

Jeanne Randolph and Cliff Eyland on Your Own Grad School, **Nadja Pelkey** discusses Neighbourhood Spaces, **Golboo Amani and Francisco-Fernando Granados** on The School of Bartered Knowledge, **Mary Tremonte** considers community print shops, **Luis Jacob's** Anarchist Free School Minutes + **Anna Hawkins** on 3 types of instructional videos

syphon

3.2

Art + Pedagogy

IMAGE CREDIT FOR COVER

Lost Keys (2014), Sandra Jass
In process documentation
Your Own Grad School, 2014

MASTHEAD

Syphon is an arts and culture publication produced by Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre that is meant as a conduit between the arts community in Kingston and communities elsewhere. It was created in response to the lack of critical arts commentary and coverage in local publications, and seen as a way to increase exposure to experimental and non-commercial art practices. Syphon has a mandate to feature local arts coverage in conjunction with national and international projects, and an emphasis on arts scenes and activities that are seen as peripheral. It acts, in essence, as a record and communiqué for small regional arts communities throughout the country.

Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre is a non-profit organization facilitating the production, presentation, and interpretation of contemporary visual, time-based and interdisciplinary arts. Modern Fuel aims to meet the professional development needs of emerging and mid-career local, national and international artists, from diverse cultural communities, through exhibition, discussion, and mentorship opportunities. Modern Fuel supports innovation and experimentation, and is committed to the education of interested publics and the diversification of its audiences.

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EDITORIAL

Given that our encounters with pedagogy exist most explicitly within academic institutions, it is easy to overlook the many moments in which we take part in informal forms of learning. Whether through solitary research and reflection or through casual exchanges that prove insightful or informative, over time these moments add up. That they are so often disregarded or diminished is, however, no accident. This lack of recognition is the product of a specific value system that undermines vernacular knowledge and elevates the institution. This process, in turn, subdivides forms of learning further into disparate disciplines, continuing to ascribe varying degrees of importance to one field over another.

In opposition to this stratification, the current issue of Syphon explores learning that occurs outside of institutions. The features discuss projects ranging from artist-initiated programs to socially-engaged residencies, but all share a common interest in communal approaches to teaching and learning. Since its inception, the modern classroom served as a “pedagogical machine” with order and discipline inscribed in the very architecture,¹ in turn becoming “not just a place of learning but an institution where we are taught our places within a hierarchical system of class, gender and race relations.”² At their best, academic institutions can critique this system and illuminate a myriad of alternative ways of organizing society, but this is unfortunately often not the case.

This issue's contributions by Jeanne Randolph and Cliff Eyland most directly contest this ‘pedagogical machine.’ Randolph and Eyland are two artists and writers who founded the *Your Own Grad School* program that has taken place at Modern Fuel three years in a row, with the fourth iteration scheduled for this Fall. Randolph brings attention to the corporatization of our increasingly neoliberal public education, asking that those who are interested in advanced arts education reflect more deeply on their motivations and expectations, while Eyland outlines an alternative graduate school model that would abandon grades for a more nuanced and insightful evaluation, one that responds to the specific needs and interests of those who are involved. If in Eyland's model everyone ‘fails,’ then what does that say of the systematization and standardization of success?

Rather than work with a standard, one-size-fits-all model, community-based projects like the *Neighbourhood Spaces* residency series in Windsor or Toronto's *Anarchist Free School* explore radically different ways of exchanging knowledge. Nadja Pelkey, who served as *Neighbourhood Spaces*’ Program Coordinator, discusses the educational structures that emerged in many of the residencies, considering how artists become integrated or involved in the groups that they worked with. Reflecting on the origin and development of the *Anarchist Free School*, artist Luis Jacob's installation *Anarchist Free School Minutes* (1999) explores the school's democratic organization and the community that emerged through this process.³

With a similar dialogue-based artist project, Golboo Amani's *School of Bartered Knowledge* (2013-ongoing) involves more direct exchanges of knowledge and information. In this project, individuals are invited to participate and share any knowledge or information that they deem to be of value or interest. Though these initial exchanges are fleeting, Amani asks participants to record some of the exchange on index cards that in turn catalogue the development of the project. We are excited to feature a selection of these cards in this issue's centrefold.

In these and other projects included in this issue the hierarchy within conventional learning processes is itself subverted, where horizontal groups collaboratively decide what to address and how the process should unfold. Those taking part gain greater agency in the process, in contrast to the ‘pedagogical machine.’ These alternative approaches to pedagogy impact not only the educational process itself, but influence our awareness of how society more broadly can be organized, as well as the values and culture that influence this mode of organization. As Jeanne Randolph argues, we need to reconsider the effects and outcomes of engaging with our increasingly neoliberal educational system, while acknowledging the value of alternative forms of learning and knowing.

ENDNOTES

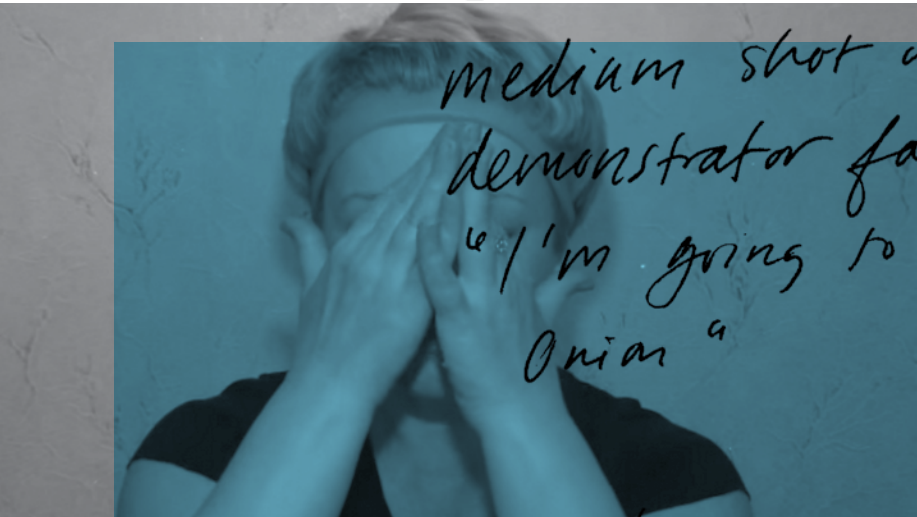
1. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) 172. See especially Part III, Section 2 “The means of correct training”.
2. Griselda Pollock, “Art, Art School, Culture: Individualism after the Death of the Artist,” Block No. 11 (Winter 1985/96); reprinted in *The Block Reader* (London: Routledge, 1996) 54.
3. The Agnes Etherington Art Centre recently acquired Jacob's installation, and we are grateful for their support in reprinting some of the minutes in this issue.

Michael DiRisio is an artist and writer, and currently the Artistic Director of Modern Fuel.

PROJECT

3 types of instructional videos

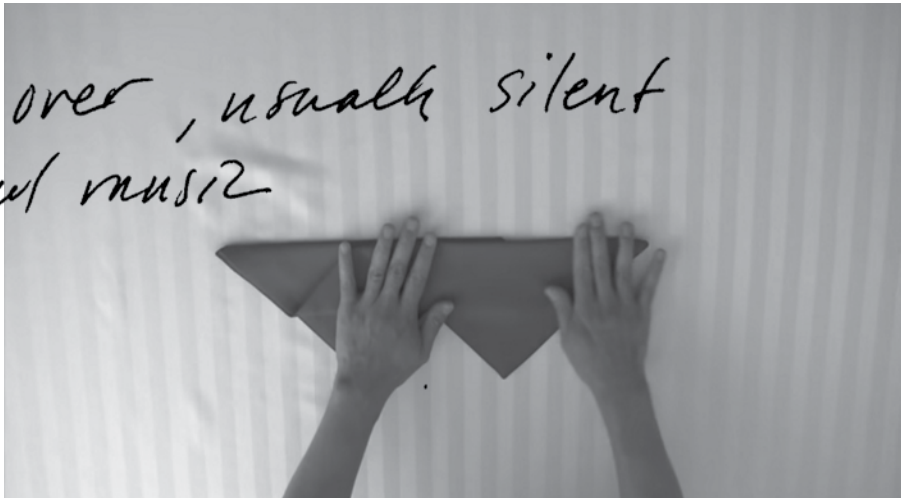
Demonstrative



medium shot of poss. close-up details
demonstrator faces camera, addresses viewer
“I'm going to show you how to chop an onion”

Empathetic

Over the shoulder shot
viewer is in the position of the demonstrator
only hands visible
w/o narration or voice over, usually silent
or w/ music



Mirrored

Close-up or medium shot
demonstrator faces camera, monitor is
used as a mirror - demonstrator watches
themselves as they are being recorded



Anna Hawkins is an American artist currently based in Montreal, QC. Working primarily with video, her work is concerned with the ways that images, gestures and information are transmitted and transformed online. Recent Solo exhibitions include, *How to Chop an Onion* at Centre CLARK (Montreal, QC 2016) and at Eastern Edge Gallery (St. John's, NL 2016) and *With Outthrust Arm* at Artspace (Peterborough, ON 2015).

Your Own Grad School

Cliff Eyland

A friend of mine recently applied to a prestigious American graduate school, and was rejected. There were 400 applicants, of whom 12 were interviewed for 4 slots, all for the privilege of paying \$100,000 for a dubious experience.

Why do people do this? So they can hang out with 17,000 other North American graduate art school aspirants? Why do artists submit to these humiliations when there are more productive ways to torture oneself? I am not against art school—I teach in one—but there are many ways to become an artist. The recent rise of the studio PhD has had many wonder if grad school alternatives might work for people who cannot or will not attend a graduate school in the visual arts.

To simply live, to think, and to have time and to make art is cheaper than school, but students often feel empty after having just graduated. They want more. They want feedback. They want a community. They want support. They want to show somebody—anybody—their work. Jeanne Randolph and I came up with *Your Own Grad School* as hundreds of other alternatives to graduate school were being tested everywhere.

I had thought about the old South Asian model of traditional teaching, in which education is free and for which the teachers are not paid. You might bring your teacher food, or give them shelter, or you might sweep their studios for them, but money would have little to do with the relationship. Jeanne and I have accepted room and board and transportation for *Your Own Grad School* sessions, but not fees. Instead we urge institutions to pay students to participate.

We “fail” everyone, we tell participants that we do not want to change their work, and we conduct reviews with the shared knowledge that all one can expect is an honest opinion.

Kingston's Modern Fuel Gallery provided us the ideal conditions to test these ideas out. Students were given the gallery space to work in for the length of a show, and then we showed up at the end to do public crit sessions. Kingston has been our most successful YOGS venture so far, but my ambition has always been to expand the idea into a self-directed program that could be adopted by anyone with experience in the arts, which I'd like to describe.

The student would assemble three people as a committee. The committee would include one member who is not an artist, but someone (preferably) schooled in the *subject matter* of the student's work. The committee should be able to advise the student on technical matters having to do with their art, on professional practice matters such as resumes, documentation, artist statements, and theories of art. The committee should be willing to share their contacts with the student and to introduce the student to people and institutions.

The committee must be honest with the student. At their first meeting they may even advise the student to abandon their art career for something else; if so, so be it. Committee members see what a student can't see in their work and in their own ambitions—the strengths, the weaknesses and the potential.

Students should attempt to make a body of work over a year that can become a solo exhibition. It does not matter where this exhibition happens.

The committee should meet four times as a group over the course of a year. The meetings should take about an hour or so each, more if required. An hour is usually long enough, but the committee may also meet at other times privately with the student.

The first meeting should introduce the committee to a student's past works and their plans for their upcoming work and exhibition. The student should give a written outline of proposed work to committee members at this meeting.

The second meeting should attempt to find out how the student is adjusting to their full-time status as an artist and what progress toward a body of work they are making. No excuses are accepted for not making work.

The third meeting should be a mid-year evaluation of progress. Should the student stop, change direction or continue full steam ahead?

The final meeting should be a pre-exhibition critique in which the committee members give their opinions about what needs to be changed in the student's proposed exhibition, artist statement, and press release.

No grades are given, just verbal evaluations.

Having the discipline, enduring the frustrations, and making the effort to carry a body of work to its conclusion are the goals. The discipline of making a body of work will often involve the sacrifice of not allowing whims and distractions to lead a student toward trivial pursuits. The year will involve turning down opportunities and refusing to do certain things in favor of studio time.

What I have outlined may seem like a lot to ask of an independent person, but I would ask you to consider the very expensive and often fruitless alternatives before you reject it. I would also argue that if a student manages to pull off a year of full-time art making with a committee, they should be able to add another year, and yet many more years of full-time practice to their lives. Yes, we all have to spend time making money, but the discipline of regular art time is what distinguishes a real artist from pretenders.

Psycho-Philosophical Musings upon the Existence of Post-graduate Visual Arts Degrees

Jeanne Randolph

INTRODUCTION:

I do not think an MFA is a waste of time and money. I do believe a PhD in the studio arts is probably a waste of time and money, or at best a once-in-a-lifetime luxurious divertissement. I do see the value of both to delay one's inevitable entry into the Hell that is toiling for money.

In my limited exposure to art schools as institutions, my impression is that the education they offer is conducted on a myriad of unspoken assumptions and unconscious motives, none of which are likely to be openly discussed (in any school there will be a few brilliant and hardworking teachers committed to imparting knowledge).

Twenty-first century Canadian culture, like societies most everywhere, is under massive pressure to conform to a Corporate Ideology, to organize bureaucratically, to embrace a Technological Ethos and to produce mentally comfortable products. Universities seem to be failing financially; they might be clinging to life by transforming themselves into technical schools—and by disguising Humanities as social outreach, political analysis and a source of elite socio-political experts. Not that there's anything wrong with that.

Do artists, however, flourish more creatively because of better business plans, more organized bureaucratic methods, accelerated technical innovation and extended reliance on socio-political analysis?

There are contemporary Canadian artists who are world-renowned; their financial situation more often than not is a secret. These artists are a credit to the country. But who among us are the 99% who will never be world-renowned and whose financial situation will at best be described as livable and at worst as pathetic? I am. Are you?

The question to ask when considering whether to enroll in a graduate program is “What difference will this make to me, who at the moment is in the 99%?”



Jeanne Randolph is a cultural critic, art writer and performance artist whose most recent books are *Out of Psychoanalysis: ficto-criticism 2005-2015* and *Shopping Cart Pantheism*.

Here are some questions relevant to your contemplation of the above:

- What do I want to learn?
- a) The historical context for my own work
 - b) How to take time to contemplate, experiment and evolve my art at a natural pace
 - c) How to make my work suitable for gallery exhibitions
 - d) How to develop my work for a commercial gallery
 - e) How to employ a variety of materials and media to embody my ideas
 - f) What senior artists/professors think are promising further developments of my work
 - g) How to develop an effective peer group
 - h) How to get access to curators and art critics

What can I expect to be taught because I cannot learn it on my own? See a) through h)

In what ways would the things I can expect to learn and to be taught differ from what I might learn if I don't attend a graduate art school program?

What are the personal/subjective reasons I believe grad school is necessary to my artistic development?

About what aspects of the art I make am I confident?

About what aspects of the art I make am I insecure?

For what reasons—that have nothing to do with my artistic development—am I considering grad school?

What psychological, subjective effect on me does making my art have?

Do I know what it is like to make art against all odds?

What would it be like to quit making art?

What do I actually believe constitutes success as an artist?

What do I actually know about the economic realities of practicing artists?

In what way (and not) is practicing art a career?

How committed to the idea of art as a career is the Art School I want to attend?

In what way (and not) is practicing art a business?

How businesslike are the principles my preferred Art School promotes?

What are my wildest fantasies about the effect on my art of having a graduate degree?

What are my wildest fantasies about the effect on my life of having a graduate degree?

How important is it to me to have artists as friends?

How will I pay back all the money I borrow to get a graduate degree?

How and when will I develop a skill for which I will be paid while I am a practicing artist?

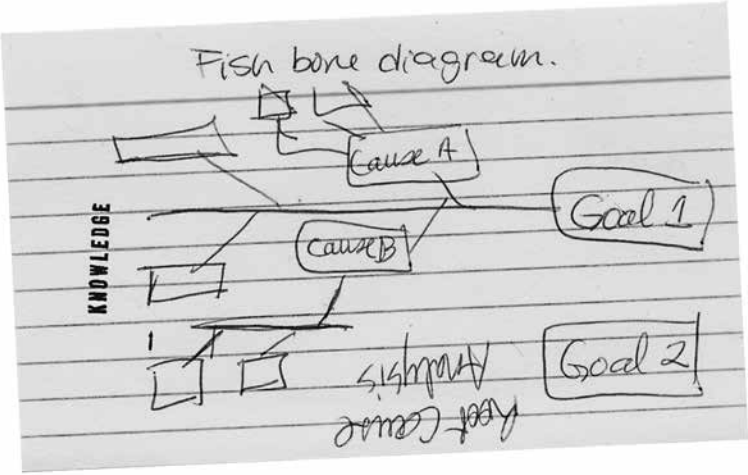
Where do my parents stand regarding my choice to become a practicing artist—

- If I pursue a graduate degree?
- If I ask them for a graduate school tuition sum of money to support artmaking on my own?
- If I get a semi-skilled job and choose art as my vocation?

Am I afraid to develop an art practice now, on my own?

Power is only your imagination.

KNOWLEDGE



Havana is more than a beach.
Havana tourism has increased 300% since Dec 17/2014.

There are no eggs for the grandmothers.

KNOWLEDGE INFORMATION

The British brought over 1000s of Irish indentured labourers to the Caribbean in the early years of colonization (1700s) (pre-slavery) as workers / free labourers

INFORMATION

Your 'inner voice' is connected to actual muscle contractions in the ~~literally~~ ^{information} talking to yourself.

Everything empowers you. (All that is) (God) is unconditionally loving. - well being is assured

truth Any thought you think duality good false

bad

unity Consciousness

INFORMATION

bicycle maintenance
squeeze your brakes and loosen the nut attaching them to the frame to center your brakes over your wheel

INFORMATION

Afghanistan has had 21 flags since 1911

1 different

INFORMATION

There are as many dogs as there are children in the USA.

KNOWLEDGE

"The way a relationship starts, is the way it will end."

KNOWLEDGE wise words from my mother - (see once)

How to quickly fix a photo in photo-shop.
First do an auto-levels (command+shift+L)
Then do an auto-color (command+shift+B)

INFORMATION

You can't fold a piece of paper in halves more than seven times.

INFORMATION

When we are infants we can only decipher texture, shapes etc. with our mouths ...
that's why babies put everything in their mouths

KNOWLEDGE

The sun's gravitational field is much larger than we had previously conceived. Since the early 90's over 26 additional interstellar objects classified as dwarf planets & satellites have been sighted and positioned beyond the orbit of Pluto. This system of objects is now known as the Kuiper belt.

INFORMATION

INFORMATION

POLISH ENGLISH

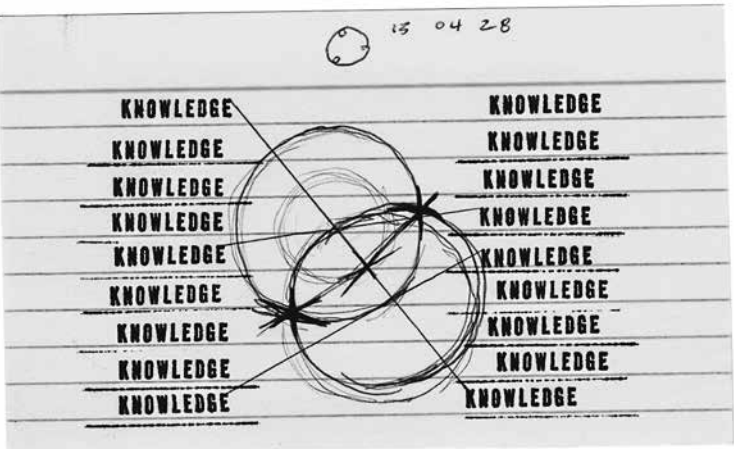
ZGÓBIONY LOST

Lemon Tarts - Portuguese - R

4 eggs
100 grams butter. Zest of 2 lemons.
200 grams flour
400 grams sugar. ^{KNOWLEDGE}
1 litre milk.
Preheat oven to 350.
add eggs and butter (melted)
blend in sugar and flour -
then add milk and zest.
Bake till golden brown.

Always Make sure you understand your Hydro Bill because they will not help you Toronto Hydro that is.

KNOWLEDGE



Incorrect planning and user experience testing costs on average of 10x more money when building a web site

KNOWLEDGE

1. Having 2 children is far more than twice as hard as having one ^{KNOWLEDGE}

2. One can manifest ANYTHING with dedicated attention and intention ^{KNOWLEDGE}

3. Milk takes out pen marks from clothing ^{INFORMATION}

The School of Bartered Knowledge

Golboo Amani & Francisco-Fernando Granados

The School of Bartered Knowledge (2013-ongoing) is a public participatory performance that facilitates negotiations of vernacular wisdom and everyday information between artist Golboo Amani and an incidental public. As an alternative pedagogical framework, the *School* makes space for people passing by to engage in an open-ended conversation about learning beyond academic institutions. Since its first iteration in 2013, the project has been performed in Toronto at Xpace Cultural Centre as part of FADO Performance Art Centre's Emerging Artist Series, at the 519 Community Centre during the Rhubarb Festival organized by Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, and in Kingston at the Union Gallery at Queen's University with Performing Pedagogies.

Physically, it consists of a simple yet solid mobile wood structure designed to be self-contained and self-sufficient. It provides storage and seating for both artist and participants, setting them up in a symmetrical relationship. The interactions in the *School* are structured through an open invitation to sit down with Amani to trade a piece of knowledge that they deem equivalent to whatever she can offer in return. Topics as wide-ranging as food recipes, history, yoga poses, colour theory, alternative medicine, philosophy, and life advice are discussed and compared as a means to arrive at a mutually-agreed fair trade. There is no time limit on the interaction, and the negotiation does not necessarily arrive at a trade; but when it does, the parts of the conversation that are agreed to be traded are documented through the writing of an index card that is exchanged as a way to end the interaction. Amani collects the index cards traded from the beginning of the project into an archive called the *Library of Bartered Knowledge*, which is housed within the *School*.

Conceptually, the structure of the *School* draws from relational performance strategies as a means to examine and rearrange the uneven power dynamics that structure how knowledge is valued. Traditional pedagogical institutions maintain their power through hierarchical structures that leave little room for negotiating the value of knowledge and its means of exchange. Factors such as gender, race, class, and ability provide uneven points of access for members of the public who have traditionally been marginalized from institutions. By placing itself within community spaces and at the edges of sanctioned cultural institutions like art galleries and libraries, the *School* makes a space for personal histories that shape both the public's and the artist's relationship to pedagogy and institutionalized learning. Amani's interactions create a moment of disruption in the hierarchies of cultural capital by re-imagining relationships of learning as horizontal, reciprocal interactions that are open to negotiation.

Like a readymade, the *School* draws from the public's existing experiences and utilizes the most casual and common ways to exchange knowledge; it holds space for everyday methods to become an official exchange of valued knowledge. This allows people to think about and recognize the breadth of their wisdom. An incalculable public going about their everyday take the opportunity to become teachers on a topic of their expertise and students of another. This relationship already happens in life, outside institutional settings, but somehow we forego it in the institution. While some exchanges are completely ephemeral, the collection of the index cards extends the possibility of further exchanges of knowledge. *The Library of Bartered Knowledge* acts as a rough index of the number of participants that have contributed to the school, which has to date reached nearly 400 people.

Golboo Amani is a Toronto-based interdisciplinary artist who creates works focused on process and research through a variety of mediums including photography, performance, space intervention, digital media, and participatory practice. She received her Bachelor of Fine Art from Emily Carr University and her Master of Visual Studies at the University of Toronto. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally in venues including the Hemispheric Institute at FOFA (Montreal), FADO Emerging Artist Series (Toronto), TRANSMUTED International Festival of Performance Art (Mexico City), and the LIVE Biennial of Performance Art (Vancouver).

Francisco-Fernando Granados is a Toronto-based artist. His practice is often live and primarily process-based, extending from performance into a range of media that includes installation, video, text, and drawing. Recent projects include a solo exhibition at Third Space in St. John NB, a group show at the Hessel Museum in Bard College NY, a billboard project for Nuit Blanche in Toronto, and performances at Queens University and University of Waterloo. He received the Governor General's Silver Medal for academic achievement upon graduating from Emily Carr University in 2010 and completed a Masters of Visual Studies at the University of Toronto in 2012. He teaches as sessional faculty at OCADU and University of Toronto Scarborough.

FREE UNIVERSITY PROJECT

Meeting 5 11 Sept 98 Community Café

Present: Allan A. (facilitating), Tim, Peter, Craig (new, phone?), Stu, Chris (recording), Gary, Michael, (later) Leeshia, Ben, Alan O. (has anybody heard from Kerry or Josh?)

The agenda proposed by Allan was accepted.

- Mission statement:** A draft by Allan and Leeshia was read. There was a bit of a tangent about needing to develop a list of committees (arising from the "How We Operate" section), then questions were taken. Questions raised: "Education is a political act." Too clichéd? Redundant? Decided to keep. "libertarian topics"? Decided to scratch "libertarian." Meaning of "autonomous"? Not answerable to a Board or a funding agency. "free of prejudice"? realistic? Maybe not, but is definitely part of our mission. Name? Still up for grabs. Meaning of "counter-community"? History, familiar (at least among activists), isn't it evident?— countercultural. Add something about free inquiry? Chris agreed to bring a sentence or two to the **next meeting** on this. Appropriate length? All agreed it should be short, basically the right length. Will return to this issue **next meeting**. Great surprise expressed at how quickly item was handled.
- Proposed workshops:** course descriptions were read out, where prepared, or offered, where not.
 - Alan O.'s "Conflict in Chiapas" course M 7-9 (some discussion of times and places of courses)
 - Gary's "Alternative Economics" course (connection with list from AR)
 - Craig's interests are in alternative economics, origins of capitalism and anarchism, economic theory. There is an Anti-Fascist education series (speakers, films, etc.) currently offered through Anti-Fascist Forum. Proposed course on history and analysis of Spanish Civil War. Recap here about Orientation session, course plans, etc.
 - Stu— "Wild Plants of Toronto" (for food & medicine)
 - Chris' "Art of Living Seminar"
 - Allan A. & Luis' "Art, Anarchism, Culture" course R 7:30-9:30
 - Michael's Dance and Anarchism course (participating in existing dance groups, then talking about experience, as well as some history)
 - Ben's "Intermediate Spanish Conversation" group and "Contemporary Theory & Revolutionary Politics" course9 proposals, to be finalized at **next meeting**. There were also some suggestions made: (1) to photocopy initial common reading for Orientation session; (2) to keep minutes/summaries of course meetings— possibly to get some kind of publication out of the course (up to course members)— at least get some overall documentation of the project.

IMAGE CREDIT

Anarchist Free School Minutes (1999), Luis Jacob

From Forms to Formations: A Conversation with Luis Jacob

Toronto-based artist Luis Jacob makes work that often connects disparate points, with social, political or material themes. While he may be best known for his *Album* series, where he assembles and laminates found images that share formal or conceptual concerns, he has also demonstrated a sustained interest in collaborative projects that foster intimate, informal communities. This is evident in his past work with the February Group—a collaboration with Adrian Blackwell, Cecelia Chen, Christie Pearson and Kika Thorne—where they gathered 66 abandoned mattresses from around Toronto and laid them out in Nathan Philips Square to protest the homelessness and dispossession caused by the Conservative government's municipal amalgamation. An expansive, participatory installation, the act of laying out the mattresses in the square transformed the function and use of the public space.

Jacob's later installation *Anarchist Free School Minutes* (1999)—the focus of this interview—explores a similar approach to community-building. It was motivated by his role in the founding of a free school in Toronto, which followed democratic and anti-hierarchical principles. In the anthology *Anarchist Pedagogies*, Allan Antlif, who was also a co-founder of Toronto's Anarchist Free School, writes that anarchists approach education as a "site of critical reflection" that prefigures the horizontal organization of communities that those critical of a stratified society strive for.¹ Jacob's installation includes the documents—or 'minutes'—that record the discussion that took place in meetings where the free school was developed, as well as a reading area that features contemporary zines and other print material from local anarchist groups. The Agnes Etherington Art Centre subsequently acquired the installation, and Jacob has stated that each time the work is exhibited the gallery must source new anarchist print material for the reading area. This has the added effect of supporting anarchist info shops and other alternative organizations in the future, with the installation's growing collection of material offering an informal archive of the evolution of anarchist communities.

MF: I wanted to start with the *Anarchist Free School* itself; if you can speak to how it developed, how it was structured, even what the experience was like.

LJ: I see it as a collective coming into formation: at first it was simply a group of people agreeing to get together; then it morphed into a collective with a shared project, a set of shared ideas. The idea developed that once the Anarchist Free School was launched—at the first meeting—the organizing group would dissolve. The people who showed up at the first free school meeting would be the Anarchist Free School.

[It continued] for a long time completely run on a volunteer basis. It was very active. Often there'd be 5 or 6 classes a week, and each class could go for 4 months. We had, I think, two or three semesters of a class almost every day, for three years. It was kind of amazing.

For me, this idea of the free school connects with my understanding of artist-run centres. Obviously artist-run centres are not necessarily anarchist organizations, but the idea of self-organizing something that you feel you need in your community is definitely part of it.

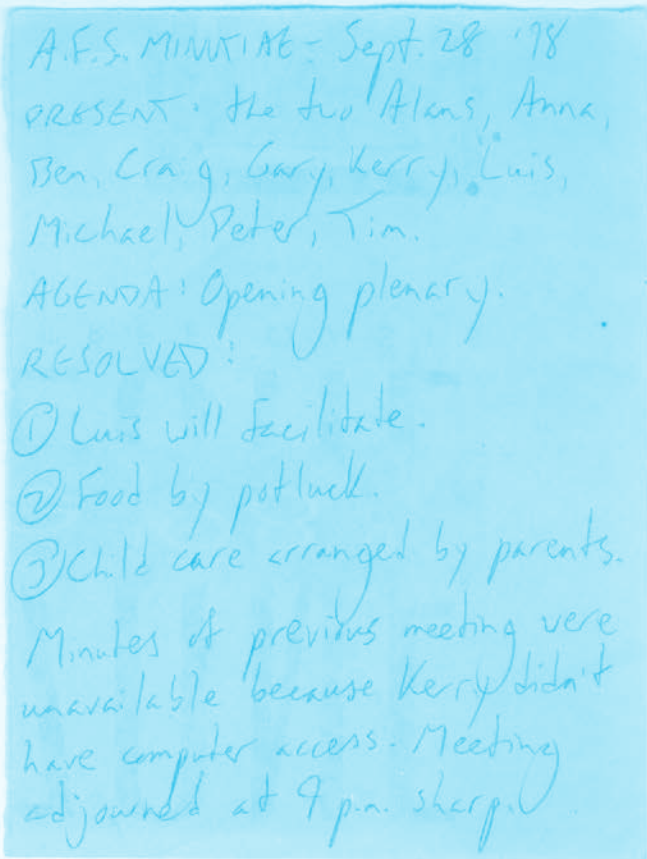
MF: I think it's frankly telling the Foucault dedicates a fair bit of his book *Discipline and Punish* to the origins of our education system; can you speak to this relation between academic institutions, the disciplines they entail and how this relates to broader disciplinary regimes?

LJ: Education in general is intended to inculcate you in the forms of organization of society. Of course you learn about a specific subject matter; if you study pharmacy, you are educated about the practice of pharmacy. But more generally, you are inculcated in hierarchic forms of organization—such as the relationship between student and teacher—that apply in the workplace, such as the relationship between employee and employer. Such things are taught not as explicit subjects or themes; hierarchies simply are how things run and you learn to adopt these forms unconsciously. These are as much a part of what is learned as the subject-matter is.

I was thinking about that notion of education, which happens almost at two levels; as the subject matter of the topic that you are attending the class to learn; and the unconscious subject matter, which has to do with organizational principles that are most frequently hierarchical. These are the unconscious things that we end up learning: identity, our role in society, what we can expect in terms of freedom of movement, or lack of freedom of movement.

Within the meeting-minutes, you really see people asking: What do we mean by 'anarchist'? What's anarchist about what we are trying to do? Is it a matter of black and red badges, or does it have to do with other things? What does it mean to have a 'school'? And what's a 'free' school? Given that most of us, who have gone through a normal education system, expect education to be hierarchical, and if anarchism is about questioning hierarchies, then how do you do a school according to anarchist principles? How do you enact a non-hierarchic education? Obviously there's no simple answer to that.

As I see it, the project is as much about organizing courses as it is a group of people trying to figure out how to relate non-hierarchically with one another. If you're working with a group of people, it's very easy to go on the 'default setting' of hierarchic relationships. How would you avoid that? That's as much a part of the *Free School* as the classes were: the process of figuring out how you would do that.



MF: You've mentioned that you would like the installation to act as a guide for initiating similar projects; I was wondering what kind of response the work has generated and what your sense of its reception is.

LJ: That work has been exhibited three or four times, and every time it has been exhibited in university galleries. It was produced for an exhibition at the Art Lab at Western University. Then it was exhibited at the Agnes Etherington [Art Centre] at Queen's [University]. It was also exhibited at OCAD University. I love that its exhibition history takes place in the context of educational institutions. In that sense I think of the work as a kind of counter-model. Not that I think in such clear black-and-white ways about the difference between anarchist free schools and, say, Western University—but I do think it's interesting to present a model of a different way of doing something inside of a place that has its own ways of doing something.

For me it's important for students and young people to be able to see pieces like that, to sustain the idea that if you need something and you don't see it around you, then you can start it. Just that basic do-it-yourself idea is something that has to be constantly reiterated, otherwise it gets forgotten. There's always a risk of people seeing their role in terms of the question, "how do I plug into what already exists, how do I get my foot in the door and plug in?" It's understandable, we all have to get our feet in the door to participate in whatever we are trying to do—I'm not knocking it—but to me if that's the only possibility we see then it's very disempowering. Once again, it's that hierarchy: you see something, and then you see yourself as outside it, trying to get in; you are constantly asking the people inside, "how do I get in? Please let me in?" It's a subservient position.

If you saw yourself as someone who is able to initiate something—as well as plug into something—then I think it's simply a more empowered position. It's important to have those conversations, especially around young people.

MF: I appreciate your installation fostering these networks, and showing zines brings attention to that.

LJ: I'm just speculating, but it'll be interesting to see—thirty years from now, if the piece is exhibited a few times—if you can actually look at the archive of zines that the work has accrued, and almost 'read' how the priorities of activism or anarchist discourse has evolved over time. There might not even be zines thirty years from now, for all we know, and that'll be an interesting part of how the piece will have to evolve as well.

ENDNOTES

- Allan Antliff, "Afterword," in *Anarchist Pedagogies: Collective Actions, Theories, and Critical Reflections on Education*, Ed. Robert H. Haworth (Oakland: PM Press, 2012) 326.

Information and Exchange: Educational Structures in *Neighbourhood Spaces*

Nadja Pelkey

Neighbourhood Spaces was a two-year long socially engaged and community arts residency program in Windsor, ON. It was conceived through a partnership between Broken City Lab (BCL), which had worked extensively in Windsor to create opportunities for partnerships between socially-engaged artists and community groups, Arts Council Windsor & Region (ACWR) and the City of Windsor through the Cultural Affairs Department. Funded through a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, The Collaborative—as they referred to themselves—laid out a structure for the residencies and agreed on how each member would support the program. BCL would assist with selecting artists and advising, ACWR became the administrative hub, and the City of Windsor worked to ensure access to spaces and groups. Artists were invited to spend 4-6 weeks in Windsor and collaborate with a community or group, having indicated where they would like to work in their application. As there were no established models for this type of residency or partnership, *Neighbourhood Spaces* became a social lab of sorts with program aims fluid enough to accommodate a range of projects and practices. The stated goals were: to engage in collaborative and community arts practice; to expand opportunities for residents and visitors to interact and connect with the arts; to facilitate neighbourhood participation in community spaces; to provide an opportunity for local and national artists to develop and expand their practice in meaningful ways within new communities and environments; and to encourage civic participation, creating a pride of place.

PROGRAM PARAMETERS

4-6 weeks is a very compressed timeline for establishing a relationship and collaborating with a community organization; in a non-residency context, this labour is a large part of the process, and therefore the work is carried out by the artist. In this case however, *Neighbourhood Spaces* used a Program Coordinator to make initial connections and agreements in accordance with the resident artist's project and the capacity of the community or organization hosting the residency. Administration was structured in some cases to clear through bureaucracy and introduce the concept of working with artists to unfamiliar places with no previous experience. The Program Coordinator acted as both an agent of the artist and a representative of The Collaborative / program. The added benefit of this was that it created a network of local spaces in Windsor with a central contact for future programs and projects—effectively opening up previously inaccessible spaces for artists to engage. A kind of collaborative infrastructure emerged in Windsor as a legacy of the program.

EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES IN NEIGHBOURHOOD SPACES

Rather than directly addressing pedagogy in relation to the projects carried out by the *Neighbourhood Spaces* residents, I would frame their engagements in terms of information and exchange. I would further categorize the project into three subcategories: *Solicitation*, where the artists worked in the community as an aggregator of stories that were then reflected back through some other media; *Community Sourced Research*, where the artist's interest was engaging community members as researchers in order to recover a lost history or reimagine a future; and *Workshops*, where the artists assumed more traditional roles, if only to subvert them.

“...socially engaged art takes the language of critical pedagogy, liberation theology, pragmatism, and other like schools of thought in order to alter the role of the artist.”

Pablo Helguerra, *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials*

and *Techniques Handbook* (New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011) 89.

SOLICITATION

The program encompassed three approaches to information and exchange. For some projects the engagement gestured towards larger implications of working with marginalized communities like the residents of a care home, or the migrant farm worker population in Leamington, located in rural Southwestern Ontario. In both instances the artist directly solicited the community.

For *Intercambio de Recetas/Recipe Exchange* Arturo Herrera set up a mobile collection office (his car festooned with colourful bunting) and asked workers to give him a recipe for something they cook for themselves while working in Canada; this would lead into a conversation about how they feed and care for themselves as they are tending and harvesting foreign crops, while remaining largely invisible to the general public. The responses (some recipes, some statements, some evocations) were then compiled and published with copies of the book available in resource areas as well as local libraries.

In *Wellness Radio*, Zachary Gough set up a short-range radio station in Huron Lodge long-term care facility and asked residents to co-create the programming with him. In a laundry room on the second floor Zach set up a table with a microphone and a laptop. Residents, employees, volunteers and families were free to come in and play a song, tell a story or a joke or just have a conversation with Zachary. He would also meet residents in their rooms if they didn't use the shared spaces. Three segments were edited together from recordings Zachary made and broadcast over CJAM, a community radio station during the month that he was there. Audio is available at: <http://acwr.net/our-programs-services/ns/wellness-radio/> In Ariana Jacob's work there was little formality to the exchanges she solicited. Curious about how people think of and talk about work, Ariana set-up in the Tecumseh Mall food court and spoke to whomever happened to sit near her. She also spent time at the unemployed help centre speaking with job seekers getting skills training.

Parts of conversations became the material for a series of screen prints, a document of what she heard when asking Windsorites about work.

COMMUNITY SOURCED RESEARCH

Both Camille Turner and Dan McCafferty used research in a more explicit way. Camille had intended to create a sonic walk centering around the history of the African American community in Windsor as an endpoint of the underground railroad. Upon arriving in Windsor, however, she discovered that much of the information she was looking for was not there; it was not in the community museum, and not in any way that was explicitly available. Camille set out to make connections and learn, and as she termed it “organize and activate citizen researchers.” In order to illuminate some of the uncomfortable history left out of the dominant narratives of the settlement of Windsor, it was necessary to reach out and ask people to examine their family's own histories and roles in the making of this place. At the NS Symposium, Camille worked with people who had been invited to create a performance with some of the texts that were discovered.

Dan McCafferty worked in the Ford City neighbourhood on Drouillard Road where he rented a storefront space and invited residents to come in and imagine new possibilities for the neighbourhood. *Drouillard Library* became a space to catalogue the desire residents had for their community. Informal meetings saw residents play with maps and interact with large format prints of overhead views of the streetscape replete with the sections hollowed out by an economic downturn and stigma the neighbourhood carries for being surrounded by industrial zones.

WORKSHOPS

Of nine residencies only two held traditional workshops. Emily Davidson, an artist from Halifax, NS, whose primary interests are in labour and printmaking, approached her residency with a curiosity about how the legacy of Windsor's industrial and labour history affects creative workers. She produced the bookwork *Let's Work Together: Conversations with Windsorites on Art and Labour*, which followed weeks of interviews and roundtable discussions with local artists and community members about contemporary labour. She was hosted by the Windsor Worker's Action Centre and worked closely with them to reach their membership. Emily also spent time working to improve facilities at a local artist-run printmaking space, Windsor Printmaker's Forum. She held two “Print & Propaganda” workshops in letterpress and silkscreening, which educated participants about the history of agitprop while giving them the opportunity to learn some technical skills.

Amanda White, who addresses the relationship between humans and plants, had previously graduated from the MFA program at the University of Windsor; as such, she had a greater understanding of Windsor than most other residents. Amanda created a plant adoption service at the Downtown Windsor Farmer's Market with the support of the Market's Coordinator, Steve Green. Amanda rehomed unwanted plants, each was given a name and biography, and prospective homes were vetted by Amanda and her assistant. The exchanges allowed her the opportunity to make connections, and she in turn created a series of plant and food centered workshops open to the public.

At a youth centre, for instance, Amanda invited a local chef to teach members of a parenting group how to make baby food with kitchen equipment available from the dollar store. At a social housing complex, Amanda invited artist Lydia Burggraaf to make a pie using an apple variety that is no longer commercially produced and mostly unavailable. Amanda's position was effectively to locate someone with a skill or interest to share, and then facilitate and promote the event. Her position as an artist was often obscured, and participants weren't necessarily aware that they were participating in an art project.

In each of these categories there is an educational model employed as a structure for engagement, with the artists assuming or obscuring various roles within that particular model (facilitator, instructor, collaborator) in order to provide a framework for the project. In *Neighbourhood Spaces* much of the formal structure was provided by the residency, which artists were also responding to in terms of the length of projects, and the communities accessible to them. In short term, Social practice may be indivisible from pedagogy by virtue of the need to create parameters for engagement and exchange.

Neighbourhood Spaces culminated in a three-day symposium where community stakeholders, artists, and the public were invited to participate in discussions and activities around models and outcomes for social practice. A publication was created and is available through the Arts Council Windsor & Region.

Nadja Pelkey is an artist, writer, and cultural worker in Windsor, ON. In 2008 she earned a BFA from the University of Windsor and in 2010 an MFA from the University of Guelph. From 2013-2015 she coordinated the Neighbourhood Spaces Artist in Residence program. She has contributed catalogue essays, review and criticism to both regional and national publications including Laura Madera's upcoming exhibition at Robert McLaughlin Gallery, *The Angle of the Suns Rays*. In 2014 she was nominated for the Ontario Premier's Awards for Excellence in the Arts by senior artist nominee Iain Baxter&. She is currently the Photo Technician and Director of the Emerging Artist Research Residency at the University of Windsor.

Silkscreen Power

Mary Tremonte

Community Print Shops vary in scale, structure and access, but share a common philosophy in making the tools and processes of printmaking accessible to a wide audience of participants. This includes those without traditional access to technical art making processes, as well as those who haven't attended a post-secondary institution for art. They may exist in spaces that are shared for another use, such as a library or community center, or even an artist-run printmaking studio that includes community access as part of its programming.

I have experienced working in community print shops in Pittsburgh/Braddock, Pennsylvania (Artists Image Resource and the Braddock Neighborhood Print Shop), Providence, RI (AS220 and the Dirt Palace), and Halifax (The Anchor Archive/Inkstorm Silkscreen Collective), as well as various DIY setups that were more private or more ephemeral. I volunteered for many years with Artists Image Resource (AIR), first as an intern during my undergraduate study in the late 1990s, and later reconnected through working in the education department at the Andy Warhol Museum.

Artists Image Resource (AIR) is an artist-run, nonprofit printmaking studio whose purpose is to integrate the creation of fine art printwork with innovative educational programs that explore the role of the artist in contemporary culture.¹

AIR was founded in 1996 by Bob Beckman and Ian Short, former professors at Edinboro University, and hosts annual open house fundraisers where visitors can try their hand at various forms of printmaking with hands-on activities, but it wasn't until 2004 with the inspiration and energy of staff member Heather White that hosting a weekly open studio took shape. For a nominal fee of \$5 per screen and \$1 to \$3 for transparencies, visitors gain access to screen printing equipment, but also learn the process of design and printing, with generous assistance from AIR's rotating team of volunteers. The impact of AIR's Open Studio program on the visual and cultural landscape of Pittsburgh cannot be overstated. It fundamentally changed the aesthetics and scope of gig posters, band merchandise, street art, activist graphics and more, by making the silkscreen printing process more accessible. Twelve years in, Open Studio now happens three times a week, with Wednesday evenings' Youth Open Studio reserved for teens and tweens, and staffed by teen employees of the Warhol (with adult supervision). Participants in Open Studio also assist and advise one another, so that the print shop becomes a model and exercise in horizontal learning that is enacted week to week and adapts with the needs of volunteers and participants.

...the print shop becomes a model and exercise in horizontal learning...

The Braddock Neighborhood Print Shop has a much different creation story, housed in the Braddock Carnegie Library, in a third storey space formerly designated as a boxing gym next to the still-active basketball court. The Neighborhood Print Shop is a project of Transformazium, an artist collective whose ethos is to identify and expand resources within the heavily disenfranchised communities of Braddock and North Braddock. Much has been written about Braddock in the past ten years, its Harvard-educated social worker-turned mayor (look it up!) and attempts to uplift a community disenfranchised by capitalism through an influx of artists and environmentally sustainable businesses.

Transformazium is the collaborative art practice of Dana Bishop-Root, Leslie Stem and Ruthie Stringer, a group of friends who moved from Brooklyn to Braddock in 2007 at the behest of their friend Calledonia Curry, also known as Swoon, an internationally-renowned street artist who had exhibited in Braddock and was charmed by the promise of cheap buildings and the potential to create a transformative community arts space for residents. This being a very long-term project, and Transformazium members being committed to social change and justice, they looked to ways to get to know their new neighborhood, to take root and enact a prefigurative transformation of resources in the here and now, while working toward the long term change of renovating a very old church with minimal financial support.

The Neighborhood Print Shop utilizes resources of underutilized equipment and space, the former from Dipcraft, a fiberglass company based in nearby Rankin, the latter an unused area of the very first library that Andrew Carnegie ever built as a philanthropic gesture toward his steel workers (rather than improving actual working conditions). The library was built in 1888 as a recreation center with a music hall, billiards, a basement bathhouse, swimming pool and athletic facilities, in addition to books and other resource materials for study and leisure. After a long history of use, defunding, and community-driven reinvention, in 2008 the library was open but held a lot of space that was underutilized. Transformazium was able to renovate a former boxing gym into a cozy silkscreen studio, using unused silkscreen printing equipment from Dipcraft's former balloon manufacturing. The Neighborhood Print Shop works with the Braddock Youth program and hosts local artists-in-residence, while also providing a weekly open studio, that is free to residents of Braddock (plus minimal supply fees) and \$5 plus supplies for non-residents. This structure speaks to both the need for accessibility and also to prioritize local residents.

On a much smaller scale, the Inkstorm Silkscreen Collective was born in a spare bedroom at the Anchor Archive (now the Roberts Street Social Centre), which grew from the individual zine collections of two NASCAD graduates and housemates, Sarah Evans and Son Edwardly, in the North End of Halifax in 2005. I visited the Anchor Archive as an artist-in-residence for their Shed Residency—literally sleeping in a tiny shed out back that was converted into a guest room—in September 2008, and taught a workshop at the Inkstorm in multiple color registration, while also working on a personal zine project.

The Inkstorm offers regular introductory workshops as well as memberships, so that interested participants can learn the process and then continue to print as an active member of the collective. The Anchor Archive eventually shifted in name and intention to the Roberts Street Social Centre, to encompass the zine library, silkscreen studio, the People's Photocopier and public event space. By the time they had to leave the space on Roberts Street due to landlord renovations (read: gentrification), the house no longer held regular tenants, but rather was an ever-morphing community center, adapting to the needs of its users. The components of Roberts Street have moved around over the last few years, and at last check all are currently housed collectively as Radstorm.

These are but a few examples of my own knowledge and experience with community print shops. Speaking from my current perspective as a resident of Toronto, a city rich with multifaceted arts cultures and opportunities, the gap in access to silkscreen printing is a glaring omission in the ecology of artist-run activities. While long-running artist-run spaces such as Open Studio and Punchclock exist², they function as member-driven studios without the open studio component that I experienced at community print shops, for those who are not members but may just want to try the process without a major investment of paying for a class or workshop. Community print shops provide access for experienced and novice printers alike, with various levels of engagement with the process. Programs such as Sketch and the Oasis Skateboard Factory teach silkscreen printing with an entrepreneurial bent to 'at-risk' youth, allowing for practical and socially-engaged applications of the technical process, and these programs do provide an important access point rooted within an anti-oppression environment. The more general gap in services for those who may not demographically fit into these programs may speak to the economic conditions of Toronto, an increasingly expensive and gentrified urban space, where artists (as well as all residents) face economic precarity due to a variety of factors related to neoliberalism, to real estate speculation and ever-rising rents.

When the hustle just to get by is so overwhelmingly present, how can it be sustainable to devote the time and energy necessary to facilitate not-for-profit arts programming without the structure of artist-run centers or support of federal or provincial funding? When rents are prohibitively high, how can the costs of running a space be sustained while maintaining economic accessibility? It is more challenging to connect the dots of underutilized resources, particularly when the most precious and finite resource of all—space—is at such a premium. In such an environment it feels ever more urgent to pool resources and build these connections for one another, to create shared spaces of a commons based on common cause, on mutual aid and need and perhaps a shared ethos, rather than a singular identity. In writing this piece my aim is to share possibility models with a hope to expand our consciousness of what we may achieve together in our own locales, acknowledging our current conditions while cooperating and coming together to ask new questions of what we may achieve collectively.

- <http://www.artistsimageresource.org/about/> - Accessed 20/05/2016
- For an excellent article about Punchclock by Toronto artist-designer-activist Ryan Hayes, check out Signal 04, a journal of international political graphics and culture, edited by Alec Dunn and Josh MacPhee. Available from PM Press and Justseeds Artists' Cooperative

Mary Tremonte is an artist, educator and DJ based in Toronto via Pittsburgh. A founding member of Justseeds Artists' Cooperative, she works with printmaking in the expanded field, including printstallation and interactive silkscreen printing in public space. Mary has exhibited, presented lectures and workshops, and performed in Toronto, throughout the United States and internationally. Through her work she aims to create temporary utopias and sustainable commons through pedagogy, collaboration, visual pleasure and serious fun.

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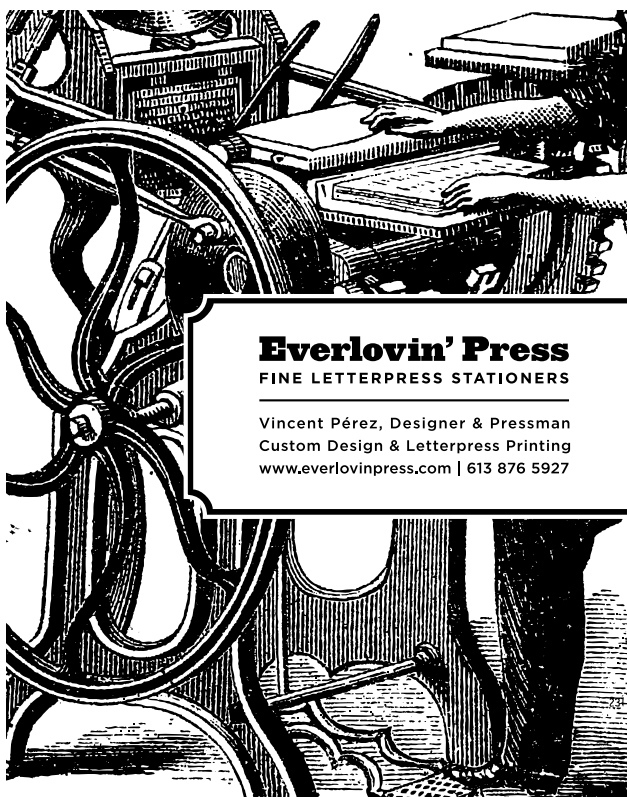
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