better understand this through a reading of the Greek philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis, and his concept of the imaginary institution of society (1987). For Castoriadis, the capacity for radical imagination is part of human nature, and is creation from nothing—as such all institutions (and all aspects of our reality) are formed through imagination. This is described by Jonas Rutgeerts and Nienke Scholts:

> Castoriadis pointed out [that] essential to creation is not 'discovery' but an active constitution of the 'new'. The 'real' and the 'invented' are not opposites, but actually two states of the imaginary. In other words, imagination comes before both fiction and reality and is essential in the shaping of both. Everything is first invented/imagined. (Rutgeerts and Scholts, 2020: 186)

As all institutions are imaginary, we always have the capacity to imagine them anew—and imagination has this capacity, to institute anew. Sheikh writes that institutions are therefore 'not just organizational forms within society, and within modern societies in particular, but also the way in which societies are constituted through instituting and the imagination' (Sheikh, 2017). The aim is thus not to do away with the institution (as Athanasiou also cautions against) but rather how to institute differently.

5.6 Towards As-Well-As-Possible Worlds

With these two understandings of caring as well as possible, I want to make some speculative proposals for art institutions. These proposals are both practical suggestions for instituting with care, as well as possible in the circumstances, and also gesture towards a more expansive idea of the imagined caring institution. As I have outlined, this is an approach to working in a context in which instituting with care is functionally impossible. A way to live with this, rather than submit to it, is to perform the institution (after Athanasiou) *as if* it were possible, thereby modelling and calling into being new ways of working, and at the same time engaging in a refusal of the way things are. This creates a misalignment, but a creative one, which is meaningful in a particular sense: it is not only doing the best we can in the circumstances, but at the same time trying to change what it is possible to do. So this *as well as possible* expands my narrative of the care fix (as the mere performance of care) and even caring well (as sometimes, a misalignment between *logos* and *bios* that the organisation is working to align) to the idea of performing an institution that is outside of the realms of possibility, and so holding the institution in a state of misalignment, but with the intention of challenging the very idea of what is possible, as a necessary mode of survival (and of refusal) within times of crisis.

The proposals made here are both pragmatic and specific suggestions for caring as well as possible, given the circumstances, and also gesture towards more expansive, as-well-as possible worlds. I will both speak speculatively about the wider sector, and specifically about EP, as a way of thinking through how these might work in practice.

Instituting with Transparency

In order to work towards a practice of care as *parrhesia*, reconciling *logos* and *bios* (and so avoiding enacting a care fix), we have determined that the institution must act as it speaks. We have also positioned an institution practising with care as one which might still hold discrepancies, as it works towards particular intentions. In order for clarity on these intentions, it is therefore necessary to publicly acknowledge the limitations (and impossibilities) of the context. This would involve naming the disconnect between the aims of the institution, and what it is currently able to enact, including honest reflections on barriers i.e., funding structures. It might also mean, depending on the nature of the institution, acknowledgements of colonial and/or racist legacies and genuine, ongoing work that is being done to work towards repair. It would entail acknowledgements of failures, and transparency about the codes of practice/toolkits that the institution commits to uphold or work towards, and transparency about salaries, project budgets, and business plans.

Part of a transparent process would also be **working *towards* access intimacy**: as introduced in Chapter 3, Mia Mingus' notion of access intimacy refers to a situation in which one's access needs are understood without need for explanation or apology. As a shared experience between members of the crip, disabled, chronically ill, and neurodivergent communities, it would be hard to translate absolutely to an art sector which has historically been ableist and inaccessible. At the same time, at the heart of access intimacy is its impossibility; it can look like 'both of you trying to create access as hard as you can with no avail in an ableist world' (Mingus, 2011, n.p.). Transparency about the accessibility of buildings, programmes, working patterns, and websites, and spending time on improving these, as well as asking both artists and staff about their access riders, is a bare minimum step.

EP has already taken significant steps towards transparency (in many cases stemming from the work done as part of *Policy Show*) in the publication of the *Policy Manual*, in publishing staff salaries on their website, and in making available (and easily accessible) their Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Action Plans. This could be taken further in the articulation of a statement acknowledging those

systemic situations which limit their ability to institute in ways which align with the statements they project into the world, for example, the fact that they have had standstill funding from ACE since they opened in 2008, and the cut that this represents in real terms, coupled with their rising rent costs and building insecurity.

Further, an acknowledgement of their discomfort with being an institution proper (something often implied but not publicly articulated) would perhaps have, in the process of *Policy Show*, made for less disappointment amongst staff who hoped for more structure in their work; part of this is a level of clarity about the fact that the directors don't see non-directorial roles as having the capacity to offer career progression within the organisation, and that ultimately the creative and operational direction of the organisation (artistic outputs and policies) lies with the directors, something which has at times been clouded by projections of horizontality. As I have discussed above, the shift in staffing structure and move towards Incidental Artists does seem to express a particular truth of the organisation, moving closer to how EP wants to operate; arguably they could go further in making the particulars of this choice public.

One of Nyampeta's proposed policies is an interesting provocation here:

> A Policy of Translation
>
> <u>Problem:</u>
>
> I know little to nothing about the material, intellectual, artistic, curatorial and affective histories of the institution I'm working with.
>
> <u>Questions:</u>
>
> Should I know about these histories? Why do I not know? What happens to "old," previous artworks, events, collaborations, and other such artistic, curatorial and institutional efforts, when they fall outside of the usual publication cycles? How do these previousnesses translate into or silence current conversations? How does the reflection on the currency allow or disable future histories? Can revisiting these histories create a space and time to correct ourselves about our previous erroneous pronouncements, in light of new insights?

Policy:

- Organise transgenerational conversations between artworkers
- Organise specific and dedicated transregional meetings between "local" and "international" artworkers.
- Make visible the histories of the institution through timelines, exhibition histories, funding histories.
- Translate and distribute texts into local languages
- Revisit texts and revise previous statements, press releases, etc. (Nyampeta, 2018)

What Nyampeta articulates here is a kind of expanded transparency: making visible the many histories of an institution, including its funding, its thinking, and explicitly revisiting and publicly correcting 'erroneous pronouncements' (Nyampeta, 2018), at the same time as translating these histories in terms of language, and also translation as a way of sharing institutional memory between generations of artworkers. A further form of translation, returning to the question of working towards access intimacy, would be the creation of an **Eastside Projects Access Manual**, adding to a revised *Policy Manual* with specific access information and commitments, working together with EOP members as well as previous staff who experience barriers to accessing Eastside Projects to co-write and rethink how EP approaches access, whilst being honest about the limitations of the building and the staff team.

Slow Critique

I have articulated the need for ongoing and iterative instituent practices of critique and evaluation, holding onto the porosity of a moment of rupture to allow for collective thinking. We have seen this attested to by Ahmed, who holds that we cannot always immediately see the impact of processes of complaint on the structures they critique (Ahmed, 2021: 310). As Francke writes in the FOTL Evaluation Report for Gasworks,

> We wanted to do evaluation as a collective slow down which would allow for continuous self-reflection, and that would produce real-time action. This way of doing evaluation

> requires a different way of learning to think with others, different structures of accountability, different ways to measure and new conceptualisations of success. (Francke, 2020: 8)

In ideal terms, this 'collective slow down' (Francke, 2020: 8) would be built in from the very point of instituting, as an engagement with how (and what) we might want to institute in the world, through collectively thought and co-directed institutions. This is akin to the slow institutions proposed by Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, working against extraction, exhaustion, and overproduction, as a sector-wide slowing down in response to a time of profound ecological crisis (Petrešin-Bachelez, 2017, n.p.). In the already-established institution, one way that this could be enacted is by the formation of a group of caretakers,[7] in some ways akin to FOTL's evaluation board, who would invest their time in thinking through the working structures and internal wellbeing of the institution (and how these align with programming and curatorial claims) in a slow and ongoing way, whilst also being able to give feedback at regular intervals. This group would include past staff members, artists, neighbours, and other individuals with the capacity to advise on organisational policy and its enactment but would be distinct from the board of the institution, being solely focused on the practices of care of the institution and as such making space for both rest, critique, and imagination.

In an EP specific context, this has similarities to one of the policy proposals made by Cisneros:

> A Policy of Care: Reflecting on Policy
>
> All policies are works in progress. With this in mind, on a yearly basis staff and board members meet to reflect, rewrite, amend, or develop policies to ensure that the policies are kept up to date in relation to both law and organisational changes and personal circumstances. Eastside Projects invites up to 2 external creative supporters to collaborate in the process. (Cisneros, 2018, appendix 2.a)

[7] *Caretakers* as a concept was developed and used by me and Alba Colomo in our collaborative work, naming a group of advisers or co-thinkers engaged in caring for and with an institution

As I have discussed here, while *Policy Show* impacted EP in some more or less measurable ways, there was nonetheless a failure of the project to live up to the long-term commitment that we had originally articulated. This failure (one of a number that I have reflected on in this thesis) need not necessarily be an end point, as Schweiker reflected in her interview:

> How do we implement this, and when we fail at it, how do we crawl back out of that hole when we've failed? And how do we actually enforce these policies? You know, there's a lot of amazing policy documents that just lie and die in a hard drive somewhere and nobody's actually gonna look at it and use it and I think—the biggest short falling is when the whole process is being used as an excuse to not change anything, rather than as a way of how we can collectively shape change together. (Schweiker, 2021)

There are echoes in this of Ahmed's description of policy as an excuse not to address the issue; 'as if having a policy against something is evidence it does not exist' (Ahmed, 2021: 52). To repair this, as suggested by numerous staff members in their interviews, a long term policy commitment could be made to an annual meeting of a thinking-group akin to the caretakers outlined above, but specifically engaged with organisational policy and initially, picking up the policy proposals made by *Policy Show* artists. This policy group would ideally include a number of these artists as well as former and current EP staff, to re-engage this process of caring-with EP.

Instituting on the Threshold

I have articulated the potential of instituting on the threshold of art and other contexts, struggles, and commitments, drawing on both Puig de la Bellacasa's call to 'think with the edges' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 129) and Salvini's invitation to institute 'on the threshold' (Salvini, 2019, n.p.). This would look like the art institution situating its activity alongside, for example, local housing struggles, embedding itself as one part of a caring ecology. This would entail redirecting resources towards long-term reciprocal relationships between artists and care settings, community gardens, or community-led initiatives for new municipalisms. One way to approach this would be to take up the model of the dispersed institution, to instead invest time and finances in existing

neighbourhood infrastructures. This is similar to the practices of para-siting described by Graham, using the resources and infrastructures available, to act as a host for social justice work, for example. We could think of this as **addressing bad publics**; programming and organising in a way that speaks to (and calls into being) specific, located, often mobile publics, rather than imagined good publics.

In the case of EP, we can see one possible proposal for instituting on the threshold of art and care in the following proposal made by Zaman:

> Policy 2: Radical Childcare
>
> Eastside projects sees childcare as a political act and hopes to play a part in building a movement that prioritizes the voices and political agendas of women and mothers, especially women of color, low-income women, and immigrants.
>
> a) Eastside will initiate a radical and collective approach to childcare within a broader campaign of social justice. This will entail providing free childcare to grassroots organisations composed of and led by m/others (mothers and other caregivers) who face multiple oppression primarily by providing competent and politicized childcare to low/no income immigrant m/others and m/others of color. The practical application of this policy will be inspired by radical childcare collectives around the world - as mapped on the Intergalactic Conspiracy of Childcare Collectives.
>
> An example structure is suggested below:
>
> A base of volunteer providers commit to provide childcare at least once a month. The collective is organized by the Core, which meets 1-2x per month. Collective members and interested community members are invited to attend and participate in Core meetings as in the Bay Area Childcare collective. Eastside could provide the venue and also staff members would commit to each providing care once a month having undergone Collective training.
>
> b) Eastside will appraise its maternity leave package for ALL employees from full time members of staff employed on permanent contracts to freelance workers on temporary contracts and commissioned artists. It will provide 12 months (pro rata where necessary) fully paid maternity or paternity leave to ALL employees. (Zaman, 2018, appendix 2.d)

If enacted, this proposal would make for a drastic shift in the activities and purpose of the organisation, and is feasibly beyond the current organisational capacity of EP. Whilst it might push at the limits of the possible, it provokes certain questions about how an art institution could become part of a local and international care community, building reciprocal and sustainable connections to the civic. If not like this as such, how else could EP intertwine itself and its resources with the local contexts it aims (and claims) to speak to and with? And how can the absolute commitment of Zaman's proposal impact on the realities of the organisation? Could moves be made towards realising at least it in part? This is something that Claxton speaks to in her interview, noting that:

> The way we would get childcare is by lobbying the arts council, that's the thing, which is the interesting failure of *Policy Show*—that actually us saying we can't do these things, that could have been a more interesting outcome, to try and lobby for those three things. Not necessarily doing them internally. (Claxton, 2020)

Claxton here speaks to the crux of the matter: that certain policy shifts are demands to be made to the institutions that hold the power to change them.

Finding New Tools

In her iconic and oft-cited essay, 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House', Audre Lorde writes: 'What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means that only the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable' (Lorde, 2018: 17). Lorde also cites Simone de Beauvoir as once saying that'it is in the knowledge of the genuine conditions of our lives that we must draw our strength to live and our reasons for acting' (in Lorde, 2018: 20). While acknowledging the genuine conditions, that work takes place in the context of late-stage capitalism and that our institutions are often agents of progressive neoliberalism, we still have some capacity to refuse the inherited ideals of overproduction, individualism, competition and the primacy of wellness. Instituent practices

embodying this capacity would look like finding (and building) **tools for reciprocal care**. As Hedva writes,

> The most anti-capitalist protest is to care for another and to care for yourself. To take on the historically feminized and therefore invisible practice of nursing, nurturing, caring. To take seriously each other's vulnerability and fragility and precarity, and to support it, honor it, empower it. To protect each other, to enact and practice a community of support. A radical kinship, an interdependent sociality, a politics of care. (Hedva, 2015)

For instance, this could be enacted by an institution acknowledging publicly the widespread crisis of care and in response, fundraising and lobbying for the provision of more liveable provisions of, for example, childcare, elderly care, and sick pay, across the sector; it might also take the form of an internal collective process, more akin to Cassie Thornton's Hologram project as discussed in Chapter 3, or another model for shared and collectivised care provision. A form of reciprocal care would be utilising (and hosting) community tools such as Pirate Care Collective's online resources, or making the gallery available for free ESOL classes, for use by childcare co-operatives, or open access health screenings. It would also entail engaging in programmes which develop new tools for arts organising, such as Jack Ky Tan's AREVA project (stemming from the AREVA report that Tan undertook for CVAN London) which sets out a process for working collaboratively towards anti-racist futures in the sector (Tan, 2023). To look at this from another angle, it could be approached by making the tools (and knowledge, and cultural capital) held by the organisation available for use by their publics.

In terms of the activity of EP, there are various proposals made during the *Policy Show* process which could be pursued, directing time and resources towards rethinking ways of working. To take forward some of Zaman's proposals, which genuinely centre care and divest of some of the individualism that characterises neoliberal society, would be a wholesale engagement with the idea of retooling. In this is some of the intention of The Care Collective's proposal for promiscuous care—as caring capaciously, exploring multiple understandings and forms of care and intimacy—as well as the recentering (and resourcing) of care in our institutions and daily lives that is proposed by

Dowling. To structure the working relations of an art institution around models of kinship and mutuality would be an absolute rejection of the accepted models and staffing structures of art institutions as we know them. Admittedly, there is something of this collectivity in the early imaginings of EP, but despite reluctance to become an institution proper, it has many of the trappings, and EP's staffing, governance, funding, and output has become a model for an established, artist-run, mid-scale organisation.

I am not advocating as such that EP become a collectively owned, non-hierarchical, care-centred institution, primarily because this would be at odds with their aims as an organisation, and as such not part of any EP-specific process to care well, or to care better. However, it is interesting to consider the potential in their spending time with the idea of what an imagined, seemingly impossible institution would be, and putting structures in place for working towards such an imaginary: an institution that might care in ways they feel are most urgent or might be closer to their initial hopes for what a collectively imagined artist-run organisation could be. The proposal for a Care Consortium made early in the *Policy Show* process, as discussed in Chapter 4, still holds promise as an approach to collectivising thinking around care policy, working together with similarly scaled and resourced organisations, providing more of a basis for lobbying local government and funding bodies. Within the staff team at the point of interview in early 2020, before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was already a clear wish for forms of rest, or slow-down. Asked to make a prescription to EP (with Manual Labours' *Building as Body* in mind), staff variously prescribe sleep, paracetamol, a garden, a spa day, and heroin (see appendix 1 for full prescriptions). Although a playful question, there's a clear pattern of exhaustion in their responses which speaks to an urgency for developing new tools.

When asked what, in the abstract, a caring institution would look like, staff and artists make proposals imagining inclusive practices, shared languages, friendship, collective decision making, and mutual care. Examples of such proposals are:

> I think to be heard, and to be listened to, is one of the first steps you can take to having an inclusive institution which looks at this idea of caring as an active agent—an ingredient

> which manifests itself, supporting long term projects, supporting care of staff. [...] I'd love to see an institution which was run predominantly by people of colour and queer bodies. [...] I guess that's my vision: let's create a language together.
>
> So a caring institution, it's like a relationship isn't it. Whether that's a friendship or a romantic relationship, two sides have to work together otherwise it's going to fall apart. You can't love one person more than the other.
>
> A caring organisation would shape policy around the needs of its staff and publics, rather than legislation, stakeholders, funding bodies. A policy of care would be jointly shaped through democratic conversation and process with all participants/ actors in the organisation (including its publics). I think a caring organisation is always open to change & proactive in relation to inclusive practices.
>
> I think the challenge for EP is to work out how to develop a mutually caring relationship with the people that are in and around it. That would be the dream scenario, I think. But it's quite hard now, in this world that we live in!
>
> I actually don't think there is such a thing as a caring art organisation, and I don't mean that in a, I mean it sounds kind of flippant, but—I just, how it is structured, in itself, and how the economic model of it works, it really can't care. And it's really hard to think that it's not possible, and I want it to be possible. But, from my experience [...] you see the irrelevance and the inability to shift even in the slightest within art institutions or art organisations, and the arts council and other funding bodies. (staff, directors, and artist interviews, 2020–2021)

What these reflections (proposing or considering an abstract, caring institution) demonstrate, is the commitment of the people who work in and with the organisation at all levels, to thinking expansively about the relational aspects of an institution, as well as, in certain cases, the apparent impossibility of instituting with these values in the specific organisation. The imagination of

as-well-as-possible worlds, as well as the knowledge of the uncaring infrastructures and wider policy that make these seemingly impossible, is held and embodied by the people who make up the institution. As Schweiker notes,

> I think I'm at a point of thinking, the organisation can never care but the people can. And the people in the organisation can care and they will, whether they are in or outside of it in a way. (Schweiker, 2021)

In Schweiker's invocation of the people of the organisation, who care despite its inability to, there is an echo of the concept of *planning* in Harney and Moten (2013), introduced in Chapter 4: planning as the activity that happens despite the institution, below, inside, around it; the ongoing experimentation with the informal, and with forms of life, enacted by those oppressed by policing, policy, and its deputies. Planning is a continuous practice for a different kind of life, a form of rehearsing the future, as Ruth Wilson Gilmore writes (Wilson Gilmore, 2020).

I began this chapter by asking: to what extent was the process of critique embodied in *Policy Show* able to shift the working structures and cultures of EP? And, in a broader sense, to what extent is the transformation of an already existing institution through critique possible at all? Using the case study of EP and *Policy Show*, I demonstrated that the various impacts on the organisation, both immediate and slow, determining that this process did shift EP in some significant ways, but that a more sustained process of critique, as inhabiting the limits and imagining something other, was needed in order to take this to its fullest capacity. I also reflected on the various blocks and obstacles (mostly capacity, resources, and funding) that made certain shifts difficult or impossible. I looked to the examples of Counterpublic in St Louis and Isola Art Centre in Milan as prefigurative institutions, deeply embedded in and responsive to place. In section 5.4, I articulated the impossibility of a true practice of care—reconciling *logos* and *bios*—when the wider infrastructures and political contexts are themselves uncaring. Nonetheless, looking at the writing of Athena Athanasiou and Ruth Wilson Gilmore, I have proposed that performing the caring institution, as if it were possible, is one way of instituting with care, as well as possible. Keeping in mind two

understandings of *as well as possible*, I have proposed some steps towards enacting care, both as specific suggestions, and drawing some more general lessons from my research.

If these forms of imagined institution (both in staff reflections, and in the policy proposals made by artists) could be held on to, given time, listened to, a collectively-imagined caring institution might be enacted, or *planned*, as well as possible.

Conclusion

In this thesis, working closely with Eastside Projects, I have asked what it could mean for art institutions to practise with care. I have spent time with ideas of publics, of instituting, and of care in all its permutations, in order to examine what we mean when we talk of care, and whether this can be enacted within the work of art institutions. Care, in these pages, has been articulated as both something tedious, painful, even violent, and also something hopeful, deeply human, and essential. I have examined how care is spoken of by art institutions, and how this is often at odds with their working practices. I have argued that art institutions, much like other institutions of public life, are in crisis—something characterised by a series of ruptures. I have called the discrepancies made visible by these ruptures examples of the care fix.

In Chapter 1, 'Thinking Through Publics', I focused on the question: how does the address of an art institution (and the publics it forms) relate to its capacity to practise with care? I articulated publics as formed by address, as plural, and as a form of world building, through a reading of Warner. I argued that an understanding of *how* the institution addresses and relates to its publics is vital to understanding how it might do so with care. This is both because the statements addressed to publics are often far from transparent about the workings and politics of the institution, and because understanding that an institutional address is not only situated in these statements, but also in the infrastructural and social fabric of the institution, is key to forming a more caring address. In other words, an institution institutes not only its programme but also its structure, and both of these form its address. I linked care to publics, both through an understanding of care as at the heart of how life is sustained, and conversely the capacity of care to be used as a policing power against supposed bad publics. I argued that theories of assembly which focus on the presence of actual bodies neglect to account for the power of those unable to assemble. I instead advocated for care-forward counterpublics, and for the role of the art institution in forming such publics, through practices of prefigurative instituting. With this in mind, I then turned my focus to practices of instituting.

In Chapter 2, 'Instituent Imaginaries and the Care Fix', I outlined Raunig's concept of instituent practice, as a form of instituting that resists formalising as a fixed institution, and instead is engaged in an ongoing practice of self-instituting. I described Foucault's concept of *parrhesia*, as both speaking the truth to power, and speaking the truth of oneself, through a reconciling of *logos* and *bios* (Raunig) and as a possible approach to the address of an art institution (Sheikh). I took forward Foucault's framing of *parrhesia* as care of the self, to consider what it would mean for an art institution to practise care of the self, concluding that in order to practise care of the self, as a form of *parrhesia*, the institution should reconcile its *logos* and *bios*: it should act as it speaks, with integrity.

I argued that there is a widespread crisis in the institutions of art, characterised by a series of public ruptures which make visible significant discrepancies between the *logos* and *bios* of these institutions and that these tendencies are an example of progressive neoliberalism (Fraser), using a veneer of apparently emancipatory claims to mask a sector which is still deeply tied to neoliberal principles. I articulated a number of ways that such ruptures function, from anonymous open letters to drawn-out public struggle, each acting as a form of complaint (Ahmed). Ahmed also draws attention to the physical impact of complaining, and I drew a thread between each of the forms of ruptures articulated, as having in common this impact of putting the body on the line. I concluded the chapter with Dowling's concept of the care fix—the reorganisation of the care sector towards privatisation and unpaid labour, thereby displacing rather than addressing the issues that led to the care crisis—and argued that this is akin to what is taking place within the art sector. I therefore made the case for looking more closely at the field of care.

In Chapter 3, 'On Care (in Crisis)', focusing on the question: what does it mean to care *well*, and why does it matter?, I argued that understanding the field of care is crucial both in situating the art institution in a broader crisis of care, and in finding examples of caring well that could be taken forward by the art sector. I began the chapter with Fisher and Tronto's seminal definition of care as maintaining our world, with this world made up of our bodies, our selves and our environments. I drew connections between the care crisis—specifically aspects of carewashing or care fixes—and similar performative fixes in the context of art institutions. I linked care to the curatorial, both in

terms of a history of care in exhibition making, the proliferance of programming on care in the midst of the pandemic, and in gathering the growing field of work on access and disability justice within art institutions. I argued that to care *well*, as the inverse of the care fix, is to enact genuine (not superficial) practices of care. These practices of care are essentially acts of maintenance, of each other, our bodies, our selves, and wider, interconnected ecosystems. To care well—with integrity—these acts of maintenance need to be rethought, to divorce them from the performance of progressive neoliberalism, carewashing, and profit. I proposed that suggestions for community care, promiscuous care, wild care in the neighbourhood, and care for as-well-as-possible worlds offered tools that could be used in the contexts of art institutions, towards caring well.

Following the scene setting of these three chapters, I then turned to my case study in order to address my question with concrete examples. In Chapter 4, 'The Doors of The Administration Building Are Open', I asked the question: to what extent do instituent practices enable environments of care? I answered this using the case study of *Policy Show* at EP, framing it as an experiment in instituent practice, a public exploration of an organisation's policies, and an example of a rupture. I proposed that the question could not be straightforwardly answered—as the *Policy Show* process did embody care in that it was a genuine engagement with the organisation and its workings, but often did not feel caring to those involved, as a difficult, uncomfortable process, which, I have argued, is often the true character of care. Further than this, while not the intention of anyone involved in the project, the fact that it ended without policy proposals being taken further by the organisation meant that it functioned in some ways as a fix, or at least appeared to at the time. I argued that, although a discrepancy between *logos* and *bios* could represent a care fix, there was another possibility: that an institution in the process of reckoning with a process of instituting, and in doing so imagining and projecting something other than its current reality, might hold such a discrepancy without this amounting to care fix. The difference in the latter case is that a meaningful connection exists between these two aspects of its work, as opposed to the use of one to mask the other as in the former case. I concluded that instituent practices enable environments of care to the extent that they engage in real reckonings with institutional forms.

Moving from examining the process of *Policy Show* to reflecting on its outcomes, in Chapter 5, 'Performing the (Caring) Institution', I focused on the Foucauldian understanding of critique as changing the forms of governance, again using the example of *Policy Show* to analyse whether this process of critique as instituent practice was able to shift the workings of EP. Through a reading of the immediate and more long-term outcomes of *Policy Show*, I concluded that this instance of critique *did* have measurable impacts on the organisation, some quite significant, and not all of which were known at the time that the project ended. However, I argued that the closure of the project precluded further possible transformative impacts, which could have been realised had the process continued. I turned to Isola Art Centre in Milan as an example of an instituent practice taken considerably further, and as an example of prefigurative instituting. I posited that, within the wider context of a care crisis, ongoing cuts to arts funding and austerity policies, there is a sense in which the caring institution is impossible: in order to live up to its ideals, it would forgo funding, or need to make changes far beyond the means available. However, despite this impossibility, I argued for the taking up of Puig de la Bellacasa's as-well-as-possible, here meaning both caring as well as it is possible to do so, given the circumstances, and also holding onto and calling into being the impossible, or what is at present impossible, drawing on Athanasiou's suggestion to perform the institution 'as if it were possible'. Keeping both of these in mind, and drawing on the findings of this research, I proposed some speculative steps towards caring as well as possible, through instituting with transparency, slow critique, instituting on the threshold and finding new tools.

Given my naming of the care fix within art institutions, in these final sentences I want to emphasise the distinction between performing the institution, as well as possible, and engaging in a care fix. The point of difference here is in our understanding of the performative. Performing the institution here uses performativity as Butler speaks of our performances of gender: that by engaging in discursive practices we are able to create a new reality—discourse has the capacity to create a world, much like forming counterpublics through an address. There is nothing disingenuous in this; it is not *mere* performance, but instead has genuine impact as a practice of world-building. On the other hand, the care fix is unmoored from reality, a distraction and redirection of attention from the issues at hand.

This difference can be seen most precisely in the more mundane as-well-as-possible. In other words, those acts of daily maintenance which work towards care, in interpersonal relationships with colleagues, in sharing domestic tasks, in communicating access needs, are the ties which make the performative side of the institution legible as genuine. In these terms, in addition to imagining how we might move towards the ideal of a care community, or emancipatory counterpublics, it is also important (for example) to spend the hours and days and years making concrete plans to build a lift for an otherwise inaccessible building, for example, or gradually building relationships with local care providers. What matters is not only what we build, but how we build it.

How might art institutions care *well*? In answer to this question, I have first defined caring well as instituting with integrity, reconciling the *logos* and *bios* of the art institution, the opposite of the care fix. I have suggested that this presents a number of challenges, both in the need for processes of instituting which necessarily hold space for discrepancies, and in the fact that to institute with integrity in a wider system built on care fixes might in many cases be impossible. I have put forward the idea of caring *as well as possible*, which at once is a call to move towards the ideal of a caring institution in pragmatic and practicable ways, and at the same time to perform the caring institution, in the sense of a speech act which calls this imagined institution into being.

With this research, I have contributed new ways of thinking about what care means in the context of the art institution, articulating in this frame the concepts of the care fix and caring as well as possible. This work is significant precisely because of its in-depth study of the field of care—a field which, as we have seen, has been widely spoken about in recent years—which offers a more thorough consideration of how care might interact with the practices of art institutions than has previously been undertaken, and does so through the case of EP, giving practical context to theoretical study, and speaking with the knowledge gained by this situated practice. It therefore offers a new lens through which to examine the art institution, in terms of practical tools for art workers as well as contributing to the field of curatorial research.

In times of crisis, and amidst myriad claims to care, it is urgent work to understand how care actually functions, in the art institution and on a wider scale. In these pages, I have written from

the heart: for all the claims we might make, these are only of value when enacted in ways that cut right through to the core of the institution. These ways are not always perfect, in fact they almost always hold failure (as we discovered through the limitations of *Policy Show*) because the work is hard and the context harder. But to model other worlds, and imagine other futures, we first need to reimagine ourselves.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Prescriptions, EP Staff Member Interviews, 2020

If Eastside Projects were a body, what would you prescribe it?

Heroin? Something really nice and relaxing! But not in an injecting way...just in a smoking way. I kind of would! Something that just lets you take a bit of a time out from the real world. Which is what heroin would kind of do, you know, a bit of time to chill out, head back, lose yourself - I've only ever seen it on the telly, obviously not a long term plan. It would be something like that - I think it would be - a holiday - a holiday to do a bit of thinking. Maybe like a bit of outdoor exercise or something like that. A bit of swimming. A bit of something that you do where you don't - where you can think about things a bit more. All the things I can think of are like, I think it needs to recharge its batteries sometimes. It doesn't always remember that. And that is partly - might be a thing you do together but also I think it's individuals being able to get out and recharge their batteries too. So it's not always busy working. Making space for that sort of stuff to happen. Yeah, that would be it. And heroin would be a great way for everyone to do it! Can you make that happen?

*

I'm just gonna go off my gut reaction! My gut reaction is painkillers because your staff are uncomfortable, and they're in your bowels. And that makes you feel uncomfortable, because they are making everything tick over, so if you've got an upset stomach, you need to take some paracetamol to make it perk up a bit. Because if you don't take care of your stomach you're going to throw up. And actually if you've got upset staff, they're gonna make you throw up because they're gonna stop you working, or stop you functioning in the way that you need to, because they're not happy and fulfilled. So firstly you need painkillers. You need a makeover because you missed the possibility to do that, and now in gallery terms you're like 60! So you're a bit wrinkly. Which is fine - I completely support wrinkles! However you haven't really thought about your appearance for a long time, you've just carried on with the same look since you were a teenager. You haven't really given yourself the time to think about who you are anymore. You just got a bit lost in

carrying on, same old same old. So you need a makeover to give yourself a check in. But I don't mean a beauty makeover. I mean a well-being makeover where you can start to question yourself. Maybe there's a bit of make up in there but it's - that's by the by! It's more about having a good old reflection on who you are now, and who you're going to be when you're 80, because there's a lot of change ahead and you haven't thought about it. That's my prescription.

*

I think it needs a spa day! It needs some gong therapy, some incense, like a vapour diffuser -it needs basically like my idea of a muji spa, muji house, it just needs incense...it just needs an exorcism! It sounds really bad, but it just needs - it's suffering a lot with two tier institutional working. Some people are scapegoated for certain types of things, it just needs something like incense, where everyone can come together and like smell it, and realise that this is what it really is. Because I think a lot of the time, it's just really easy to forget. Because I think it's like a sensuous thing, I guess some other people gave or would've given a medical thing, but I'm thinking it needs people to come together, to look at something or smell something or experience something together - some incense like in India which people will at different times of day and different rooms of the house will smell that. And it's an activity where even if someone is in a disparate room to you, they will know what's happening. And I think that's what needs to happen. some type of activity like that, a kind of incense activity with gong therapy in the background. With like low mood lighting, a washed blue, muji aroma diffusers everywhere, a sonic ambient environment, the sound of a waterfall or something - it sounds like a Rosemarie Trockel piece! But it basically needs to feel as though everyone - everyone can come together with having a very similar vocabulary for one particular activity. Not that we have to take this vocabulary everywhere, but just that if you're in a room and doing something together, the vocabulary has to be there. So maybe the starting point would have to be that you smell and experience something the same way, or in a collective way.

*

A garden. Yeah, a garden might be the best thing. I think slightly more - yeah, a bigger landscape to play in. Play, more play. I think the garden is quite good because it's sort of controlling what can't be controlled, like an attempt to control nature in a way. But - so it would - a little bit more beyond just the - I mean the gallery is a kind of garden anyway. So it would only be a garden that's got enough manure, a well-resourced garden!

*

I would perhaps prescribe some fresh air, in the form of a policy monitoring taskforce (for want of better words!), independent of the institution. Or even, a Policy Show take two! Perhaps there could be a (online or physical) space for anonymous feedback, or policy suggestions. As discussed above, policy should be a moving, shifting force for change & so I would ask, should Policy Show ever be finished or complete? Policy show is a bit like a dentist appointment, a six-month check-up is advised.

*

Sleep! And like, just slowing down. But maybe that doesn't help, because the way that they move forward is, they need that energy. For something so precarious as a gallery like Eastside Projects, it really needs that energy, so it would be interesting to see what happens when it stops, or the direction it goes in. But more staff! That's the main thing.

Appendix 2: Policy Proposals, 2019

2.a Teresa Cisneros

A Policy of Care: Reflecting on Policy

All policies are works in progress. With this in mind, on a yearly basis staff and board members meet to reflect, rewrite, amend, or develop policies to ensure that the policies are kept up to date in relation to both law and organisational changes and personal circumstances. Eastside Projects invites up to 2 external creative supporters to collaborate in the process

A Policy of Considered Pay: Transparent Pay Structures

Eastside Projects makes transparent how the organisation's pay structure is informed/decided with consideration of staff, freelancers, artists, talks, commissions, interns (all payments from Eastside Projects) - fees/salaries. This information is available on all agreements, staff handbook, and website. Pay structure information lists resources used such as governmental guidelines, a-n artists

pay, ACE pay guidelines, annual budget breakdown etc in order to make the process transparent and uses language that is easily understood. For clarity, there is a visual breakdown in the form of charts or graphics which clearly indicates fee break-downs.

A Policy of Curating: Considered Creating

Eastside Projects staff take a vested interest and responsibility of how it curates and why it curates through a set of "fundamental questions", a document that staff co-develop on a yearly basis. The questions consider cultural equity, personal interests/networks, aesthetics, contemporary politics, art histories, knowledge networks, room for development, room for learning, room for experimenting, etc. This policy recognises stakeholders, the arts and the world at large to be in a constant state of change.

2.b Christian Nyampeta

A Policy of Translation

Problem:
I know little to nothing about the material, intellectual, artistic, curatorial and affective histories of the institution I'm working with.

Questions:
Should I know about these histories? Why do I not know? What happens to "old," previous artworks, events, collaborations, and other such artistic, curatorial and institutional efforts, when they fall outside of the usual publication cycles? How do these previousnesses translate into or silence current conversations? How does the reflection on the currency allow or disable future histories? Can revisiting these histories create a space and time to correct ourselves about our previous erroneous pronouncements, in light of new insights?

Policy:

– Organise transgenerational conversations between artworkers

– Organise specific and dedicated transregional meetings between “local” and “international” artworkers.

–Make visible the histories of the institution through timelines, exhibition histories, funding histories.

– Translate and distribute texts into local languages

– Revisit texts and revise previous statements, press releases, etc.

A Policy of Distribution

Problem:

I have no idea what to do with the "stuff" I'm making after the exhibition or event. Although this stuff could be "useful" somewhere else, it is not always possible to get it there, or to find ways of storing it before it can be received where it is needed.

Questions:

What happens to the material used after the exhibition? How is this material disposed of? What is the logic behind the logistics of this disposition and dispossession? How can this material create social meaning, further relations between Eastside Projects and other individuals, communities, institutions?

Policy:

– Think ahead of the exhibition where the used material (physical and theoretical also) are going after the exhibition.

– Try to collaborate in advance to determine the "needs" to which "artworks" or "support structures" or "hosting structures" might respond after the exhibition.

A Policy of Summaries

Problem:

I am sooo out of touch with today's cool! I am behind with my doses of theory. I haven't had time to see any shows lately. I haven't visited a concert in ages!

Questions:

What books are we reading today? What exhibitions have we visited? What TV show are we angry or happy about? What historical event have we recently learned about?

Policy:

Each member of staff, or other guests will:

– Create playlists of songs, podcasts, prayers, lectures;

– Create reading lists;

– Create visual or textual reviews of visited exhibitions or attended events. Create summaries and periodically read out loud or play out loud to colleagues with much attention to relieving each other's pressures.

2.c Rosalie Schweiker

economic transparency policy

make public and explain the budget for each project, including fees, non-monetary exchanges and voluntary contributions

who is not here policy

when possible, as an element of shows, events, meetings, discussions (etc), think about who is not in the room and why

air quality and atmosphere policy

every member of staff should have a houseplant on their desk or in the gallery space somewhere. they can choose what the plant is and are responsible for its care.

2.d Rehana Zaman

Policy 1: Decolonising Eastside Projects

This policy seeks to challenge the legacies of colonialism and racism within the arts by:
a) Dismantling structural inequalities - in the first instance within the institution of Eastside itself through employment procedures and Eastside's organisational structure. We will invite Dr Karen Salt as a consultant to assist us in engaging with the far reaching consequences of this aim.

b) Through the promotion of global intellectual traditions of artmaking that extend beyond Europe and US. We acknowledge that our own research interests and experiences may be limited in this capacity therefore we will seek to develop partnerships with individuals and groups that express this expertise through lived experience or academic study. We commit to sharing resources that we have been privileged to receive (where others have not been so lucky) and will remain vigilant towards the creeping effects of white supremacy that have become ossified and largely unchecked within so many of our 'progressive' institutions. c) Through a sustained and sensitive engagement with local communities of Black, Minority Ethnic and working class background in Birmingham and beyond. Our commitment towards this aim will be demonstrated by centreing this work as the main activity of the gallery rather than peripheral or satellite activity that exists at the margins through an education programme, public programme or offsite project. In order to create longevity and real impact within our local community we will invite members of this community to become part of our organisation at board level or in an advisory capacity (this role must be at least living wage paid employment to acknowledge the precarity often faced by people of BME and working class background who increasingly have little access to the elite academic routes that afford one a paid career within the arts).

Policy 2: Radical Childcare

Eastside projects sees childcare as a political act and hopes to play a part in building a movement that prioritizes the voices and political agendas of women and mothers, especially women of color, low-income women, and immigrants.

a) Eastside will initiate a radical and collective approach to childcare within a broader campaign of social justice. This will entail providing free childcare to grassroots organisations composed of and led by m/others (mothers and other caregivers) who face multiple oppression primarily by providing competent and politicized childcare to low/no income immigrant m/others and m/others of color. The practical application of this policy will be inspired by radical childcare collectives around the world - as mapped on the Intergalactic Conspiracy of Childcare Collectives.
An example structure is suggested below:
A base of volunteer providers commit to provide childcare at least once a month. The collective is organized by the Core, which meets 1-2x per month. Collective members and interested community members are invited to attend and participate in Core meetings as in the Bay Area Childcare collective. Eastside could provide the venue and also staff members would commit to each providing care once a month having undergone Collective training.

b) Eastside will appraise its maternity leave package for ALL employees from full time members of staff employed on permanent contracts to freelance workers on temporary contracts and commissioned artists. It will provide 12 months (pro rata where necessary) fully paid maternity or paternity leave to ALL employees.

Policy 3: Rethinking Mental Health in the Workplace

a) Eastside Projects acknowledges the detrimental effects of current exploitative conditions of work upon the mental health of its employees – that ill mental health is an issue of disempowerment, situated in a context of decimated collectivity. Eastside will address its current hierarchical structure and instead implement one of collective ownership with democratic control over the apparatus of the organisation.

b) Eastside projects will be the first organisation within the arts in the UK that will critically redress the negative impact of excessive working hours (that often extend into the evening and weekend) and curtail the length of the working week to three days (absolutely no work related activities or admin on the remaining 4 days). The impact of these working hours will require a radical rethinking of what constitutes 'excellence' within the arts and a commitment to abandon the insidious professionalisation and corporatisation of art practice. An out of office message will be drafted collectively.

Appendix 3: Extracts of *Policy Manual*, Eastside Projects, 2017.

Extracts from Policy Manual are attached as a PDF on the following pages.

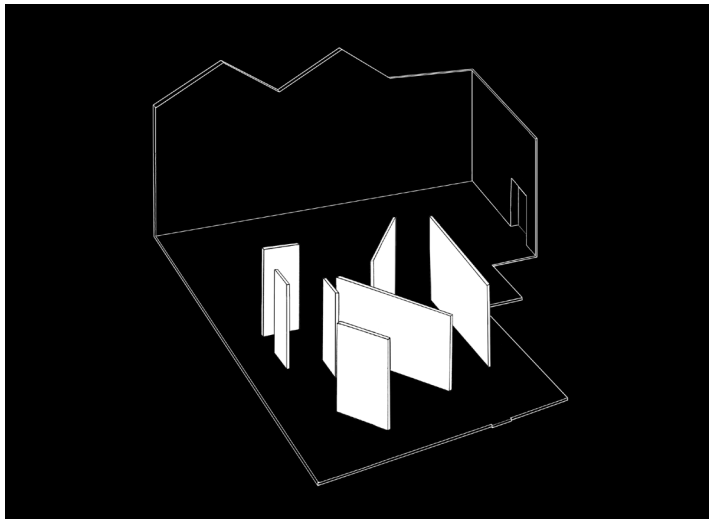
Appendix 4: 'On Care and Parrhesia', *Temporary Art Review,* 2017.

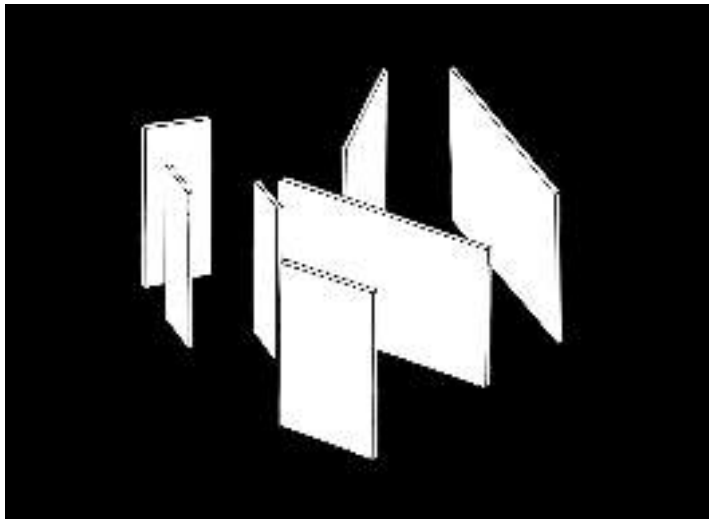
Parts of this thesis were published earlier in the following text, with the PDF included here as an appendix following the BCU guidelines. The text is also available at:
https://temporaryartreview.com/on-care-and-parrhesia/

‘Policy Manual’

Eastside Projects User’s Manual

Draft #7.2





#0.2 Celine Condorelli, Gavin Wade — 2004
Support Structure methodology

offer support

define a brief

ask a question

pursue conversation

build an archive

navigate the terrain

construct a framework

claim a position

play a game

evaluate your tools

choose an unacceptable colour

#0.3 User's Manual Draft #2 — 2009
Published in 'Support Structures' (2009/2014)

As would be the case for operating a machine or learning a subject, a manual

may be necessary / useful / recommended for the full use of Eastside Projects.

#1 Peter Nadin, Christopher d'Arcangelo, Nick Lawson (1978) — 2008
Used on cover of User's Manual Draft #1

We have joined together to execute functional constructions and to alter or refurbish existing structures as a means of surviving in a capitalist economy.

#2 Slogan in Eastside Projects Proposal — 2007
Title of first Eastside Projects exhibition at 86 Heath Mill Lane — 2008

this is the gallery

and the gallery is many things

#3 Peter Nadin, Christopher d'Arcangelo, Nick Lawson (1978) 2008
Used on cover of User's Manual Draft #1

Design by function.

#4 Liam Gillick, first billboard on Eastside Projects facade 2008

The doors of the administration building

have been left
are open.
will remain

#5 Unpublished Eastside Projects policy 2009

Evolve according to changing needs.

#6 Kurt Vonnegut, 'Slapstick or Lonesome No More' (1976) 2009
Unpublished Eastside Projects policy

A little less love, and a little more common decency.

#7 Lawrence Weiner, 'Work #716' (1992/2008) 2008–2009
Long term installation at Eastside Projects

As long as it lasts.

#8 R. Buckminster Fuller motto 2009
Unpublished Eastside Projects policy

More with less.

#9 Kelly Large, 'Alarmed' 2008

Activate the gallery security alarm when the building is open to the public. Let the alarm sound until the first visitor enters the space.

#10 Lady Allen of Hurtwood (1897–1976) 2009
Quoted by Simon & Tom Bloor in 'As Long As It Lasts'

Better a broken arm than a bruised spirit.

#11 User's Manual Draft #2 2009

Demand that visitors are active.

#12 Joanne Tatham & Tom O'Sullivan, exhibition title 2009

Does your contemplation of the situation fuck with the flow of circulation.

#13 User's Manual Draft #2 2009

Be considered essential / intrinsic / mercurial / arousing to the structure of the city.

#14 User's Manual Draft #2 2009

Continuously question our status as an organisation and respond to the pressures towards becoming an institution / a burden / a fixed position / a myth

#15 User's Manual Draft #2 2009

Establish the artist-run space as a public good.

#16 User's Manual Draft #2 2009

Consider design, organisational structures and architecture as programme.

#17 Heather & Ivan Morison in 'Gavin Wade Interviews El Lissitzky' 2009

The world is understood through myths. All meaning comes to us as stories. We can take control of these stories to create our own meaning and form new myths. The midden is the detritus of society and we sit upon it, pick things from it, re-mould them and model them into objects that can act out new histories and possible futures.

#18 User's Manual Draft #4 2011

We do not make art for the public. We are the public that makes art.

Documentation of Policy Show Meeting #1: Unspoken Policies of the Art Organisation, Eastside Projects, 2017. Image credit: Stuart Whipps (Courtesy of Eastside Projects)

On Care and Parrhesia

LUCY LOPEZ on October 12, 2017 at 11:24 AM

Can a practice of instituting also be a practice of care? In his paper "Instituent Practices: Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming", Gerald Raunig discusses the potential of 'instituent practices' as a process of ongoing instituting, rather than a process of gradually "*becoming institution* in the sense of constituted power."[1] He describes the process as one of exodus – not in terms of withdrawal from the institution, but rather through "betraying the rules of the game."[2] This entails a departure from the two previous iterations of Institutional Critique by drawing something from each: working from a position of ongoing self-questioning (not imagining an artificial distance from the institution), but also not fixating on complicity within it.[3] In his development of this theory, Raunig draws on Foucault's writing on *parrhesia* (developed in "The Courage of Truth" lectures at the College de France from 1983-84) as a form of uncompromising truth-telling: to practice *parrhesia* is to speak frankly from a position of exposed vulnerability, to speak truth to power[4] and in doing so to practice a kind of radical care of the self.

In 2016, Simon Sheikh expanded on this use of *parrhesia to* consider the connection of care and power in terms of the institution.[5] In other words, to consider institutions speaking truth of, and to, themselves – by looking at the relationship between their artistic programs, the information they make public, and their modes of governing and instituting. How could the institution practice care of the self – towards (or on behalf of) its workers and its publics? As Raunig describes, the truth-teller is involved in a self-critique that "queries the relationship between their statements (*logos*) and their way of living (*bios*)".[6] If we see the outward facing program of the institution as its statements, or *logos*, and its internal functions as its way of living, or *bios*, then a reconciling of the two is needed in order to practice *parrhesia* as a radical position of (self) care.

Writing for the October 2017 issue of e-flux journal, Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez makes a case *For Slow Institutions*, with a call to curators to "imagine new ecologies of care as a continuous practice of support…to

radically open up our institutional borders and show how these work—or don't—in order to render our organizations palpable, audible, sentient, soft, porous, and above all, decolonial and anti-patriarchal".[7] This sentient and porous, *slow* institution – one which might adapt according to changing needs[8] and resist crystallization[9] – might go some way towards a practice of *parrhesia*.

As Nina Möntmann has put it, the art organization – often the smaller, non-profit, the artist-run – has the potential to function as a wild child:[10] to challenge and disrupt the forms of institution building and institutional governance that form the major infrastructure of our societies and culture. There is no lack of art which challenges existing conditions and makes propositions for new ways of living and working together – yet all too often these practices are strictly supported and celebrated in the realm of programming, while our institutions neglect to learn from the radical practices that they propose.

What can we learn from the practices of artists such as Alex Martinis Roe (whose project "To Become Two" continues her research into feminist alliances and methodologies for navigating the contemporary condition), Dorine van Meel and Nelmarie du Preez (who, in their project "The Southern Summer School," worked together with collaborators from the Netherlands, South Africa and the United Kingdom, towards creating non-normative spaces and alliances of solidarity across national borders) and Sidsel Meineche Hansen (whose discursive projects "Towards a Physiological Novel" and "This is Not a Symptom," explore nervousness as a response to the institution and the biochemical production of subjectivity through what they term the "biopolitical regime that shapes the consumer's nervous system"[11])? With the histories and problematics of institutional critique in mind, how might we resist the subsumption of these practices into the institution, and instead critically address, acknowledge, and act upon their capacity to have a measurable impact on the way that we work? In the 2017 Contemporary Art Society conference in London, Andrea Phillips proposed *management* as a site of contemporary political struggle, and not in the ways we might expect (such as exploitation of workers or micromanagement under contemporary capitalism), but rather a site of struggle in how we *manage* institutions – with management as key to their transformation in real terms.[12]

This struggle over management is also simultaneously a struggle over the *bios* of the institution, viewed most directly through the experience of the art worker, and the anxiety and exhaustion which this often entails. As highlighted by FcU (Feminist Curators United) at a recent event in Nottingham Contemporary's *New Institutionalities* series, the tendency to fetishize hard work, to present as a public face the 'coping curator' is widely recognisable. During this event, curator Helena Reckitt presented the results of a workshop around working practices, with responses from numerous contributors stating their relationship with work: one which was underpaid, overcommitted, and often took precedence over family and personal commitments.[13] To put it simply, we know that we are overworked, and that it seems almost unavoidable in the strained financial context of working in the arts under neoliberalism. What does it matter, in the wider context? Apart from the obvious (that institutions – publicly funded or not – should not be exploiting their staff), it matters because the first stand we can make is how we work together (and treat those who work alongside us) and because this is a real enactment of the care that we might profess in grander and more distanced ways.

It is up to us as art workers to address the reality of the institutions in which we work – to make demands on behalf of ourselves and our publics. Artistic research and practice is at the core of curatorial work. Can we follow the lead of artists imagining new ways of living, of truth-telling, of establishing collectivities? If we are to think about how we can really make a shift within the wider context, we need to likewise reimagine this institutionally: what are our governance structures? Could they be rethought as a critique, rather than a reflection, of the neoliberal context under late stage capitalism?

As Andrea Phillips writes in her recent paper 'Reclaiming participation: arts centres and the reinvention of social condensation';

> "just as arts centres have morphed into sites of the performance of neoliberalism, so they could transform again into locations where we test and perform practices of equality on a daily basis: not just through the making of exhibitions and events but through equal staffing and pay structures, through fair pricing, through the maintenance of equality within our collegiate relationships and through the recognition of the intelligences of our audiences".[14]

In order for the institution of art to practice *parrhesia*, it needs to be as Petrešin-Bachelez writes, sentient; to care and to speak. In his essay "Art After Trump," Simon Sheikh asked the questions: "How do we act institutionally? In terms of how we govern within artistic institutions such as galleries, museums, biennials, art fairs and art schools – can we re-orient these spaces away from the vanishing center, and towards a resurgent left?"[15] This reorientation could be a form of reconciling the *logos* and *bios* of the institution.

This framework was the starting point for *Policy Show*, the current program at Eastside Projects (Birmingham, UK), which I have co-curated with Gavin Wade. *Policy Show* brings together a group of artists and art workers (Teresa Cisneros, Christian Nyampeta, Ciara Phillips and Rehana Zaman) to think along with Eastside Projects about its existing policies, and to develop together a policy of care for the organisation. Our first step was to publish the existing policies of the organisation, ranging from measurable policies ('We will work with a minimum of 50% women artists and curators') to the more everyday ('last one out, turn off the tea urn'), and those policies which function more as artworks, though are no less considered as guidelines to live and work by ('evolve according to changing needs' and 'as long as it lasts'). Working together with Cisneros, Nyampeta, Phillips and Zaman, and facilitated by artist Rosalie Schweiker, alongside the input of Eastside Projects' staff, volunteers, board members and publics, our first event resulted in a number of action points towards developing our policy of care. Moving forward from this first meeting, we will develop a care consortium – working with other small art organisations to share and develop policy together (around maternity leave and sick pay, for example), whilst also acting as a potential lobbying group. The further development and implementation remains to be seen over the course of the project, and the years to follow: part of our work will be to develop a framework for accountability within this.

We must not only begin to imagine how these policies are situated within the singular institution, but how they might begin to connect to a resurgent left. Sheikh locates these potentials within "galleries, museums, biennials, art fairs and art schools," but we could extend this to networked contexts such as Common Field, that connect and form alliances between the resistant strategies of artists and art organisations, in order to reimagine not only the institution but the "rules of the game" itself. Raunig states that what is needed is "*parrhesia* as a double strategy: as an attempt of involvement and engagement in a process of hazardous refutation, and as self-questioning."[16] Applied to the institution, we can see how in order to practice *parrhesia* it must both speak truth to power (in terms of content and on behalf of its publics) and, at the same time – speak truth of, and to, itself.

FIELD *PERSPECTIVES*

. . . . . .

2017

This essay was commissioned by Temporary Art Review for *Field Perspectives 2017*, a co-publishing initiative organized and supported by Common Field as a part of their Los Angeles 2017 Convening. *Field Perspectives 2017* is a collaboration between Common Field and arts publications ARTS.BLACK, Art Practical, The Chart,

Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles, contemptorary, DIRT, Pelican Bomb, Temporary Art Review, and X-TRA. Partners each commissioned a piece of writing that aims catalyze discussion, dialog, and debate before, during and after the Convening. Read the other contributions here.

1. My emphasis.
2. Raunig, G. (2006) 'Instituent Practices: Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming', trans. Derieg, A. Available at: http://eipcp.net/transversal/0106/raunig/en
3. Ibid.
4. Foucault, M. (1983-84), collected lectures from the College de France, in *The Courage of Truth (The Government of Self and Others II)*, Ed. Gros, F. (2011) Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
5. Sheikh, S. (2016), 'Careful and Careless Power', paper presented during a public editorial meeting at BAK, Utrecht, 2016, titled *Instituting for the Contemporary*, commissioned by Clark, T. Hlavajova, M. and Lopez, L.
6. Ibid.
7. Petrešin-Bachelez, N. (2017) 'For Slow Institutions', in e-flux issue 85, October 2017. Available at: http://www.e-flux.com/journal/85/155520/for-slow-institutions/
8. 'Evolve according to changing needs' is Eastside Projects policy number #5, 2009, as included in the publication Eastside Projects User's Manual #7.2, 2017, eds. Langdon, J., Lopez, L., and Wade, G.
9. Raunig, G. (2006)
10. Möntmann, N. (2008), 'Playing the Wild Child: Art Institutions in a Situation of Changed Public Interest' in Open, 14: Art as a Public Issue.
11. Meineche Hansen, S. (2014) 'Emotional Reasoning', in conversation with Gritz, A. in Mousse Magazine issue 44.
12. Phillips, A. (2017), 'Museum as Social Condenser', paper given at the Contemporary Art Society conference *The Museum as Battlefield: Alternative Models of Museum Practice*.
13. Child, D., Reckitt, H., and Richards, J. 'Labours of Love: A Conversation on Art, Gender and Social Reproduction' in *Third Text*, 2017, available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09528822.2017.1365492
14. Phillips, A. (2017) 'Reclaiming participation: arts centres and the reinvention of social condensation', in The Journal of Architecture, vol.22:3.
15. Sheikh, S. (2016) 'Art After Trump', in e-flux conversations, November 2016. Available at: https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/simon-sheikh-art-after-trump/5325
16. Raunig, G. (2006)

CATEGORIES ESSAYS UK

TAGGED ALEX MARTINIS ROE ANDREA PHILLIPS CHRISTIAN NYAMPETA CIARA PHILLIPS COMMON FIELD COMMON FIELD 2017 DORINE VAN MEEL EASTSIDE PROJECTS FEMINIST CURATORS UNITED GAVIN WADE GERALD RAUNIG HELENA RECKITT INSTITUENT PRACTICES LUCY LOPEZ MICHEL FOUCAULT NATAŠA PETREŠIN-BACHELEZ NELMARIE DU PREEZ NINA MONTMANN NOTTINGHAM CONTEMPORARY REHANA ZAMAN SIDSEL MEINECHE HANSEN SIMON SHEIKH TERESA CISNEROS THE SOUTHERN SUMMER SCHOOL

LUCY LOPEZ

Lucy Lopez is a curator, writer, and editor, currently Associate Researcher at Eastside Projects, Birmingham, and co-director of Jupiter Woods, London. She is a PhD candidate at Birmingham School of Art. She was previously Curator at BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht. She holds an MFA in curating from Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research focuses on the intersection of practices of instituting,

Bibliography

Adam, S. and Teloni, D. (2018). 'Solidarity Clinics and social work in the era of crisis in Greece', *International Social Work*, 61(6), pp. 794–808.

Agamben, G. (2013) *For a Theory of Destituent Power*. Available: https://introfilosofia.wordpress.com/2014/02/04/agamben-for-a-theory-of-destituent-power/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Ahmed, S.

- (2014) 'Self Care as Warfare', *feminist killjoys.* Available: https://feministkilljoys.com/2014/08/25/selfcare-as-warfare/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2021) *Complaint!* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Aikens, N., Condorelli, C. and Staple, P. (2014) 'With whom are you going to share it and on what terms?' in C.Condorelli (ed) *The Company She Keeps.* London: Bookworks, pp. 105–116.

Alampi, A., Fokianaki, I., and Vandevelde, M. (2018) 'Letter of Resignation from Kunsthal Extra City Curators', *e-flux conversations*. Available: https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/letter-of-resignation-from-kunsthal-extra-city-curators/8566 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Althusser, L. (1971) 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)', *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* pp. 142–7, 166–76. New York and London: Monthly Review Press.

An Endless Supply (2011) 'As Long As It Lasts', *Public Evaluation Event.* Unpublished performance script, Eastside Projects, Birmingham.

Anon. (2020) *Open Letter to Nottingham Contemporary*. Available: https://ncopenletter.wordpress.com/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Archey, K. (2022) *After Institutions*. Berlin: Floating Opera Press.

Arts Council England (2020) *Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report.* Available: https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/14742/download?attachment (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Art + Museum Transparency (2019) *Art + Museum Transparency Website.* Available at: https://www.artandmuseumtransparency.org/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

ArtReview (2017) 'Open Letter Denounces Sexual Harassment in the Artworld', *ArtReview News.* Available: https://artreview.com/news-30-oct-2017-open-letter-we-are-not-surprised/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Athanasiou, A. (2016) 'Performing the Institution, As If It Were Possible', in M. Hlavajova and S.Sheikh, *Former West: Art and the Contemporary After 1989*. Cambridge, MA and Utrecht: MIT Press and BAK basis voor actuele kunst, pp. 679-691.

Baird, K.S. (2015) 'Beyond Ada Colau: the common people of Barcelona en Comú', *Open Democracy*. Available: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/beyond-ada-colau-common-people-of-barcelona-en-comu/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Borstner, S. (2020) 'Why Did Witte de With Change its Name?' *Frieze* online. Available: https://www.frieze.com/article/why-did-witte-de-change-its-name (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Bosold, B., Hofmann, V., Krasny, E. and Lingg, S. (eds.) (2022) *Radicalizing Care: Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating*. London: Sternberg Press.

Bouteloup, M.

- (2017) 'Autohistorias: Reclaiming Our Institutions', in P. O'Neill, L. Steeds, M. Wilson (eds) *How Institutions Think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, pp. 78–83.

- (2019) *Modes of Instituting*. Unidee Residency Programme, Cittadellarte Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella. Available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SlMPCTjFWnk (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Bouteloup, M., and Dyangani Ose, E. (2020) 'La Institución Como Lugar de Investigación', *Towards a Possible Decalogue for the Institution Yet to Come,* curated by Rodríguez Armendariz, A. La Casa Encendida, Barcelona. Available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0uT4cdYZp0 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Bowcott, O. (2019) 'National Gallery Lecturers Win Right to be Recognised as Workers', *The Guardian*. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/mar/01/national-gallery-lecturers-win-right-to-be-recognised-as-workers (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Boycott Zabludowicz (2014) *Boycott the Zabludowicz Art Trust and the Zabludowicz Collection!* Available: https://boycottzabludowicz.wordpress.com/boycott-zabludowicz/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Breton, N., Cornish, F., Moreno-Tabarez, U. et al. (2023) 'Participatory Action Research', *Nature Reviews Method Primers*, 3 (34). Available: https://www.nature.com/articles/s43586-023-00214-1 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Brizioli, A., Caffoni, P., Figone, C., Piccolo, S., Schiltz, M., and Theis, B. (2013) (eds.) *Fight Specific Isola: Art, Architecture, Activism and the Future of the City*. Berlin: Archive Books, 2013.

Brook, O., O'Brien, D., and Taylor, M. (2018) *Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries.* Available: https://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries1.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Brown, A.M. (2020) *We Will Not Cancel Us: And Other Dreams of Transformative Justice*. Chiko: AK Press.

Brown, M. (2020) 'Tate Galleries to Make Half of Commercial Workforce Redundant', *The Guardian*. Available:

https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/aug/12/tate-galleries-to-make-half-of-commercial-workforce-redundant (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Bryan-Wilson, J. (2003) 'A Curriculum of Institutional Critique', in: J. Ekeberg (ed.), *New Institutionalism*, Oslo: OCA/verksted, pp. 89–109.

Bunting, M. (2021) *Labours of Love*. London: Granta Publications.

Butler, J.

- (2002) 'What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue', *The Political: Readings in Continental Philosophy*. London: Basil Blackwell.
- (2015) *Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cameron, J., Gibson-Graham, JK. and Healy, S.

- (2013) *Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Our Communities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- (2016) 'Pursuing Happiness: The Politics of Surviving Well Together', in G. Ledvinka, C. Nelson and Pike, D. (eds.) *On Happiness: New Ideas for the Twenty-First Century.* Western Australia: UWA Publishing.

Cathedral of Shit (2011) *Cathedral of Shit Blog.* Available: https://cathedralofshit.wordpress.com/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Caló, S.

- (2016) 'The Grid', *Anthropocene Curriculum: Axiomatic Earth.* Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 23 April. Available: https://www.anthropocene-curriculum.org/contribution/the-grid (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2019) 'Can an Institution be Militant?' in Balona, A., Lemos, S., (eds) *Metabolic Rifts. A Reader*, Lisbon, Berlin: Atlas Projectos, pp. 115–131.

Caló, S., Colomo, A., and Rassel, L. (2018) 'It is not about what we bring, but to be as less toxic as possible', in Aristizábal, I., Cooper, R., Fauq, C. (eds) *Still I Rise: Feminisms, Gender, Resistance,* Nottingham: Nottingham Contemporary, n.p.

Castoriadis, C. (1987) *The Imaginary Institution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Child, D., Reckitt, H., and Richards, J. (2017) 'Labours of Love: A Conversation on Art, Gender and Social Reproduction', *Third Text*, 31(1), pp. 147–168.

Cisneros, T.

- (2018) *Document 0*. London: AND Publishing.
- (2019) Interview conducted by L. Lopez, 30 July.

Claxton, R. (2020) Interview conducted by L. Lopez, 6 February.

Clements, L., Hatrick, A. and Rose, L. (2018) *Access Docs for Artists.* Available: https://www.accessdocsforartists.com/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Colectivo Situaciones (2003) 'On the Researcher-Militant', *eipcp.* Available: https://transform.eipcp.net/transversal/0406/colectivosituaciones/en.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Colomo, A. and Lopez, L.

- (2019) 'Institutions as Ecosystems', in N. Daldanise et al (eds.) *Who's Art For? Art Workers Against Exploitation*, Milan: Postmedia Books, pp. 31–41.
- (2021) 'Cultivating la Sala', in H. Reckitt and D. Richter (eds.) *Instituting Feminism*, *On Curating Journal*, 52.

Condorelli, C. and Wade, G. (2004/2009) 'Support Structure Manifesto', *Support Structures.* London: Sternberg Press.

Condorelli, C.

- (2009) *Support Structures.* London: Sternberg Press.

- (2010) 'Functional Configurations', *Manifesta Journal,* 10, p. 93.

Condorelli, C. and Gordon, A. (2014) 'The Company We Keep', Parts 1, 2 & 3 in C.Condorelli (ed) *The Company She Keeps.* London: Bookworks, pp. 33–90.

Condorelli, C. and Hartle, J.F. (2014) 'Too Close to See' in C.Condorelli (ed) *The Company She Keeps.* London: Bookworks, pp. 11–22.

Dafoe, T. and Goldstein, C. (2020) 'The George Floyd Protests Spurred Museums to Promise Change', *Artnet.* Available: https://news.artnet.com/art-world/museums-diversity-equity-commitments-1901564 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Davis, A. (2015) 'A Lifetime of Revolution', *Black Student Assembly and the University of Southern California Speakers Committee.* 23 February, University of Southern California. Available: https://kpfa.org/area941/episode/angela-davis-a-lifetime-of-revolution/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

De la Puente, G. (2018) 'Liverpool Biennial 2018', *The White Pube.* Available: https://thewhitepube.co.uk/art-reviews/liverpool-biennial-2018/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Deleuze, G. and Parnet, C. (1977) *Dialogues*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Desai, J. (2020) *This Work Isn't For Us*. Available: https://heystacks.com/doc/337/this-work-isnt-for-us--by-jemma-desai (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Dowling, E. (2021) *The Care Crisis: What Caused It and How Can We End It?* London: Verso.

Eastside Projects

- (2008-2019) *User's Manual Drafts #1-7*. Birmingham: Eastside Projects. Available: http://eastsideprojects.org/about/users-manual/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

- (2017) Policy Manual. Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/Eastside-Projects-Policy-Manual-1.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2019) *The Range,* Exhibition Guide. Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Range-Exhibition-Guide.pdf
- (2020) *EOP Membership.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/esp/product/eop-membership/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2020) *Ongoing Anti-Racism Actions.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/Eastside-Projects-Anti-Racism-Actions-18-June.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2021/2023) *Inclusivity Action Plan.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/Eastside-Projects-Inclusivity-Plan-2021-23-Final-update-April-2023-1.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2022) *Incidental Artists.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/projects/incidental-artists/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2023) *Artist Fees.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/Eastside-Projects-Artist-Fees-2023%E2%80%9324-1.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2023) *Code of Conduct.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/about/code-of-conduct/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2023) *Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan.* Available: https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/Eastside-Projects-EDI-Plan-2023%E2%80%9326.docx.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Eastside Projects Staff Members 2016–20 (2020–2021) Interviews conducted by L. Lopez.

Ellis-Petersen, H. (2017) 'Art gallery criticised over neo-Nazi artwork and hosting racist speakers', *The Guardian*. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/feb/22/art-gallery-criticised-over-neo-nazi-artwork-and-hosting-racist-speakers (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Federici, S. (1975) *Wages Against Housework.* Bristol, London: Power of Women Collective and Falling Wall Press. Available: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/postgraduate/masters/modules/femlit/04-federici.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Fisher, B, and Tronto, J. (1990) 'Towards a Feminist Theory of Caring' in E. Abel and M. Nelson (eds.) *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives*, New York: SUNY press.

Fite-Wassilak, C.

- (2011) 'Review of Narrative Show', *Art Monthly*, 349, p. 32.
- (2015) 'Drafts, Acts and Lapses: Eastside Projects', in P. O'Neill and M. Wilson (eds.) *Curating Research*. Occasional Table No. 4, London and Amsterdam: Open Editions and de Appel, pp. 202–212.
-

Flückiger, G. and Kolb, L. (2013) 'New Institutionalism Revisited', *On Curating*, 21. Available: https://www.on-curating.org/issue-21-reader/new-institutionalism-revisited.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Fokianaki, I. (2020) *The Bureau of Care*. Available: http://thebureauofcare.org/about/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

FormContent, *Public Evaluation Event Performance*, in *User's Manual Draft #5*, Birmingham: Eastside Projects, 2012, pp. 17–18.

Foucault, M.

- (1983) *Discourse and Truth: The Problematization of Parrhesia.* Berkeley: University of California, Oct-Nov. Available: https://foucault.info/parrhesia/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (1997) 'What is Critique?' in L. Hochroth and S. Lotringer (eds.) *The Politics of Truth*. New York: Semiotext(e), pp: 23–82.
- (2008) *The Courage of Truth (The Government of Self and Others II), Lectures at the Collège de France 1983-1984*. New York: Picador.

Francke, A. and Jardine, R.

- (2017) 'Bureaucracy's Labour: The Administrator as Subject', *Parse Journal*, 5, pp. 23–33. Available: https://parsejournal.com/article/bureaucracys-labour-the-administrator-as-subject/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2019) *Gasworks Evaluation Newsletter*, July.
- (2020a) *Connecting Communities: Evaluation of the Gasworks Participatory Artists Residency Programme.* Available: https://www.gasworks.org.uk/2020/11/17/Evaluation_Report.pdf
- (2020b) *Evaluation Framework for Gasworks Participatory Artists Residency Programme.* Available: https://www.gasworks.org.uk/2020/11/17/Evaluation_Report.pdf
- (2020c) *Gasworks Evaluation Newsletter*, January.
- (2020d) *Gasworks Evaluation Newsletter*, February.
- (2020e) *Gasworks Evaluation Newsletter*, April.

Fraser, A. (2005) 'From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique', *Artforum*. 44 (1) pp. 278–283.

Fraser, N.

- (1990) 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', *Social Text*, (25/26), pp. 56–80. Available: https://carbonfarm.us/amap/fraser_public.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2019) *The Old Is Dying and the New Cannot Be Born*. London: Verso.

Frayling, C. (1993) *Research in Art and Design.* London: Royal College of Art.

Freire, P. (1968/1996) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* London: Penguin.

Goffey, A. (2016) 'Guattari and Transversality: Institutions, Analysis and Experimentation', *Radical Philosophy* (195) pp. 38–47. Available: https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/guattari-and-transversality (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Graham, J.

- (2013) (ed.) *Art + Care: a Future.* London: Koenig Books.

- Graham, J. (2015) 'Para-sites like us: What is this para-sitic tendency?', *Six Degrees*. Available: https://www.newmuseum.org/blog/view/para-sites-like-us-what-is-this-para-sitic-tendency#fn2 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Graziano, V., Mars, M. and Medak, T. (2019) *Pirate Care*. Available: https://pirate.care/pages/concept/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Greenberger, A. (2020) 'Controversy Over Museums' Black Lives Matter Statements Continues as Critics Pillory British Institutions', *ARTnews.* Available: https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/british-museums-black-lives-matter-statements-controversy-1202690203/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Haacke, H. (1984/2018) 'Museums: Managers of Consciousness' , *M+ Magazine.* Available: https://www.mplus.org.hk/en/magazine/museums-managers-of-consciousness/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Habermas, J. (1992/1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Halberstam, J. (2011) *The Queer Art of Failure,* Durham: Duke University Press.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2009) *Commonwealth*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, Harvard University Press.

Harney, S. and Moten, F. (2013) *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study.* New York: Minor Compositions.

Harvey, D. (2001) *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hedva, J.

- (2016) 'Sick Woman Theory', in H. Hurr and I. Nastasia (eds) *Mask Magazine*. Available: https://topicalcream.org/features/sick-woman-theory/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

- (2019) 'Hedva's Disability Access Rider', *Sick Woman Theory Tumblr*. Available: https://sickwomantheory.tumblr.com/post/187188672521/hedvas-disability-access-rider (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2020) *Get Well Soon*. Available: https://getwellsoon.labr.io/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Holmes, B. (2003) 'Liar's Poker', *Springerin* (1). Available: http://subsol.c3.hu/subsol_2/contributors3/holmestext.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Hope, S. and Richards, J. (Manual Labours)

- (2013) *Manual Labours: About Us*. Available: https://manuallabours.co.uk/about/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2018) *Building as Body: A Handbook for Investigating Your Workplace.* London: Cultural Democracy Editions.

Isin, E. and Nielsen, G. (2008) (eds) *Acts of Citizenship*, London: Zed Books.

Jacques, J. (2020) 'Aphorisms on Self-Care', in R. Jagoe and S. Kivland (eds.) *On Care.* London: MA BIBLIOTHÈQUE, pp. 101–106.

Kaba, M. (2019) 'Everything Worthwhile is Done with Other People', interview by E.L. Ewing, *ADI Magazine*. Available: https://adimagazine.com/articles/mariame-kaba-everything-worthwhile-is-done-with-other-people/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Kent, C. (1965) *Immaculate Heart College Art Department Rules.* Available: https://designmanifestos.org/sister-corita-kent-immaculate-heart-college-art-department-rules/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Kwon, M. (2005) 'Public Art as Publicity', in S.Sheikh (ed) *In The Place of the Public Sphere?* Berlin: b_books. Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0605/kwon/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinhai, L. (2018) *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice.* Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

Lazard, C. (2019) *Accessibility in the Arts: A Promise and a Practice.* Available: https://promiseandpractice.art/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Lesauvage, M.

- (2019) 'Harcèlement Moral à Bétonsalon?' *Le Quotidien de l'Art*. Available: https://www.lequotidiendelart.com/articles/16309-harc%C3%A8lement-moral-%C3%A0-b%C3%A9tonsalon.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2020) 'Mélanie Bouteloup quitte la direction de Bétonsalon', *Le Quotidien de l'Art*. Available: https://www.lequotidiendelart.com/articles/17868-m%C3%A9lanie-bouteloup-quitte-la-direction-de-b%C3%A9tonsalon.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Lichtblau, E. and Markoff, J. (2004) 'TECHNOLOGY; Gaps Seen in Virtual Border Security System', *New York Times*. Available: https://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/31/business/technology-gaps-seen-in-virtual-border-security-system.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Lind, M. (2009) 'The Curatorial', *Artforum*. 48 (2), p. 103. Available: https://www.artforum.com/columns/the-curatorial-192127/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Lorde, A.

- (1984) 'Poetry is Not a Luxury', *Sister Outsider, Essays and Speeches*. North Carolina: The Crossing Press, pp. 36–39.
- (1988) 'Epilogue', *A Burst of Life.* Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books.
- (2018) *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House*. London: Penguin Classics.

Lorey, I. (2011) 'Non-representationist, Presentist Democracy', *Autonomy Project Symposium.* October 7–9, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven. Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/1011/lorey/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Martina, E.A. (2015) 'Policy and Intimacy', *Policy People*. Available: http://policy-people.com/egbert-alejandro-martina-policy-and-intimacy/#fn26 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Martinon, J.P. (2013) (ed.) *The Curatorial: A Philosophy of Curating*. London: Bloomsbury.

McAnally, J.

- (2017) *Prefigurative Institutions*. Available: https://louisedany.no/prefigurative_institutions.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2023) 'Triennials out of Time: Counterpublic 2023', *March.* Available: https://march.international/triennials-out-of-time-counterpublic-2023/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Migrants in Culture (2018) *Migrants in Culture Website.* Available: http://migrantsinculture.com/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Mingus, M. (2011) 'Access Intimacy: The Missing Link', *Leaving Evidence*. Available: https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/05/05/access-intimacy-the-missing-link/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Möntmann, N.

- (2006) *Art and its Institutions: Current Conflicts, Critique and Collaborations*. London: Black Dog Publishing.
- (2008) 'Playing the Wild Child', *Open! Platform for Art, Culture & the Public Domain.* Available: https://www.onlineopen.org/download.php?id=221 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Morgan, G. (2019) 'Artists vs Arms Dealers: Should artists hang their work in unethically funded galleries?', *New Statesman.* Available: https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2019/08/artists-vs-arms-dealers-should-artists-hang-their-work-in-unethically-funded-galleries (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Murphy, M. (2006) *Sick Building Syndrome and the Problem of Uncertainty*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Negri, A., Petcou., Petrescu, D., and Querrien, A. (2008) 'What Makes a Biopolitical Space?' *Multitudes* (31). Available: https://www.eurozine.com/what-makes-a-biopolitical-space/?pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Negt, O. and Kluge, A. (1972/1993) *Public Sphere and Experience: Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Nyampeta, C. (2019) *The Evening School.* Available: https://evening-school.org/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

O'Doherty, B. (1986) *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*. San Francisco: The Lapis Press.

Pérez, M. and Salvini, F. (2019) 'The Right to Care: Entering outside in the southern European crisis of welfare', *ephemera*, 19 (2). Available: https://ephemerajournal.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/19-2perezramas.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Petrešin-Bachelez, N. (2017) 'For Slow Institutions', *e-flux,* 85. Available: https://www.e-flux.com/journal/85/155520/for-slow-institutions/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Phillips, A.

- (2013) 'Public Space', in I. Dragset and M. Elmgreen (eds.) *A Space Called Public* Köln: König. Available: https://research.gold.ac.uk/id/eprint/10444/1/PublicSpace%20APhillips001.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2017) 'Reclaiming Participation: Arts Centres and the Reinvention of Social Condensation', *The Journal of Architecture*, 22(3), pp. 522–531.
- (2017) 'Museum as Social Condenser', *The Museum as Battlefield: Alternative Models of Museum Practice*. 2 May, Contemporary Art Society Conference, British Museum, London.

Power, N.

- (2012), 'The Spectre of the Public: The Ideology of Law and Order', *Ideology Now*. 28 April, Birkbeck, London. Available: http://blogs.bbk.ac.uk/events/2012/05/04/ideology-today/
- (2016) '"Great" Britain in the Former West ', in S. Sheikh, M. Hlavajova, and B. Buden (eds.) *Former West: Art and the Contemporary after 1989*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Precarias a la Deriva (2004) 'Adrift through the Circuits of Feminized Precarious Work', *transversal.* Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0704/precarias-a-la-deriva/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Prowse, J.

- (2020) 'The Quiet Revolution of the Self Isolated', *Art Work Magazine*, 1, pp. 10–20. Available: https://issuu.com/magazineartwork/docs/art_work_issue_one (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2021) 'Creating Change: Leah Clements on working towards a disability inclusive art world', *British Journal of Photography*. Available: https://www.1854.photography/2021/07/industry-insights-leah-clements-creating-change/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2021b) 'How Open-Access Resources Can Support Disabled Artists', *Frieze*, 223. Available: https://www.frieze.com/article/open-access-resources-disabled-artists (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2017) *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Quaintance, M.

- (2017) 'The New Conservatism: Complicity and the UK Art World's Performance of Progression', *e-flux conversations*. Available: https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/the-new-conservatism-complicity-and-the-uk-art-worlds-performance-of-progression/7200 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2023) 'Care v Competition', *Art Monthly*, 464, pp. 5–9.

Rassel, L. (2018) 'Experimenting with Institutional Formats', interview by C. Sollfrank, *Creating Commons.* Available: https://creatingcommons.zhdk.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Transcript-Laurence.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Raunig, G.

- (2006) 'Instituent Practices: Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming', *transversal*. Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0106/raunig/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2013) 'Flatness Rules: Instituent Practices and Institutions of the Common in a Flat World', in P. Gielen (ed.) *Institutional Attitudes: Instituting Art in a Flat World.* Amsterdam: Valiz. pp. 167-178.
- (2015) 'Towards Institutions of the Common', in S. Hansen and T. Vandeputte (eds.) *Politics Of Study.* London: Open Editions, Series: Occasional Table. pp. 32–39.
- (2016) 'Confluences: The Molecular-Revolutionary Force of the New Municipalismos in Spain', *transversal*. Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0916/raunig/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Reckitt, H.

- (2016) 'Support Acts: Curating, Caring and Social Reproduction', *Journal of Curatorial Studies*, 5 (1), pp. 6–30. Available: https://research.gold.ac.uk/id/eprint/21062/1/Reckitt_Support%20Acts_JCS_2016.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2023) 'From Coping to Curious: Unlearning and Reimagining Curatorial Habits of Care', in E. Krasny and L.Perry (eds.) *Curating with Care.* Abingdon: Routledge. pp. 169–182.

Reyburn, S. (2023) 'Artists paid less than £3 an hour for public art commissions, report finds', *The Art Newspaper*. Available: https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/05/16/artists-reveal-woeful-pay-for-public-art-work (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Rhoden-Paul, A. (2022) 'Stop and search: Ethnic minorities unfairly targeted by Police', *BBC News Online*. Available: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-61167875 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Rodriguez Munoz, B. (2020) *Health*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Rogoff, I.

- (2006) 'Smuggling: An Embodied Criticality', *eipcp.* Available: http://eipcp.net/dlfiles/rogoff-smuggling/attachment_download/rogoff-smuggling.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2010) 'Practising Research: Singularising Knowledge', *MaHKU zine*. 9, pp. 37-42.

Rutgeerts, J. and Scholts, N. (2020) 'TALOS/Talos: What Sort of Future Do We Want to See Performed?' in N. Wynants (ed.) *When Fact is Fiction: Documentary Art in the Post-Truth Era.* Amsterdam: Valiz, pp. 181–198.

Ryzik, M. (2019) 'MoMA PS1 Settles With Curator Who Said Giving Birth Cost Her Job Offer', *New York Times.* Available: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/26/arts/design/moma-ps1-settles-with-curator-who-said-giving-birth-cost-her-job-offer.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Salvini, F.

- (2013) *Struggles for the Right to the City: Assembling Politics on the Streets of Barcelona.* PhD Thesis. Queen Mary, University of London. Available: https://www.academia.edu/69525379/Struggles_for_the_right_to_the_city_assembling_politics_on_the_streets_of_Barcelona (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2016) 'Instituting on the Threshold', *transversal*. Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0916/salvini/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2016a) 'Taking Care, Making Care', *L'Internationale Online.* Available: https://www.internationaleonline.org/opinions/106_taking_care_making_care/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2016b) 'Institutions as Ecologies', *L'Internationale Online*. Available: https://www.internationaleonline.org/opinions/108_institutions_as_ecologies/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2019) 'Caring Ecologies', *transversal.* Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0318/salvini/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

- (2019) 'When the City Heals', *Entra Afuera*. Available: https://entrarafuera.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/when-the-city-heals.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Schweiker, R. (2021) Interview conducted by L. Lopez. 13 January.

Serpentine Civic Projects (2023) *Radio Ballads,* curated by L. Gaytens, E. Graham, and A. Khalaf. Available: https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/whats-on/radio-ballads-exhibition/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Service Public FR (2023) *Harcèlement Moral au Travail*. Available: https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2354 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Shani, T. (2022) *Statement from Artists Participating in British Art Show 9.* Available: https://www.instagram.com/p/CdN7fOGMaql/?igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA== (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Sheikh, S.

- (2006) 'Notes on Institutional Critique', *transversal*. Available: https://transversal.at/transversal/0106/sheikh/en (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2008) 'Publics and Post-Publics: The Production of the Social', in J. Seijdel (ed.) *Art as a Public Issue: How Art and its Institutions Reinvent the Public Dimension*. Rotterdam: NAi/SKOR.
- (2015) 'Towards the Exhibition as Research', in P. O'Neill and M. Wilson (eds.) *Curating Research.* London: Open Editions, Series: Occasional table. pp 32–46.
- (2016) 'Art after Trump', *e-flux*. Available: https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/simon-sheikh-art-after-trump/5325 (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2016) 'Careful and Careless Power', *Instituting for the Contemporary.* 11 April, Public Editorial Meeting 1, BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht.
- (2017) 'The Magmas: On Institutions and Instituting', in P. O'Neill, L. Steeds and M. Wilson (eds.) *How Institutions think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 126-131.

Siravo, J.

- (2019) 'Long Term Care Centres: A Strategy for Formal and Informal Carers Alike', *Autonomy*. Available: https://autonomy.work/portfolio/ltccinformalcarers/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2020) 'New Foundational Infrastructures: Economic Policies for a Radical Municipalism?', *Minim Magazine*. Available: https://minim-municipalism.org/magazine/new-foundational-infrastructures-economic-policies-for-a-radical-municipalism (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Spivak, G. (1988) 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture.* Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, pp. 271–313.

Tan, J.K. (2023) *AREVA REPORT – A Knowledge Exchange Report on Anti-Racism and Equity in the Visual Arts.* Available: https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/67440973/areva-report-jan-2023-cvan-london-iniva-jack-ky-tan (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

The Care Collective (2020) *The Care Manifesto*: *the politics of interdependence.* London: Verso.

Thornton, C. (2020) *The Hologram Project.* Available: https://feministeconomicsdepartment.com/ (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Tronto, J.

- (2015) *Who Cares? How to Reshape a Democratic Politics*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- (2013) *Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice.* New York: NYU Press.

Wade, G. (2020) Interview conducted by L. Lopez, 6 February.

Warner, M.

- (2002) 'Publics and Counterpublics', *Public Culture* 14 (1), pp. 49–90.
- (2005) *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.

Warsza, J. and the participants of the Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts (eds.) (2017) *I Can't Work Like This: a Reader on Recent Boycotts and Contemporary Art.* London: Sternberg Press.

Weeks, K. (2011) *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Wilson Gilmore, R.

- (2020) *Abolition on Stolen Land*, Keynote. UCLA Luskin. Available: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a354481a9db0961249f52ec/t/60f454ff1ad9bf1c32bdce41/1626625279702/RGW+Keynote+transcript.pdf (Accessed: 16 September 2023)
- (2020) Conversation with P. Gilroy. University College London, 7 June. Available: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/racism-racialisation/transcript-conversation-ruth-wilson-gilmore (Accessed: 16 September 2023)

Wilson, M. (2011) 'An Education on Value and Public Judgement', *Public Evaluation Event*. Unpublished transcript of talk, Eastside Projects, Birmingham.

Zaman, R. (2021) Interview conducted by L. Lopez. 9 February.