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SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

Archiving Artistic Processes in Evolving Relationships

Xueyin Chen

Master's Programme in International Museum Studies
School of Global Studies
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

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Supervisor: Professor Stuart Burch

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the institutionalization of artistic processes, particularly in the forms of the archive and the art museum. It is argued that artistic processes are complex, varied, and involves many factors. The archive and the museum, armed with the task to preserve valuable records for society, are also participants of artistic processes, while at the same time contributing to the symbolic value of the objects they hold as they feed their interpretations to a passive audience. Yet as artistic processes enter the archive and the museum, the role of the institution is downplayed and recorded separately from the work of the artist, with the artist being a common organizational principle of artistic processes. The material aspects of works are privileged in the archive and the museum, while processes, especially those that didn't result in material productions, are seldom discussed. It is argued that the emphasis on the role the artist rather than that of the institution; and the focus on the materialized works rather than immaterial processes, benefit the institution as it excludes the institution's role and what it marginalizes. This thesis then discusses the recent development of conceptual art, information society, as well as changes of the art museum's role from a bourgeoisie enlightenment project to a site of reflexivity and criticism, which is now expected to provide the service of artistic critique for productivity in a Post-Fordist society. It is argued that these developments force the art institution to adapt to immaterial aspects of artistic processes; at the same time, the art museum must also renegotiates its relationship to the artist and the audience. The artist and the audience can now push existing institutional boundaries, yet at the same time can be institutionalized themselves, functioning as infinite extensions of the museum. In this instance, artistic processes provides an opportunity to connecting different realities, given that the art institution goes beyond a site of aesthetic discussion and serves instead as a node with its role rooted in reflexivity and criticality. The act of documentation and archiving, must not become a tool to cut off the vitality of operability of the artistic process, but rather provide a site where official narratives are connected with other realities.

Keywords

Museology, museum studies, archive, documentation, contemporary art, conceptual art, institutional critique

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the institutionalization of artistic processes, particularly in the forms of the archive and the art museum. Through these explorations, I intend to critically reflect on the limitations of existing institutional structure and highlight challenges art institutions are faced with when archiving artistic processes. Relationships between the artist, the institution and the audience will be analyzed. Recent developments in art practices, institutional practices as well as the emergence of the society of information will also be examined to provide a backdrop for my discussion.

My inquiry for the topic began with my internship at Baltic Art Centre in Visby, Sweden in Fall 2011. One of the tasks I had was to develop working methods for organizing the center's institutional memory. For an art institution that puts artistic processes in the center of their activities, the question of how to archive artistic processes inevitably came up. I started looking to other art institutions which also work with archiving artistic processes, and came across a range of projects from public art museums to online archival platforms. It seems that the topic is becoming increasingly relevant to art institutions. Yet despite growing interests in archiving artistic processes, during my preliminary research, I discovered that not many studies have been done on the field. Among the studies I found so far, most take on a pragmatic approach to provide specific solutions to answer the question of how to archive artistic processes. Eager to gain more understanding of the context surrounding artistic processes and their institutionalization, I decided to use my master's thesis as an opportunity for further investigation.

As a starting point, I began my research with questions concerning artistic processes, such as what happens in artistic processes? Whom do they involve? These explorations are included in the chapter "Artistic Processes". The next chapter, "Archiving Artistic Processes", is concerned with the structure and functions of the archive and the museum, and what happens to artistic processes after they enter these institutions. Specifically, I will explore why art institutions are interested in artistic processes and what forms artistic processes take within an institutional setting. Looking to theoretical reflections of the archive, I assume the position that institutional structures are limited with their ability to represent artistic

processes, and that these structures are political. I will also attempt to establish the links and relationships between the artist, the institution and the audience in these discussions. These reflections will lay the theoretical groundwork for my thesis argument.

As my research progressed, it became apparent that with the conceptual turn in art practice in the 1960s, and the emergence of the information society, the relationships between artist, institution and audience have entered into a period of renegotiation. Artistic processes link all three roles together, and processes had been used as one of the means to challenge institutional structure. The art museum is faced with a paradigm shift in these evolving relationships. In Chapter 3, "Recent Developments", I will loosely group together developments in art practices, institutional practices as well as the wider society. Among the topics discussed include the rise of conceptual art and its aftermath, institutional critique and its institutionalization, changes of the *raison d'être* of art institutions in the context of late-capitalism, the emergence of the society of information and in particular the Internet platform. This chapter functions as literature review to establish a present day backdrop against which institutional responses will be analyzed. Chapter 4 "Institutional Responses" will consist of examples and case studies I collected to analyze institutional responses to the developments mentioned in Chapter 3, "Recent Developments". I will discuss the utilization of process pieces to fill the void left to the art museum by artistic practices of immaterial works; how works that heavily emphasize immaterial processes, such as installations, performance art and new media art, pose challenges for museums; I will also discuss the renegotiation of relationship between the artist, the institution and the audience brought by these changes. Documentation strategies developed by institutions will be discussed in a number of case studies. And finally, I will conclude with a summary of identified challenges to critically reflect on the limitations of existing institutional structures in archiving artistic process, and attempt to propose some adjustments for institutions to adapt to in light of these developments.

This thesis is theoretically informed by institutional critique. Information criticism is also used in my discussions of the society of information and its impacts. Not having had extensive education in either field prior to the start of the thesis, I do not intend to claim expertise, and rather hope that with these theoretical tools, I can expand the existing discourse on archiving artistic practices and involve fellow colleagues into these discussions. In order to gain an understanding of institutional practices and their developments, I turned to

online research, site visits and interviews to form case studies. Discourse analysis also informs my analysis. The information I collected was then analyzed through the theoretical lens. Due to funding, time and geographic constraints, the information I collected come from limited sampling. All of the museum institutions I discussed are either from Europe or the United States. I was also not able to do extensive research on any particular institution and its historical developments, but rather have to rely on theoretic analysis to gain an understanding of recent changes. Despite these apparent limitations, it is my hope to bring the information I managed to gather to my fellow colleagues and engage them in the discussion of archiving artistic processes in the contemporary context.

ARTISTIC PROCESSES

Before we start engaging in discussions on the institutionalization of artistic processes, it is necessary to spend some time with the notion of ‘artistic process’ itself. Despite the wide range of discussions involving artistic processes, I have not been able to find a definition of what artistic process is. The art history canon seems to privilege the material product of an artwork, rather than the process embedded in it, despite the emphasis on processual aspects of art production in the art academy setting. Yet artistic processes seem to fascinate many. Leonardo Da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa*, for example, has gone through quite a few rounds of X-ray, infrared scans, and speculations, to provide information about the process behind its creation (see CNN, 2007, Austen, 2006, and Gray, 2010). The BBC’S John Tusa, in an effort to explore creative processes, interviewed acclaimed artists in various fields from painting, music, poetry and theatre (2004). Composer Elliott Carter, describes his artistic process to Tusa as “A sense of disastrous confusion” (Tusa, 2004, pp. 87-105); While curator David Sylvester, speaks of “Somewhere between prayer and sex.” (Tusa, 2004, pp. 241-257) Tusa, after his series of interviews, concludes that most artists’ work process involves repeated rejection. He writes:

Very few artists go straight from the idea to the execution, though one instance of doing so exists in this collection. Most reach their end by repeated addressing of the problem, whether on the canvas, the poet’s notebook, or the composer’s score. Some attack the work almost physically, finding the resolution of the problems through the elimination of earlier attempts. Some continue to revise work even after it appears to be completed. All are looking for that understanding of rightness, that revelation of personal truth, which represents their own essential guide to when a work is complete. (2004, p. 10)

Determining when the process ends and an end product begins, can be a line very difficult to draw, especially if the works are time-based, immaterial, process-oriented or involve more roles than that of the artist. We will examine some the complexity involved with these works in greater detail later. For now let's take a time-based work by artist Andrea Zittel as an

example. Zittel began creating her work series *Six Month Uniforms* in 1991 as a response to the social dictate to wear a different change of clothes every day (Zittel, n.d.). While one may say that the artwork itself consists of Zittel's day to day life in the time period when she wore each of the uniforms, is it really clear that this period of time was not also part of Zittel's artistic process, whether for the particular uniform that she was wearing at the moment, or for the next uniform she was about to create? "Working on and completing a particular work is not just an end in itself, a moment of particular conclusion." Tusa continues to speak of the creative processes of his artist interviewees, "The activity of making one work opens up possibilities for what is to be done next." (2004, p. 11) Not to mention, not all processes necessarily lead to a material product. Even projects that are unrealized could involve processes behind them.

Another aspect to be considered is that artistic processes do not always manifest themselves "on the canvas, the poet's notebook, or the composer's score" as Tusa noted above (2011, p. 10). In my early training to be a graphic designer, I collected folders of images and texts over the years and refer back to them as I worked on different projects. Collections, it seems, contribute to not only myself, but also many other artists' creative processes. The pin board is a common tool. Other collections, just to name a few examples, can include disparate objects such as embalmed animals and a mandrake root in the shape of a person, found in the collection of Surrealist writer André Breton (Putnam, 2001, p. 12); or masks, among other African and Oceanian objects, found in the collection of Pablo Picasso. (see Stepan, 2006) Curator James Putnam, argues that "...artistic collecting is very different form that of the hobbyist or the 'serious' collector and it has a distinct character which links it to the creative process." (Putnam, 2001, p. 12) He then points out, with examples of Max Ernst, Kurt Schwitters, Hannah Höch, Claes Oldenburg, Daniel Spoerri, Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely and Arman, that "In the twentieth century artists may actually use the things they collect as an integral part of a work" (2001, pp. 12-14).

Whereas canvas, notebooks, scores and collections are all tangible, not all aspects of artistic processes are captured in material forms. Rejections and fleeting thoughts aside, the processes of research and decision-making are often times not meticulously recorded. In the fall of 2011 when I was working at Baltic Art Center in Visby, I had the opportunity to assist artist Ibon Aranberri with research for a project that he is developing. There were site visits, archive visits, library visits; we watched films and talked to a range of people. Yet other than

some site photographs and archive reference records, there were not much traces of the research trips that were recorded.

Not to mention, in addition to sketching, composing and researching, the role of the artist often involves other forms of labor, especially in our contemporary situation. Theorist Sven-Olov Wallenstein comments that in a late-capitalist backdrop where the political economy of the sign constitute our normality, much emphasis is placed on the commodity as sign or 'brand' (Wallenstein, 2006). Drawing from Lawrence Wiener's claim, Wallenstein argues, "As our societies increasingly take their lead from the service industry, art itself often appears as a kind of 'social service' – an action undertaken in order to produce a psychological state, influence a situation or a set of social relations, rather than to produce an object to be judged on the basis of taste" (ibid.). He then relates this development to the role of the artist. Wallenstein comments:

If we relate this to the way in which the artist-institution complex changes, then one of its effects would be the incorporation into the role of the artist of other functions - administration, pedagogy, marketing, consulting, etc...(2006, p. 118)

One 'service' that artists nowadays often provide, closely resembles the work of a curator. In previous paragraphs, I discussed that many artists hold their own collections. Some of them even integrate their collection into their artistic processes. But the artist's curatorial role is hardly limited to curating his/her own collection. With the rise of institutional critique, artistic practices can now be used as a critical method, questioning the art institution – mainly art museums, galleries and collections. The framework of the institution in critique was later expanded to include the artist's own role. With practices such as artistic works, interventions, critical writings or political activism; institutional critique has since become a common occurrence within the institutional framework (Sheikh, 2006). Curator and critic Simon Sheikh wrote, "Both waves [of institutional critique] are today themselves part of the art institution, in the form of art history and education as much as in the general de-materialized and post-conceptual art practice of contemporary art." (2006) Artist Fred Wilson, for example, worked with museum collections and existing exhibitions to highlight museological issues such as ownership, cultural heritage, taste, privilege and racial stereotyping. While

artist Andrea Fraser examined educational practices in museums with performative, interpretative and interventionary tours (Putnam, 2001, pp. 98-100).

In addition to the complexity and variety of artistic processes, another issue to consider is the players involved. The conception and production of an artwork, it seems, is often attributed to the artist and artist alone. Certainly, we have long been aware of the existence of the artist's apprentice or the modern day version - the artist's assistant. Yet it seems almost all artworks are credited to the artist and the artist only. Tusa wrote about the “fundamental loneliness of the artists’ work” in his discussion of the creative process:

For the process of making, painting, writing is, by and large appallingly lonely. While some artists - sculptors in particular - need studio technicians to do the physical and technical labour, most work alone. No one else can endorse or confirm what they are doing, though occasionally friends or critics can play a marginal part in the process. But the artist is driven by a strong sense of the direction in which he or she should go (2004, p. 9).

While I do not doubt the crucial role the artist plays in his/her artistic processes, I would also like to point out that artistic processes can involve many other participants than the artist, and at times it can be difficult to clearly distinguish who plays the creative role. In the academy setting, group critique is commonplace – sociologist Sarah Thornton documented in great detail the group critiques in Michael Asher's 'crit' class at the California Institute of the Arts, where students discuss each other's works at length (2008, pp. 46-49). Student-artists often work in the same space, or in close proximity to each other. While not all are equally eager for other’s opinions, in my own experience of being a design student and later a graphic designer, many artists and designers seem to adapt the critique practice in their work routine and frequently seek discussions with colleagues.

Even when an artist works solo, creative decisions in his/her processes could be affected by others. When photographer Eva Arnold, one of Tusa's interviewees, was asked about her work process to photograph Margaret Thatcher, Arnold clearly pointed out the roles Thatcher and her publicist, Gordon Reece, played in influencing the photograph. According to Arnold, at the beginning of her photography assignment, Thatcher would tell the photographer where to stand. Arnold was not producing good photographs as the light

was not flattering Thatcher. Later as the deadline of the assignment approached, Reece – Thatcher's publicist, suggested to Arnold that she should show Thatcher ‘in the footsteps of Churchill’ by placing Thatcher next to a statue of Churchill, made by sculptor Oscar Nemon who was a friend of Churchill. Arnold agreed and produced the photograph, and commented on Thatcher's role: "...she [Thatcher] looks the way she wanted to look. I just followed her lead." (Tusa, 2004, pp. 26-27)

In fact, curators, art dealers, and even the artwork's audience could all play an important role in artistic processes. Curators have long been interpreters of artists and their works. In recent years, with the rise of institutional critique and particularly site-specific and relational aesthetics works, there has been an increase in curator-artist collaborations, where the work of the two roles can be highly integrated. Art critic and curator Jan Verwoert wrote about the new division of labor in the art field with the conceptual turn of art in the late 60s, and argues that the role of curator and artist now closely resemble each other (Verwoert, 2006, p. 132). While Gill Park, writer and curator, discussed collaboration models between artists and curators. (Park, 2008) Writing in the context of conceptual art as a movement from institutional critique, art historian Benjamin Buchloh famously (and not without controversy) noted the production of ‘an aesthetic of administration’ in art production, as a result of conceptual art responding to “the rigorous and relentless order of the vernacular of administration” (see Sheikh, 2006, Buchloh, 1990).

In addition to curators; art dealers and gallerists often maintain close and long-term relationships with artists. They can influence artistic process directly through commissions of artworks, or dialectic exchanges with the artist; or indirectly via framing and packaging of artworks and artists in a symbolic economy. Economist Don Thompson listed an anecdote of a gallerist encouraging and funding an artist to spend lavishly, so that the artist could develop an expensive taste (Thompson, 2008). While this case is hardly commonplace, it is difficult to deny the influence gallerists and curators could have on artists and their works. Sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu has done much work to reconstruct social relations behind art and cultural practice, which he believes to be often obscured by essentialist concepts of art and the still dominant charismatic vision of the artist (Johnson, 1993). Bourdieu argues, such ‘charismatic’ ideology directs attention to the *apparent producer* – the author [artist], and suppresses ‘the question of what authorizes the author, what creates the authority with which authors authorize’. Bourdieu suggests that the art trader, who bears prestige and invests in the

author's cause, in fact works as a 'symbolic banker' and brings in symbolic value to the work (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 76-77). Drawing from Bourdieu and using collaborations between artist duo C+L and museum director Lars Nittve as examples, researcher Stuart Burch points out that "a work of art is produced by the field and its various go-betweens/agents." (Burch, 2011, p. 23, see also Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 76-77)

Other than the producer/commissioner, an artwork's audience, while often perceived as passive viewers, or limit their activities to "private moment of engagement" in the museum, in recent years have also become increasingly integrated with artistic process (Paul, 2006). The rise of conceptual art, especially relational aesthetic works and Internet art, combined with audience participation strategies, have made the role of the audience an important part of the work. I will unpack this phenomenon in greater details in Chapter 3.

With the paragraphs above I hope to have established that there are many variables that contributes to artistic processes, and it is difficult to trace and account for every single person and factor that affect the processes of art production. Yet there is another development that must also be considered – namely the role of the artist, or the 'creative agent', has become an increasingly popular and common role, adapted by curators, institutions and ordinary people alike.

In his analysis of the new division of labor in the art field with the rise of conceptual art, Verwoert uses the exhibition statement from Søren Grammel's 1969 exhibition *When attitudes become form*, and points out that the roles of the artist and curator are now defined in identical terms, as exhibition becomes an art form in its own right, with the ability to overwrite the participating artist's position. Verwoert further argues that "this strategic re-definition of the role of the curator modeled on the contemporary transformation of the role of the artist...not only led to the emancipation of the curator as a cultural producer but effectively also turned curator and artist into competitors." (Verwoert, 2006, p. 133) Verwoert also draws from Charles Esche's "Temporariness, Possibility and Institutional Change", arguing for understanding the art institution as a creative medium, "as an experimental device through which ideas are formulated, tested and assessed", while at the same time acknowledging the people outside of the art institution - the artists and visitors, who shape the institution and bring in a source of creativity (2006, p. 137).

To further expand the notion of the artist, theorist and art critic Boris Groys suggests we could look beyond the professional artist - art consumer model, and view all of us who live in the contemporary life as simultaneously an artist and an artwork ourselves. Groys argues that as we learn to live in a state of media exposure, we must also learn to produce artificial personas (Groys, 2010a, p. 15). As everyone is now subjected to an aesthetic evaluation, everyone is then required to take aesthetic responsibility upon him/herself (Groys, 2010a, p. 41). Through such process of self-design, the whole of social space is turned into an exhibition space, in which the individuals appear both as artists and self-produced pieces of art (Groys, 2010a, p. 34). Groys' analysis is particularly relevant with the emergence of the information society and the increasing popularity of the Internet. I will return to this discussion at Chapter 4.

ARCHIVING ARTISTIC PROCESSES

In the previous chapter, I discussed some of the complexities relating to artistic processes. In this chapter, I will explore why and how artistic processes are archived through both examples and theoretic analysis, as well as discussing some opportunities and consequences.

Modernity, through the organs of the archive and the museum, has placed quite an emphasis on preservation. *The Archivist Code* developed by the National Archives and Records Administration of the United States (NARA), for example, begins with “The Archivist has a moral obligation to society to take every possible measure to ensure the preservation of valuable records, not only those of the past but those of his own times, and with equal zeal.” (NARA, 1955) While the International Council of Museums (ICOM), defines in their *Code of Ethics* that museums are entities that “preserve, interpret and promote the natural and cultural inheritance of humanity.” (ICOM, 2004) While both the archive and the museum are expected to take on preservation tasks, there are also differences between these two organizations. The museum, as shown above, also carries a function of 'interpretation', leaving much room for the variation of content it develops and houses. While the archive, on the other hand, does not seem to be encouraged with the freedom of 'interpretation'. According to the aforementioned *Code*, the archivist “must protect the integrity of records in custody...must guard them against defacement, alteration, or theft.” (NARA, 1955) Another difference is that while the archive is mainly concerned with record keeping, the museum traditionally conducts their work around objects (see example of differences between the Smithsonian and the National Archive, discussed in NARA, n.d.) In the case of art museums, such objects are often artworks. Although according to ICOM, museums are “responsible for the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage.” (ICOM, 2004) In the case of preserving artistic processes, both record keeping and tangible objects are used for the purpose of preservation, as I will demonstrate with examples in the following paragraphs. Hence, within this thesis, I will use the term "archive" loosely to examine concepts and practices relating to both the archive and the museum.

But why archive artistic processes?

The act of archiving, judging from the *Codes of Ethics* above, is explicitly linked with material or immaterial forms that are *valuable*. Are artistic processes valuable? If they are valuable, then for what reason? In my experience, the art history canon seems to place heavy emphasis on the material products of art production – artworks, so too, do the art market and most art museums. Process, if discussed, is often used as an anecdote that accompanies the material product, explaining the birth of a masterpiece so-to-speak, with the emphasis placed on the masterpiece and the artist behind it. Sometimes artistic processes are explained from the angle of techniques, serving to help the audience understand how a particular artist works, or is used as an organizing principle to group together a school of artists or styles.

The BBC's John Tusa, interviewed fourteen artists working with various disciplines to explore their artistic processes with the goal to gain an understanding of creativity. In explaining his motives, he writes:

As we planned these interviews...We had no belief that a group of such widely varied artists could be forced into a conforming set of patterns and we had no interest in trying to create patterns where none existed. Every interviewee was approached because of the intrinsic interest of his or her work, and because we believed that they had something to reveal about themselves and how they worked. They would not have been the artists they were if they had not been utterly individual and distinct. (Tusa, 2004, p. 5)

In other words, Tusa's interest in artistic processes is organized around the role of the artist. He also seems to believe that artistic processes can provide a key to understanding artistic excellence.

In the previous chapter, I attempted to show the complexity behind artistic processes. When artistic processes enter an archive, however, limits and structures start to appear. Among the archives and museums that deal with artistic processes, many take an approach similar to Tusa's, as 'the artist' seems to be a main point of interest and a common organizing principle.

To understand why and how art institutions archive artistic processes, where's a better place to look other than the institutions themselves? Let's begin our exploration with an example from New York's Museum of Modern Art, Pablo Picasso's painting *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)*. The famous painting was acquired by the MoMA in 1939, and is described by the museum as "one of the most important works in the genesis of modern art" (Museum of Modern Art, 2004, p. 64). In "The Collection" section on the museum's website, a series of text and audio relating to *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* can be found. While most of the information focuses on aesthetic analysis of the work, artistic process is also occasionally discussed. The *Gallery Label Text* of the painting, for example, mentions sources such as Iberian sculpture, African tribal masks, and El Greco's painting, from which Picasso drew inspiration. It also mentions Picasso's decision to eliminate a figure of a medical student on the final painting (Museum of Modern Art, 2010a). These narratives all feature Picasso as a central character, with emphasis placed on the decisions he made.

More detailed discussions of the painting's process is found in the painting's conservation website. As *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* went through conservation processes over the years, a website was created by the MoMA to communicate these processes. It includes information on the painting's condition, past restoration processes, and the conservator's analysis, which was informed by archival research and technical analysis of the painting, as well as by consultation with the museum's curatorial staff (Museum of Modern Art, 2003). Similar to the information on the painting's aforementioned webpage from "The Collection" section of the museum's website, many of the processes discussed here on the conservation website centers around the artist as well. It mentions how Picasso prepared the canvas, what he did on preparatory studies, and how he executed the painting on the large canvas (Museum of Modern Art, 2003). Yet on the conservation website, other characters also start to appear. For example Leo Stein, a friend and early collector of Picasso's work, who could possibly have had the painting treated (ibid.); Doucet, who bought the painting; and Charles Chapuis, a reliner, who re-stretched and possibly restored the work (ibid.). The museum's role also starts to rise to attention – first via Alfred H. Barr, Jr, MoMA's first director who persuaded the museum's trustee to acquire the painting (ibid.), and later via a string of conservators, along with their researches, X-rays, infrared examinations, relining, cleaning, and retouching (ibid.), bringing different impacts to the work. While one could argue that these processes may not be part of the artistic process of the painting, they unarguably brought physical changes to the work, and required the museum's laborious

efforts. The work *Les Femmes d'Alger*, did not stay still after it left the hand of the artist, but rather exists as a flow that undergoes changes brought to it by various people and factors.

At the MoMA, other than a collection of art objects, a separate archive also exists. It contains sound and video recordings, administrative papers, as well as research files, clippings, reviews, writings, correspondences, and other materials, generated by both departments and staff inside the MoMA, and similar collections of materials by selected outside organizations and individuals. There is also a group of restricted records, containing information such as the Bank Books, Committee Minutes, Trustee Minutes, General Counsel Documents, and the like (Museum of Modern Art, 2012). Among the items featured in the MoMA's archive, there is a hand-drawn chart by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., founding Director of the museum, illustrating the development of modern art. This working draft would eventually lead to a final version that was published on the jacket of the catalogue for the exhibition *Cubism and Abstract Art* at the MoMA. Barr's papers collection at MoMA's archive contains nineteen document boxes of material concerning Picasso, including notes, printed matters, photographs, exhibition and book proposals, as well as lecture and symposium notes on Picasso, among which contains a folder dedicated to *Les Femmes d'Alger*, and correspondence with *Time* regarding the painting (Museum of Modern Art, 2006). The MoMA's archive is a place where one could find traces of artistic process that are not centered around the exhibited artist and his/her works, but are rather of the institution and its staff's creative and administrative efforts, much of which contribute greatly to the symbolic capital of works the museum holds.

Let's examine another art institution as a case study. When Walker Art Center's Brooke Kellaway responded to my email interview, answering my questions regarding the Walker's interest in archiving artistic process, she linked such interest as keeping in line with the organization's mission statement: "to engage audiences with artists' creative expressions", and "to better the presentation, interpretation, collection and preservation of artists' works". Kellaway also states the audience's interests as one of the reasons why the Walker is interested in artistic process (Kellaway, 2012, pers. comm., 11 April).

According to my conversation with Kellaway, the Walker's archives store artists' correspondence and sketches, media documentation of their works at various stages,

interviews and related notes, curator's research, and so-forth. The Walker's registration department maintains files for every work in the collection – each including installation notes and an artist questionnaire that is sent to artists during each new acquisition. Some of these documents, such as the contents inside of exhibitions, performance and film files are sent to the archives; while installation notes and artist questionnaires are inserted into registration's files. Interviews and research published in print catalogues and on the website are also documented, as well as documentation of public programs such as artist lectures or workshops (ibid.).

While most of these materials are organized with the artist in the center, some material, such as the curator's research, installation notes, questionnaires and interviews also involve the work of the museum. Kellaway acknowledges the Walker's role in archiving artistic processes. She points out: "It [The Walker] provides context; influences interpretation; illuminates or obscures a historical moment; and may lead to new discoveries that affect the presentation or preservation of the work." (ibid.) Here, the artist's works and the museum's own are articulated to be clearly separated – with the artist as the creator, and the museum as the presenter. While the Walker staff also undertake a creative role – programming and curatorial works are two areas that Kellaway pointed out as reflecting the organization's creative efforts (ibid.) – they are documented on the museum's website, separate from the collection, the registration's files and the archives.

Even though artistic processes – whether an artist's or the museum's – are sometimes researched and documented in the institution, neither the MoMA nor the Walker focuses primarily on artistic processes. This is often the norm with art museums, where emphasis is given to the material product of an artwork, and processes are often discussed only in relation to materialized objects.

There are however, institutions that focus mainly on processes. Architecture museums and Public Art museums are two prime examples – even though their focus on artistic processes might not have started as an active choice, but rather occurred as a reaction to cope with their limitations. Consider the following statement by Denmark's KØS Museum of Art in Public Spaces (Museum for kunst i det offentlige rum):

Just as a museum of architecture does not collect finished buildings, KØS does not collect finished works of art – those belong in the public sphere. Instead, the museum collections comprise more than 7,000 drawings, models, and other preliminary works for these unique works of art. (Museum for Kunst i Det Offentlige Rum, n.d.)

Artistic process is a central element for KØS Museum of Art in Public Spaces. To gain an understanding of how artistic processes are archived and presented at KØS, I visited the museum in April 2012. A stroll through the museum's exhibition halls grants the visitor access to a variety of process pieces, such as a model to Copenhagen's famed statue *The little Mermaid*; detailed sketches by artist Bjørn Nørgaard for the tapestries he made for Denmark's Queen Margrethe II; thread samples used to produce the aforementioned tapestries by Paris' Gobelins Manufactory, to name a few examples. In the museum's exhibition *Kom og leg* — which translates as "Come and play", playgrounds and their creative processes were discussed. The exhibition featured several designers and their projects, showcasing relevant sketches and models – in some cases comparing what was proposed to what was realized. Yet also included in the discussions were economic problems, as well as conflicts between the municipality and the artist's ideas.

Among art institutions, the Public Art museum such as Denmark's KØS Museum of Art in Public Spaces, presents interesting opportunities for studies, as it must respond to the expectation of public record keeping, in addition to serving as a site for aesthetic discussions. In order to further understand how artistic processes are represented and organized in such a setting, I visited another public art museum – the Skissernas Museum of Public Art (also known as the Museum of Sketches) in Lund, Sweden.

Began as Archives of Decorative Art in 1934, the Skissernas Museum was founded by University of Lund's Professor of Art History Ragnar Josephson with the intention to “establish an archive of the creative process, or the path of the artist from the first idea to the finished work” (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012d). Skissernas Museum's current curator Malin Enarsson describes artistic process as “where an artist’s creative development of ideas emerging [sic], with the outcome not decided in advance” (Enarsson, 2012, pers. comm., 10 April). The archive was first located at the university’s Department of Art History, with the aim to collect sketches, models and

photographs of Public Art (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012d). Processes of both realized and unrealized works are presented in Skissernas' collection (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012c). Over the years, the archive grew with donations, gifts, competition proceedings and acquisitions, and moved to the new premises at the university's former Teacher's Academy in 1941, when it then became a museum (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012d).

The Skissernas Museu's website states that it consists of three main collections – the Swedish, the Nordic and the International (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012a). Its permanent exhibitions are organized into "The Swedish Hall", "The International Hall", "The Mexican Hall", and "The Sculpture Hall" (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012c). According to the museum's staff, around 10% of the collection are on display, where series of sketches for individual works are exhibited so the visitor could follow the creative process “in the birth of an artwork”. If the artwork is realized, the museum also shows the specific environment the artwork is in with a photograph (Enarsson, 2012, pers. comm., 10 April). I was able to visit the museum's storage, where the rest of the museum's collection is contained. The museum's store follows another organizational system. Objects are first placed in different rooms according to medium: paintings, sketches, and models; then under each of these mediums by artist name. As a result, an artist can have different works in different parts of the storage.

In addition to collection storage, the museum also hosts a separate archive and a library. The archive consists of illustrations and article cuttings from newspapers and magazines, letters, photographs, slides, as well as materials related to public art – specific decorations, artists information, debates, and competitions, including the Museum's own curriculum and exhibitions over the years (The museum of sketches - archives of public art at Lund university, 2012b). While the curator or director acquires sketches models and other objects for the collection, the museum also has an archivist, who searches for articles, books and press that are related to the artists and projects in the museum's collection. The archivist would also obtain correspondence information if it is shown in the press – often due to public debates, or from public legal files if legal matters are involved. The museum is currently working on a digital database. Once completed, the database will be able to link information together from both the collection and the archive – pictures of models, sketches, articles and

newspaper clippings, grouped by artist. With the introduction of this digital database, the museum is no longer limited to only aesthetic discussions, but can involve a wider social context, and more perspectives other than that of the artist.

In addition to working with these process documents, the Skissernas Museum itself seems to also have creative impact on the artist's work. Enarsson commented that in the process of exhibiting their works and process pieces at Skissernas, artists have an opportunity of closely examining their working processes, and can develop questions that otherwise may not have come up. She comments, "I think you [as an artist] become more aware of different options and alternative solutions." (Enarsson, 2012, pers. comm., 10 April)

With all the complexity surrounding artistic processes, it is difficult for museums and archives to represent every single detail related. Hence, questions arise such as what do these institutions archive, how do they archive artistic processes, and what are the consequences of these decisions. Critic and theorist Fredric Jameson questions the language of representation itself. Using the example of the first globe and mercator projection, Jameson speaks of the incapability of these inventions to represent the world we live in. Drawing from Marx, Jameson argues that it is not that the world is unknowable, but rather *unpresentable*. One finds a gap between our existential experience and scientific knowledge (or in Lacan's terms, 'abstract knowledge'), and it is ideology that fills this gap while articulating these two dimensions (Jameson, 1991). As museums and archives struggle with representing the entire picture, ideology and power structures, functioning through institutional validation and exclusion, prevail.

The museum is said to confer on objects an aura of importance and authenticity, endowing what is presented with a sense of significance (Putnam, 2001, p. 24). This could be said of artists as well as their works presented in museums, as often their values increase the moment they enter a museum collection. Sociologist George Dickie claims that the existence of the work as 'art', is due to its being appointed to the status by agents who are situated inside the art world (Wallenstein, 2006, p. 120). It has been argued that an object's status rests with the framing of the museums (Putnam, 2001). The art museum, along with its staff, director and curator, is certainly an agent which could appoint a work as 'art' while framing how art production could be understood. Legitimizing and explanation are sometimes done via the tool of description. Art historian Michael Baxandall in his work *Patterns of intention:*

on the historical explanation of pictures, speaks of the utilization of description. Baxandall argues that if a picture is presented, a description functions to point out or characterize its interest, rather than to inform (Baxandall, 1985). As museums and archives work to document artistic processes, they function to characterize points of interests: the artist's research, studies, techniques and decision-making processes. This validates the artist's role while providing these points of interests to the museum audience.

As museums and archives characterize points of interest for the viewer, they also create a structure of meaning where artworks and processes reside. Art critic and theorist Rosalind E. Krauss points out that by placing art in the museum, works of art were cut loose from referentiality as they moved away from their original significance and function (Krauss, 1986). At the same time, the museum creates meaning and structure for the artworks it houses. In her discussion of the inner working of the modern museum, Krauss points out that via classification - and the spatial arrangement that corresponds to such classification, different centers are formed in the field of meaning. Each artistic form has something to say (by museums and art historians), which become linguistic branches – and later styles. Artworks then find a place in the museum within this meaning model (ibid.).

In a larger social context, it has been argued that the archive is linked to memory on one hand (for future generations), and authority on the other. The linguistic root of the word archive, points to the Greek word *ἀρχή* (*archē*) – which means rule or order. While etymologically the word comes from ancient Greek *ἀρχεῖον* (*archeion*) – referring to a government building and places of residence of a reigning king Archon, where important state documents were placed and stored under the supervision of an administrator (Lahoda, 2010, p. 35). Philosopher Jacques Derrida sees the archive as a "privileged topology where law and singularity intersect". The Archontic power, Derrida argues, gathering functions of unification, identification, and classification, is paired with the power of consignment, which aims for all elements to articulate the unity of an ideal configuration (Derrida and Prenowitz, 1996). Derrida then points out the political nature of the archive:

There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation. (1996, p. 4)

Philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault argues that the archive governs what is said or unsaid, recorded or unrecorded. He has compared the study of the archive to the practice of learning about the past through its material remains. Through his analogy of the archive with archaeology, Foucault discerns "an underlying structure governing the thought systems and values of any given society, in relation to its own people and others. Thus who determines, and what conditions enable, a history to be written depend upon the definition of the archive." (Merewether, 2006, p. 11, See also Foucault, 1969)

Theorist and critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak performed an excellent exercise that wonderfully corresponds to Foucault's theory above. Spivak looks to the archive to explore how the idea of India has been created "as a proper name and as fiction that inscribes its colonial history" (Merewether, 2006, p. 16, See also Spivak, 1985/99). Spivak argues that the "misreading" of this "fiction" produced the proper name "India" (ibid.). Although Spivak mentions that the Indian case can not be seen as representative of all countries, nations, cultures and the like, she also points to the necessity of such caution (1985/99). Spivak argues that in so far as the archive has been designated by "hegemonic nineteenth-century European historiography" as "a repository of fact", those facts need to be read. The archival records of soldiers and administrators construct "an object of representation", or a "construction of a fiction whose task was to produce a whole collection of 'effects of the real'". Spivak then uses these reflections to point back to the legal and juridical role of the archive as composed of evidential traces of that which has taken place, and raises the question of who constructs the archive, which she asserts in this case are those in power (Merewether, 2006, p. 16).

Just as Derrida, Foucault and Spivak investigate the power structure behind the archive, plenty of others have done work to reveal the power structure behind the museum and the art institution. Art historian Carol Duncan, in her work "The Art Museum as Ritual", points out that the control of a museum requires the control of the representations of a community and its highest values and truths (Duncan, 1995, see also English, 2007); while Curator Nina Möntmann links the art institution to the bourgeoisie in the context of modernism. She writes:

The art institution as an education and enlightenment project embodied the ideals of the bourgeoisie and served to educate and confirm aristocratic values.

Freedom in this case was the freedom of thought, always and primarily from economic pressure...the bourgeoisie was given a public forum that again supported its own legitimacy. The bourgeoisie demonstrated its own distinguished lifestyle in art institutions. And those who could not participate in this in their everyday lives would at least scrape together some crumbs of education in the art institutions. Any critique of these hegemonic value policies is closely connected with a critique of Modernism. (2006, p. 8)

Artist Hans Haacke, through his works of institutional critique, directs the viewers' attention to corporate sponsorship of the arts and makes apparent the exchange of symbolic and financial capital behind the museum structure. Haacke points out that the aura that the museum carries is not only illusory, but used strategically by institutions - both the museum and the corporation - to maintain their power (English, 2007).

Archiving artistic processes, then, present interests to me as it does not only provides traces to a particular artist's working methods, but also the information on how institutional structures surrounding artists and their works function. I have discussed how the archive and the museum characterize interests and establish legitimacy for the artist and the artist's works. Yet, despite the variety of forms and strategies used by museums to capture artistic processes, the heavy emphasis on the finished, material works over the not-materialized effectively eliminate information on what the institutional structure excludes and suppresses. The audience is encouraged to focus on the role of the artist and their excellence, while the role of the institution is downplayed or even invisible.

Furthermore, as museums and archives, serving as interpreters, center their works around the figure of the artist, a notion of the 'sole creator' is established that enables separation of the artist and the surrounding institutional context, while generating symbolic capital for the artist's brand. As some of the cases I discussed above demonstrated, creative and administrative processes by those other than the artist – even though sometimes an important part of the artistic process – are often separately recorded, if recorded at all. Through seemingly objective systems of archiving, meaning is created surrounding the notion of the sole creative genius, in which the institution is portrayed not to be a part of. In validating the artist's role, the museum also gains symbolic capital. As critic and theorist Boris Groys points out, "There is no doubt that any public persona is also a commodity, and

that every gesture towards going public serves the interests of numerous profiteers and potential shareholders” (2010a, p. 17). At the same time, as museums and archives boast such power to legitimate and validate, this can cause artists – at least those longing for institutional recognition – to become dependent upon the museum and archive system.

While it is tempting to propose counter structures in response to hegemonic power structures such as that of the modern archive and the museum, it is also important to consider what power structures these counter narratives could produce. Political theorist Chantal Mouffe calls for the recognition of “the hegemonic nature of every kind of social order and the fact that every society is the product of a series of practices that attempts to establish order in a context of contingency.” Mouffe further points out that every order is political and based on some form of exclusion, as “there are always other possibilities that have been repressed and that can be reactivated.” (2008, p. 8)

Can we then, look to reactivate other possibilities? And is it possible to reactivate these other possibilities without creating a new hegemonic structure? I found some thoughts from New Delhi's The Raqs Media Collective encouraging. The Raqs Media Collective performed their own exercise with authoritative documents by working with First Information Reports – a type of official document created by the Indian police force (Raqs Media Collective, 2003). The collective argues that these reports produce “images and representations that are well organized, persuasive, and that conform to the approximation of truth from the perspective of power” (Merewether, 2006, p. 16, see also Raqs Media Collective, 2003). Yet the Collective also points out, “just as the FIR can be read as a statement by power about the world (and to the world), it is also always vulnerable to counter readings, to being prised open, and connected to other ‘documents’ or other realities, and to be made to reveal the inner logic of power.” (Raqs Media Collective, 2003, p. 171)

It is the possibility of connecting official narratives to other realities that I believe presents opportunities. In the next chapters, I will discuss some recent developments within and outside the archive and museum structures – namely the changing expectations on the art museum; the rise of conceptual art and institutional critique; and shifts that are happening as we enter the society of information. I will then investigate the responses to these recent developments in institutional structures, and explore what difficulties and opportunities are presented.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

CONCEPTUAL ART, INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE AND THEIR INSTITUTIONALIZATION

In the previous chapters, I explored the complexity of artistic processes, as well as why and how artistic processes are archived in an institutional setting typical in a modernist context. In this chapter, I will discuss some recent developments in the art field as well as the wider society, namely the rise of conceptual art and institution critique, changes of the *raison d'être* of art institutions in the context of late-capitalism, as well as the emergence of the information society and in particular the rise of the Internet. In the next chapter, I will explore how these developments relate to the archival practices of artistic processes, and how institutions respond to these developments.

While drawings, paintings, and sculptures dominate the collections of many art museums, since the 1960s there has been a wave of radical questions in the form of artistic practice that confronts the structure of the aesthetic institution (Wallenstein, 2006). The 'conceptual turn' of art departs from the traditional artistic forms of drawing, painting and sculpture – objects that could be bought and sold, and instead focuses on ideas that can be owned by everyone. By depriving aesthetic institutions of tangible objects, conceptual art attempts to revolt against the symbolic capital built upon these objects (ibid.).

Critic Jan Verwoert interprets the conceptual turn as active re-negotiations of the parameters of art production and presentation by different parties. Verwoert argues, by propagating the dematerialization of the art object and exploring alternative media, sites and publics to stage works; conceptual art, land art, performance art or Fluxus in their respective ways addressed and expanded the conventions of how art is produced and presented (2006).

As art went through the conceptual turn in late modernism, the art institution itself also saw changes in its relationship to the wider society. Curator Nina Möntmann argues that as the bourgeoisie loses its social influence, the traditional art institution has lost its peer

group, which has thrown it into a crisis of legitimation (2006). Paul de Bruyne and Pascal Gielen offer to analyze art in the backdrop of post-Fordist production process, and point out that politics now requires the arts to reciprocate economically while also solve social problems (De Bruyne and Gielen, 2009).

In an adaptation to such expectations, the art institution now on one hand provides symbolic value for economic circulation; while on the other facilitates a space for self-reflexivity and self-criticism to re-negotiate social relations.

Curator and critic Simon Sheikh points out, the art institution, once an exemplary bourgeois public space, is nowadays finding itself in a difficult transformative phase, where its historical role– the caterer of taste and reason – has become obsolete, without another critical role being apparent, or without another constituency emerging, other than commodity exchange within the experience economy and the society of spectacle (Sheikh, 2008).

Critic and theorist Rosalind Krauss attempts to work out the cultural logic of the late capitalist museum by examining Minimalist art. She argues that when museums respond to the art market, not the mass market, this situation resembles a dealership, and not an industry. Yet as generalized capital penetration occurs to all sectors through standardization and specialization, museums, too, will head in the direction of industrialization. The industrialization of the museum requires them to break up merged, entrepreneurial roles, such as that of the curator, and instead push specialized roles. It requires increasing technologization and centralization of operations at every level; it requires the museum to fashion itself after the industrialized area of leisure, dealing with mass markets rather than art markets (Krauss, 1990).

Many of these requirements are already being met. Artist Andrea Fraser writes in detail how museums increasingly “run in a businesslike fashion”. Fraser lists examples of how museums are increasingly influenced by corporate culture; including modeling staffing structure in museums after corporations by creating a centralized power; receiving gallery sponsorships and showing artists represented by these galleries; exhibiting clothing labels; and even modeling physical space for event programming in order to attract sponsorship, donations and sales (Fraser, 2006). Symbolic capital of the museum is indeed well in circulation.

Yet, at the same time as museums reciprocate economically, the criticality brought about by the rise of conceptual art has also become increasingly absorbed by the art institution, providing it a new *raison d'être*: producing solutions to social problems in the institutional setting.

Political theorist Chantal Mouffe points out how artistic critique functions as a productive element in late-capitalism. She argues:

...The aesthetic strategies of the counterculture: the search for authenticity, the ideal of self-management, the anti-hierarchical exigency, are now used in order to promote the conditions required by the current mode of capitalist regulation, replacing the disciplinary framework characteristics of the Fordist period. Nowadays, artistic and cultural production play a central role in the process of capital valorization and, through 'neo-management', artistic critique has become an important element of capitalist productivity.' (2008, p.7)

Theorist Sven-Olov Wallenstein maintains that many of the critical ideas from the 1960s, while still in existence, are by now in a 'digested' form. Wallenstein argues: "...they have become the backbone of a new type of official institutional discourse, where self-reflexivity and self-criticism are what provides the art institution with its very source of legitimacy." (2006, pp. 114-115) He further concludes that as our societies increasingly take lead from the service industry, art also starts to appear as some sort of 'social service', serving the purpose of producing a psychological state, influence a situation or a set of social relations, rather than to produce an object to be judged on the basis of taste (Wallenstein, 2006).

The rise of institutional critique and its institutionalization provides an excellent example of how artistic practice and criticality becomes institutionalized. Theorist Simon Sheikh sums up two waves of institutional critique: the first wave, from the late 1960s and early 1970s, used artistic practice as a critical method to put the art institution – mainly the art museum, but also galleries and collection – to question; while for the second wave, from the 1980s, such institutional framework had been expanded the role of the artist (Sheikh, 2006). Yet Sheikh also clearly points out that both waves are today themselves part of the art institution (ibid.).

In the first chapter of this paper, I briefly discussed how artistic practice can become a form of service in the institutional setting; and how the curator and the institution increasingly play a creative role – at times in competition with the role of the artist (see also Verwoert, 2006). With institutional critique, both of these tendencies contribute to its institutionalization. Sheikh draws from Benjamin Buchloh's notion of “the aesthetic of administration”, and points out that institutional critique is now “literally being performed by administrative aestheticians” (see Sheikh, 2006, and Buchloh, 1990). This produces a contradictory situation where art institutions are both the “target and weapon” of institutional critique (Paul, 2006). In Jan Verwoert's analysis of the symbolic competition of the artist and the curator, he draws from Alex Farquharson and points out, the “absorption of discourse at the point of presentation” inevitably privileges the producer's own accounts of their productions and thus precludes its critical evaluation from an outside perspective (Verwoert, 2006).

Nina Möntmann observes that whereas other institutions, like civil services, parties and unions, have a direct mandate for political action, an art institution is expected to deliver and produce images or rather an ‘image’ of what is happening outside; to transform social and subjective realities into a format which we can handle and conserve, but not to interfere and take an active part in the production of social and political realities (2006). It is understandable why some critics, such as curator Christiane Paul, consider institutional critique now exists “as a clearly defined process in which institutions and artists validate each other through a critical engagement that does not result in more radical redefinitions” (2006, p. 192).

In the previous chapter, I argued that archiving artistic processes does not only provide traces to a particular artist's working methods, but could also reveal information on how institutional structures surrounding artists and their works function. With the rise of conceptual art, and especially institutional critique, creative collaborations between artists and institutions have deepened, and both roles at times become interdependent – in work process as well as content and symbolic value, fulfilling social expectations for art institutions by providing economic reciprocation and negotiating social relations. The institution's role thus should no longer be ignored in archival practices of artistic processes.

OPERATIONALITY

In the paragraphs above, I discussed some changes to art practices as well as art institutions, focusing on institutional critique and its institutionalization. There is yet another facet to the rise of conceptual art. As art practices increasingly take on forms that resist the structure of the aesthetic institution, artistic processes increasingly gain significance as they not only provides a foundation for interpretation and fills the void left behind by immaterial art productions; they have also now become a crucial aspect of art production utilized by conceptual art, to involve not only the artist and the institution, but also the audience.

Sociologist and critical theorist Scott Lash points out, that while Modern art works through meaning via the materiality such as color and texture, contemporary art works through ‘operationality’ via ideas. Lash observes that the work of conceptual art is characteristically unfinished; unlike Modern art that over values the position of the artist, conceptual art undervalues it, leaving the audience to finish the work – to contemplate and make sense of it. Lash further argues that the viewer is now no longer a passive recipient of the artwork and its interpretation; in conceptual art, the viewer becomes the user, and interpretation becomes code. Conceptual art works through the operationality of the viewer, as the viewer must put together the last bits of the artwork. The viewer, Lash points out, no longer interprets, but *does* (2002, p. 217).

Lash then draws from cultural theorist Paul Virilio, arguing that we live in a culture of the accident. Art in this sense, is an accidental byproduct of the idea – its side effect. Conceptual art is no longer art for the sake of art, but rather involves an anti-aesthetic, where aesthetic judgment and anesthetization (of image) disappear at the same time (ibid.). Lash notes that as the audience is now required to be part of the artwork to finish it – the judge is now in the position of operationality; there is no longer sufficient distance for judgment with indifference between the judge and the judged. Lash's writing here on conceptual art was written to provide an analogy for the analysis and critique the society of information. Sourcing from sociologist Max Weber's analysis of Modernity, Lash argues that where there used to be self-legislation in different spheres of modernity (with artists, economists, and doctors in different spheres, for example), conceptual art and the information society dissolve such differentiation into a general indifference. Hence, critique of information (and here I

will reverse Lash's analogy to also include conceptual art), is non-judgmental. It doesn't work through meaning, but through code, through operationality. In this context, power structures involve a politics of access to, control over and ownership of not meaning, but code – mode of thought (Lash, 2002).

SOCIETY OF INFORMATION AND RISE OF THE INTERNET

In the first part of this chapter as well as the last chapter, I explored institutional desires surrounding art and how some of these institutional structures function. The rise of the Internet has also been adapted quickly into these structures.

The Internet provides an important tool to answer expectations for the archive and museum to work with the public. *The Archivist Code* developed by The National Archives and Records Administration of the United States (NARA), for example, demands that “The Archivist should endeavor to promote access to records to the fullest extent consistent with the public interest...He should work unremittingly for the increase and diffusion of knowledge, making his documentary holdings freely known to prospective users through published finding aids and personal consultation.” (NARA, 1955) The International Council of Museums (ICOM), on the other hand, defines in their *Code of Ethics* that "museums have an important duty to develop their educational role and attract wider audiences from the community, locality, or group they serve." (ICOM, 2004) The Internet provides a convenient platform for increasing accessibility to the holdings of these institutions.

More importantly, the Internet also offers these institutions a solution that meets the expectations of a late-capitalist society. Curator Nina Möntmann points out that as the classically bourgeois institution becomes increasingly penetrated by corporatist institution logic, neo-liberalist management techniques begin to take place (Möntmann, 2006). Politicians and sponsors often work with a homogeneous, populist concept of the public, where visitors are seen as global consumers, and institutions are demanded to calculate their success with quantitative measures, such as visitor numbers. The Internet then provides not only global presence for the archive and the museum; with tools such as visitor counters and

Google Analytics, it can also provide detailed statistics, and even visitor demographic information, to politicians and sponsors.

While the Internet proves to be a useful tool and an attractive platform to fulfill the archive and the museum's mandate, it has also brought about a few significant changes. First of all, with its ability to digitally copy and distribute contents, the Internet changes the context in which the content is placed. In the previous chapter, I drew from Rosalind Krauss's observation that by placing art in the museum, art objects were cut loose from referentiality as they moved away from their original significance and function (Krauss, 1986). Krauss also observed yet another change of context for art objects as they enter the site of reproduction – through art books, postcards, and posters. Krauss writes:

In the second wave they [works of art] are, through their transplantation to the site of reproduction, unmoored from their original scale, every work whether tiny or colossal now to be magically equalized through the democratizing effects of camera and press (*ibid.*).

Krauss's analysis parallels that of cultural critic Walter Benjamin. Writing in the context of mechanical reproduction of artworks, Benjamin makes distinctions between an original artwork and its reproduction, pointing out that reproduction changes for whom the artwork is produced (Benjamin, 1939). The Internet, reaching further than photographic and print reproductions, creates a new context, and new structure, in which art objects and processes function.

In the previous chapter, it was discussed how the archive and museum characterize interest and create meaning for the objects they house. This information is then sent to the audience, who takes on a passive role on the receiving end of this information. The rise of conceptual art in the 1960s, discussed in the first half of this chapter, can be seen as resistance to, or re-negotiation of, such a model. It had been observed that contemporary art has become too broad to be contained inside museums (Putnam, 2001, p.190). The museum itself, sometimes working with the artist, has also tried to push beyond its own walls.

Curator James Putnam listed a few alternative institutional practices that responded to the static nature of an institution by linking to a wider network of urban sites. The Museum in

Progress, Vienna, for example, organized exhibitions that span a wide range of sites such as bus-stops, billboards, newspapers and television; while the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Ghent, as early as 1986, experimented with working with local families who allowed artists to create and exhibit works in their homes. The Experimental Programs section of The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, collaborated with a local commuter bus, the City Fire Department, sanitation workers, and a popular television soap opera for their 1997 exhibition *Uncommon Sense*. (Putnam, 2001, pp. 190-191)

Similar effort to explore the structural boundary of the art institution could also be seen in the working methods of Seth Siegelaub. In discussing the role of the creative agent, Jan Verwoert highlights Alexander Alberro's analysis of Siegelaub, a dealer and curator who from 1966 onwards presented artworks beyond conventional gallery spaces at salon-like gathering events in his own apartment and a club, Siegelaub also organized shows in public venues and publication projects from his desk. Alberro argues that Siegelaub adapted his practice to the flexible working method of the advertising agencies and courted corporate patrons and private professionals. By operating as 'a true avant-gardist' in the field of art presentation, 'it was Siegelaub, rather than the artists, who most thoroughly explored the specific operations of the institutional and contextual parameters that cordon off the work of art.' Alberro further describes the pole position Siegelaub came to occupy as 'symptomatic of a general shift', in which the dealer came to displace the critic as mediator in an art market of rapid growth, where "the validation of the work through the market thereby came to precede the classic authentication of the work through the critic." (Verwoert, 2006, p. 134)

The story of Siegelaub presents a classic case of renegotiation of roles and power structures in the institution of art. Similarly, as the viewer becomes an integral part of conceptual art, and the public an increasingly important measure for the success of a museum, it is only natural that the museum audience also participates in a renegotiation of symbolic value.

Designer and museum consultant Nina Simon has been an avid advocate for a paradigm shift in museums for a participatory model involving the museum's audience in a more active way. With her book *The Participatory Museum*, Simon aims to provide a practical guide "to working with community members and visitors to make cultural institutions more dynamic, relevant, essential places." (2010) Simon's works can be

interpreted as attempts to construct an institutionalized structure to involve the museum audience.

Critic and theorist Boris Groys also notes the recent efforts by artists and museums working in a participatory model involving the public. Groys links such practice with symbolic value in what he calls ‘the economy of sincerity and trust’. Groys argues that the modern artist has always positioned him/herself as the only honest person in a world of hypocrisy and corruption (2010c). In the contemporary world where self-design dominates (Groys, 2010b) and the political sphere is aestheticized (Groys, 2010c), Groys argues, “the effect of sincerity is created not by refuting the initial suspicion directed toward every designed surface, but by confirming it.” (2010c, p. 43) In other words, sincerity is achieved by proclaiming oneself to be bad. Trust thus functions through a ritual of symbolic sacrifice and self-sacrifice. Yet there is another subtler and more sophisticated form of self-design as self-sacrifice: symbolic suicide, committed as the artist announces the death of the author, presenting the artwork to be collaborative, participatory, and democratic, often times encouraging the public to join in. By forgoing individual authorship, such self-sacrifice is compensated within a symbolic economy of recognition and fame (Groys, 2010c).

Groys details how participatory art functions in such context:

...The artist produces and exhibits art, and the public views and evaluates what is exhibited. This arrangement would seem primarily to benefit the artist, who shows himself or herself to be an active individual in opposition to a passive, anonymous mass audience. Whereas the artist has the power to popularize his or her name, the identities of the viewers remain unknown in spite of their role in providing the validation that facilitates the artist's success (ibid.).

It is easy to see parallels between artists and art institutions in their engagement of such an ‘economy of sincerity and trust’. *The Archivist Code* developed by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) begins with “The Archivist has a moral obligation to society to take every possible measure to ensure the preservation of valuable records” (NARA, 1955); while the International Council of Museums (ICOM) defines a museum as “a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development”

(ICOM, 2004). Positioning themselves as moral entities in the service of society, both the archive and the museum depend on the symbolic value of being trust-worthy. Participatory practice can thus become a route through which museums gain symbolic capital. Yet similar to Groys' analysis, such participatory practice often takes place within an institutional framework with an institutional hierarchy – with the audience being part of a passive mass, responding to participatory terms set by the art institution, which then benefits from the recognition of symbolic sacrifice.

Yet the information society, and particularly the Internet, works in a different manner and could possibly provide a paradigm shift in the renegotiation of symbolic value between the museum and its audience.

In the “Operationality” section of this chapter, I sourced from Lash to discuss the audience’s role in conceptual art. The audience’s role in the information society is also discussed at length in Lash’s work. The global information order – which has come rapidly to displace the older national manufacturing order of modernism, Lash argues, is a ‘technological culture’. While previously culture works through representation, within the global information order, culture is now comprised of cultural objects that are in the same space as the user, who used to be passive but is now active. Lash argues:

Here previously existing dualism of technology, on the one hand, and culture, on the other, collapse into the same immanent plane. What previously was a representational culture of narrative, discourse and the image which the reader, viewer or audience encountered in a dualistic relation, now becomes a technological culture. Culture is comprised no longer primarily of such representations but instead of cultural objects as technologies that are in the same space with what is now less the reader, viewer, spectator or audience than the user, the player. (2002, p. x)

Furthermore, Lash points out that the global information culture witnesses a new autonomy of *objects*, which in their global flow tend to escape from the intentions, from the sovereignty of the subject. The objects here could be as varied as images, communications, finance (2002). The global information culture thus presents the opportunity for art objects and processes, traditionally housed and gaining their symbolic values in archives and museums,

via its reproduction and circulation, to flow beyond museum walls and into the hands of various users – who are now no longer a mere passive audience of the museum structure. While the museum audience cannot reverse the power hierarchy of the museum, and has yet to accumulate credibility and symbolic value comparable to that of the museum, in the information society and particularly on the Internet, the audience is in the same space as the museum, expanding the context beyond museum walls in which art objects and processes can reproduce and circulate.

New Media art, and particularly Internet art, has already taken advantage of the features of the information society and posed a challenge for the traditional museum structure to contain. In curator Christiane Paul's discussion of new media and in particular Internet art, Paul observes, New Media art seems to call for a “parallel, distributed, living information space open to artistic interference – a space for exchange, collaborative creation, and presentation that is transparent and flexible.” New media art, Paul points out, by its highly contextual and often net-worked nature, extends beyond the walls and structures of the museum and, at times, undermines the museum's very logic of exhibition and collection (Paul, 2006, p. 191). Furthermore, Paul observes, Internet art, which exists in its own potentially global exhibition space and does not need an institution to be presented to the public, poses an opportunity to bypass the institution (ibid.). Paul then draws attention to the tension between the alternative space of the Internet that resists traditional, physical models of ownership, copyright, and branding:

As an open system and archive of reproducible data, the Web invites or allows for instant copying, recycling, and recontextualization of information. These possibilities of instant reproduction have implications for both the understanding of the art object and the demarcation of institutional territory. (2006, p. 202)

I will explore the conflicts between Internet art projects and the art institution further in the next chapter. At the moment, I would like to direct the attention away from institutional structures and into opportunistic spaces that are created as a result of the Internet – the ‘digital commons’. As context expands with the Internet platform, the audience now able to play a more active role; public space can now be formed as a non-locality outside of geographic territories. Drawing from art activist and theorist Geert Lovink, Paul points out

that digital commons projects inhabit a “third space” between state interests and market forces. (2006, p. 206) Different from the public space of the archive and the institution, the digital common departs from the hierarchy model of authoritative interpretation, and in turn offers the construction of public spaces by and for the audience, who can now utilize reproduction of art objects and processes, and offer them directly to a new set of audience members. The Internet thus offers enormous opportunity for art objects and processes to operate, to be adapted into new interpretations, alternative modes of thinking and embedded in a variety of memories. New archives and collections could be constituted, interpreted and made accessible.

As promising as the Internet is, through its nature, the very feature that enables it to be a critical structure available for a wide range of users to create new context and new narratives, also brings its own paradoxical challenge, namely the lack of outside space for critical reflection. The notion of ‘outside’ has been addressed and discussed by both art practices and institutional practices, particularly pertaining to institutional critique. Analyzing the radical questions in the 1960s conceptual turn and its desire to step outside of institutionally defined spaces, Wallenstein draws from Robert Smithson – an artist known for his land art works and among the pioneers of the conceptual turn, and remarks that “the desire for any pure 'outside' was naive from the outset, and what in fact took place could just well be understood as the infinite *extension* of the museum.” (Wallenstein, 2006, p. 115)

Verwoert brought up similar problems as he discussed the increasing similarity of symbolic value, and competition over the claim to creativity, among artists, curators and critics. Drawing from Farquharson, Verwoert points out that the blurring of the symbolic differences between the inside and outside of the institution may lead to a loss of criticality and hence a flattening out of the art discourse (Verwoert, 2006).

In the society of information, the creative and critical roles can now be adapted by a wide base of users beyond the walls of the art institution. Not only can this situation then dissolve the inside and outside of the art institution, it also brings about a great degree of differentiation, which could dissolve into a general indifference. Lash points out the paradoxical nature of the information society: the simultaneous existence of differentiation and in-differentiation. Lash describes such paradox as “The simplest anarchic flux and the most complex differentiation at the same time. Homogeneity and heterogeneity

simultaneously. The greatest rationality *and* the greatest irrationality.” Lash maintains that such conditions make up the information order while at the same time, being its critique. Like conceptual art, Lash argues, the information society is reflexive and critical. It is a reflexive critique of its own conditions of existence. As we enter the global communications flows we can no longer step outside of it to find a solid fulcrum for critique. The critique of information is in the information itself (Lash, 2002).

In such a condition of operationality and total absorption, where then, is the *raison d'être* of the art institution located? What forms do archiving artistic processes take? How do the existing institutional structures respond to these new developments? These are some questions that I will attempt to explore in the next chapter.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES

In the previous chapter, I discussed several recent developments within the art field as well as the wider society. On one hand, museums are confronted with their structural limitations as artists re-imagine where and how art functions, actively push artworks and processes beyond museum walls, and form critical questions regarding the art institution. On the other, the museum also engages in these critical questions by actively adapting to a creative role, and in turn institutionalizes these inquiries within its own walls. As artists and art institutions renegotiate their relationships with one another, the information society, turning the previously conceived as passive audience into active users, adds yet another layer of change.

Witnessing these developments, archiving artistic processes is presented with opportunities and challenges. As art practices increasingly become de-materialized and conceptualized, artistic processes can provide a basis for interpretation and documentation. Some process-oriented works demand outright that artistic processes are the focal point of interest. Such developments entice art institutions adapt and focus more on artistic processes. Yet as institutional desire to capture artistic processes strengthens, it is also met with many challenges. How to trace the development process – and its finitude – of concepts and ideas, presents the first problem. Whereas previously with modern art, a materialized product can be relatively easy to identify and contain due to its material nature, conceptual art can be intentionally unfinished, immaterial, and involve a wide network of participants – such as institutions and audience – requiring them to constitute crucial parts of the work. The institution, through the extended network of artists and audience, could also stretch its boundary to infinity, while also engaging in artistic processes itself. Furthermore, artistic processes can and have flowed beyond existing museum walls and structures – physical, spatial and temporal, posing practical problems for documentation and preservation. Another problem that conceptual art raises has to do with its anti-aesthetic nature. If art no longer functions through meaning but code, and values the audience over the artist, what does this mean for archives and museums? Finally, as expectations change for art museums, and their past practice of characterizing bourgeoisie aesthetic standards loses relevance, how will they

respond to their new *raison d'être* in a society of information where the outside can cease to exist? I will attempt to explore these questions in this chapter.

DOCUMENTING PROCESS-ORIENTED WORKS

In the first chapter, I discussed how artistic processes are traditionally marginalized by most art institutions. With the conceptual turn of the 1960s, however, the processual aspects of art production became more important, as artworks became increasingly de-materialized, site-specific, time-based and/or process-oriented. Confronted with such developments, art institutions have developed several strategies to adapt.

One strategy is to collect and exhibit process pieces in the archive or the museum to provide the basis for interpretation, filling the void left behind by artworks that cannot be contained within the walls of a museum. Although in many of these cases, a clear line between process and product, between a study and a final work can be difficult to draw. Similar to Public Art museums and architecture museums, which cannot collect the actual finished works, art museums sometimes turn to process pieces to stand in place for works that are large scale or ephemeral. Artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude's works provide excellent examples. Known for their site-specific installations, often monumental in scale, Christo and Jeanne-Claude have, among other sites, worked with monuments, museums, fountains, bridges, towers, coastlines, and rivers, wrapping or covering them in fabric (Christo and Jeanne-Claude, 2012a). Some of these projects are realized, others not, some are still in progress. Yet whether realized or not, the sheer scale and temporal nature of the projects are way beyond what museum's walls could contain. Many museums and galleries thus turn to drawings and models that Christo and Jeanne-Claude made – which are often beautifully composed and can be argued to be artworks in their own right – to communicate the artists' projects to the audience (see Christo and Jeanne-Claude, 2012b, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, 2012c, Museum of Modern Art, 2010c, Museum of Modern Art, 2010b).

Yet process pieces cannot always substitute for the absence of the 'finished', material works. Great efforts have thus been invested by institutions in the preservation of installations, many of which are process-oriented in nature. The *Inside Installations*:

Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art project gathered several major museums and institutions in Europe to investigate the care and administration of installation works of art. The project resulted in 33 case studies of installations that were researched, re-installed, displayed and documented – in most cases in consultation with the artists. In addition, research has been carried out in various directions, including preservation, artist documentation, theory and semantics, knowledge management and information exchange (Scholte and Hoen, 2007). As participants for the project, Tatja Scholte and Karen te Brake-Baldock from Instituut Collectie Nederland pointed out, that unlike 'traditional' paintings, installations have specific relationships to time, space and context, and can have potential variability in subsequent re-installations. Scholte and Brake-Baldock maintain that installations, more than other works of art, require communication with the artist or the artist's representatives during the work's lifespan (ibid.). At the same time, Scholte also reflected on how installation art changes museum practices and impacts on the professional roles of conservators, curators, technicians and archivists. Drawing on a panel discussion *Installation Art in the Museum Context* at Maastricht, Scholte suggested that open-ended works of art, such as Suchan Kinoshita's installation in the Bonnefantenmuseum, and argued that they can be especially challenging for a museum organization, in that these works induce subjectivity and interpretation by curators and conservators (ibid.). The findings from the *Inside Installations* project call for the museum to take on increasingly active roles in documentation; targeting areas such as measurements, light, movement, sound and video documentation. Visualization of installations and 3D documentation, both to be conducted by museums, were also investigated (ibid.). Here we witness a very strong desire for the material aspects of installation art to be preserved – even if it means it is museums which create such material. It could also be argued that museums now play an increasingly important role in the production and presentation of the artwork, to the degree that they could become co-authors of some sort.

Much like installation art, performance art poses many challenges for the existing institutional structure. Traditionally, video and photos seems to be a common means to capture time-based and performance works. Performance artist Marina Abramovic, for example, has collaborated with video maker Charles Atlas to capture her early performance work *SSS*, which was collected by the Museum of Modern Art in New York (Museum of Modern Art, 2010d). Curator Malin Enarsson from the Skissernas Museum of Public Art in Lund, Sweden, also quoted video works and pictures as their method for archiving and

presenting conceptual, performance or new media works and their processes (Enarsson, 2012, pers. comm., 10 April). Yet the complication of performance pieces can go beyond what the video format can contain. Conservator and researcher Hanna Hölling discussed several challenges in conserving performance art, including the work's improvised nature, its immediate and often site-specific context, audience reaction and participation, as well as the involvement of the medium of the artist's body. All of these are crucial elements in many performance art pieces, and all pose difficult questions for institutional frameworks to document and preserve (Hölling, 2009). Hölling observes, what constitutes performance as an act is the individual action of an artist or a group in a given place and at a given time, as well as the relationship between the audience and the actors (ibid.). Drawing from Sophie Delpeux's study, Hölling further points out that the experience of each participant could be quite different (2009, p. 12). As a response to these challenges, Hölling listed cases using objects from performance as an attempt to present, or reconstruct and reinvent particular performance environments for a contemporary audience. Looking to musicological approach, Hölling further discussed re-enactments and interpretations of old performances as a possibility for conservation. Yet, Hölling raised concerns that as works are taken out of their original context, they could become decontextualized, devitalized and isolated. What's more, Hölling points out, the desire to participate in an event that took place at a certain time in the past cannot be fulfilled as long as notions of authenticity and originality prevail (Hölling, 2009).

While sketches, models, videos and pictures provide excellent visual materials, as the case above with conserving installation and performance art have demonstrated, visual materials, or even leftover objects may not be sufficient to capture ideas and concepts, especially when a network of participants is involved. Text based materials and oral histories thus become other means through which institutions capture artistic works and processes. I discussed Walker Art Center's work with archiving artistic process in the second chapter. At the Walker, everything from artist's correspondence and sketches, media documentation of work at various stages, to curator's notes and installation notes are collected. The Walker also actively conducts interviews and artist questionnaires. Brooke Kellaway, Getty Fellow of Visual Arts at the Walker who is currently working on the Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative, stresses the importance of artist interviews for archiving conceptual, performance or new media art works and their processes; arguing that interviews are essential for documenting the artists' processes that went into making these works (Kellaway, 2012, pers.

comm., 11 April). Kellaway discussed the Walker's use of artist questionnaires, which are sent to artists during each new acquisition. According to Kellaway, the questionnaires ask about the subject of the work, the ideas expressed in it, the circumstances under which it was executed, and any additional information the artist might like to include. The purpose of the questionnaire is also to capture a thorough description of installation instructions (ibid.). With interviews and oral histories, it can be argued that the artist now has more power over the interpretation and official memory of his/her works. This could be seen as another result of the conceptual turn of the 1960s, where renegotiation of art production and art presentation within an institutional setting has taken place. Yet as I pointed out in Chapter 2, the works of the artist and that of the museum are articulated to be separated. The role of the museum is established as a presenter, and not an active participant who influences the creative process, and whose decision-making process (who to commission, what to collect, what to show and how to interpret, for example) remains separated from artistic process, despite the museum's clear contribution to the physical appearance, understanding and symbolic value of the work.

As artists and institutions negotiate their relationship with one another via art practices, sometimes this can push far beyond institutional boundaries, rendering the institution unable to contain the work, or control the work's process within institutional frameworks. In some cases, institutions turn to presenting documentations of the work instead. In Chapter 3, I briefly mentioned conflicts between some Internet art projects and the art institution. The networked nature of the Internet has triggered conflicts in museums as well as in the larger institutional frameworks.

In discussion of the institutionalization of *net.art* and the institutionalization of *net_art_activism*, artist and professor Ricardo Dominguez brought up the notion of 'digitally correctness'. Dominguez believes that the post-contemporary museum/gallery needs to be digitally correct because it seeks economic support from large corporations like Microsoft, Dell or Macintosh. This means that *net.artists* seeking a presence in these cultural institutions just becomes another line of Research and Development within corporate culture; and the resultant type of techno-formalist work then becomes the aesthetic standard that museums will show and the gallery system will support; thus any form of work not driven by techno-formalist code will be disqualified from being hosted on museum/gallery servers in this circuit of presentation. Dominguez further notes, using the case of *net.art* projects, that the institution's server space offered to *net.artists* has imposed limits, and that cultural

institutions will only support *net.art* that deals with suturing the digital divide or that accommodates the demands of the software economy or certain pedagogical principles of the network as research tool and archive (Dominguez, 2006).

Dominguez was co-founder of the Electronic Disturbance Theatre (EDT), which along with a group of activists co-developed *swarmtheminute.com*, and organized a non-violent mass virtual sit-in against the Minutemen (ibid.). Inspired by EDT, activists in Germany organized a sit-in at the Lufthansa website to protest against the company for transporting people who are deported from Germany, which attracted 13,000 people to take part in the virtual sit-in. The Lufthansa sit-in resulted in Andreas-Thomas Vogel, who registered the domain where a call for the sit-in had been published, being put on trial. Dominguez argues that such actions should be viewed as a civil act of disobedience (ibid.). Regarding the Vogel trial, the German Higher Regional Court eventually decided that the action to block the corporate website in the context of a political event is not violence or coercion but legitimate free expression (EDUi, 2006). The works of EDT and the Lufthansa sit-in illustrate how conceptual art can operate within a society of information. Bypassing art institutions and directly drawing the action of its active audience, art practice here becomes social practice and challenges aesthetic standards – in this case modes of thought about what the Internet could be used for – framed by social institutions.

Within cultural institutions, Dominguez maintains that while they have been subject to many years of “active education by artist working between art and politics throughout the 20th century”, this ‘active education’ usually take places around the critique and disruption of the architecture of the museum/gallery and its politics of presentation. Dominguez argues that cultural institutions fail to grasp the same questions when they concern the museum/gallery network architecture. Dominguez drew attention to artist’s collective Knowbotic Research's project *Minds of Concern* at the New Museum's exhibition *Open_Source_Art_Hack*, during which the work’s website was forced to shut down due to pressure from the museum's Internet Service Provider .The ISP threatened to shut down the whole exhibition website if Knowbotic Research did not stop its scanning of security systems (port scanning) to evaluate the vulnerability of a particular server to hacking attacks (see Dominguez, 2006, and Mirapaul, 2002). In his discussion of the incident, Dominguez parallels another project in the same exhibition that was also postponed by the museum - *GenTerra* by artist’s collective Critical Art Ensemble. The museum was not comfortable with the project on the grounds that

an illegal release of a ‘transgenic organism’ was scheduled during the performance. Dominguez argues, that both incidents suggest that cultural institutions have not yet been able to balance artistic freedom of action with a dialogue between artists and museums that can actively engage internal critique from within the museum space (2006). What the museum had succeeded in doing, however, is to maintain a hegemonic authority using legal tools, illustrating Derrida’s interpretation of the archive as a “privileged topology where law and singularity intersect”, aiming for all elements to articulate the unity of an ideal configuration (Derrida and Prenowitz, 1996). As Dominguez further points out, the framing of *GenTerra* incident as a legal question – rather than a political/aesthetic question – by the New Museum, is a selective institutional response, as he has yet to see cultural institutions asking the same legal questions when presenting the bio-formalist art of Eduardo Kac. Dominguez believes that Formalism was the main containment filter during the last half of the 20th century and it will probably continue, as it is a very handy ideological tool. Dominguez argues, that as cultural institutions struggle to understand the architecture of networks in relation to their own histories as art institutions, when they encounter *net.art* projects such as *Minds of Concern*, instead of seeking alternative ISPs or solutions to problems, they just shut them down. Similarly, while analyses of EDT *net.art* projects have proliferated in a range of academic publications and news media, “cultural institutions in general have given little weight to the work worthy of being hosted as a live digital art event or mass performance”. Works that disturb or critique the virtual capital sought by the post-contemporary institution or the frame of digital liberation pushed by technological fundamentalism from within are restricted to documentary presentation – and are never hosted or funded in such a way that they can disturb the digital frame of the institution. In Dominguez’s words, “they [post-contemporary cultural institutions] will accept the echoes of this practice. But not the work itself.” (2006, pp. 368, 372-374)

Documentation and archival practices thus have the potential to become a safe buffer zone for cultural institutions in its practice of engaging institutional critique. Through archival practices, museums and galleries can continue to characterize interests and set terms for aesthetic standards, and safely cut off the operationality of conceptual art by stopping the artwork’s audience from taking an active role (via hosting documentations, rather than live projects in which the audience could participate), assigning them back to the passive audience role of the past, accepting or reacting to the interpretation of work established by the cultural institution. Yet by replacing hosting of artworks with hosting of documentations,

it compresses the public space in which institutional critique could take place, and contradicts the cultural institution's role of providing a site for institutional critique. Here we witness a paradox between active critique, and the concluding act of preservation and archiving. In the past, even though the artwork's existence can also be considered a flow – as I had demonstrated with the case of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* in Chapter 2 – these flows can be relatively easy to contain, as they are bound to physical objects housed within the museum architecture, where the museum can control their access, interpretation and interaction. The network structure, when activated in artistic processes, can instantly delimit the physical walls of the museum, adding participants to the flow whom the museum does not have control over. After negotiating its relationship with artists, can, and if so, how do cultural institutions account for creative processes contributed by the audience, who are now not only part of the artistic process, but can also develop flows on their own that go beyond the existing museum wall? I will return to these discussions at the end of the chapter. In the section below, I will first continue to explore the institution's relationship with artists, as the archival practice of concepts takes place.

ARCHIVING PROCESSES FROM CONCEPTION

Archives and museums traditionally work with material objects that have already been produced –then later collected by the institution, where the points of interest are articulated, connections made, context given and narratives built. Yet as art productions de-materialize and the institution's desire to capture ideas strengthens, some projects attempt to archive artistic processes from the beginning, before a 'finished', material product of an artwork – or even a process work, is realized. Two of such examples are Ireland's Tyrone Guthrie Centre's *ArtLog* project, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's HyperStudio's research for the school's Art, Culture and Technology (ACT) *Future Archive Project*.

ArtLog is a collaborative venture between the Library Services and the Digital Media, Centre of the Dublin Institute of Technology, and the Tyrone Guthrie Centre. It claims its objective is “to build an electronic archive of artistic thought, to capture, organise and preserve this data and make it accessible to future generations.” Similar to the Walker, ArtLog is interested in the artist's own narratives. Yet unlike the Walker, the Tyrone Guthrie

Centre is an artist residency and can attempt to capture the artist's thoughts before materialized works are produced. Citing affordable storage capabilities and technology's abilities to identify patterns over large collections of data, *ArtLog* had been designed as a digital platform where artists are the main data inputter. According to its design, *ArtLog* makes it mandatory for a residing artist to complete a 'profile' – including their biographical details and hopefully also artistic history. With each additional visit, the artist can augment their profile with details of the work they have carried out during the intervening period. The artist is then invited to complete an opening or entry statement, outlining ambitions or plans they have for their work. The artist is also encouraged to complete a closing or exit statement, summing up their experiences regarding to the work and their stay. In between entry and exit, the artist can also record their reflections on their practice, leaving a series of diary-like 'inputs', which could be text-based, with photos combined, or in the form of video (Desmond et al., 2009). While the artist is the apparently the focal point of this archival practice, *ArtLog*'s institutional framework also should not be overlooked. In the design of *ArtLog*, institutional archival strategy was considered and integrated, where standards such as cataloging rules, metadata schema for inputs, and consistent vocabulary for indexing are incorporated into the software. Furthermore, while the artist has been identified as the main user, the infrastructure of the *ArtLog* incorporates users other than the artist. The editor, for example, bears the responsibility to archive the artist's entries and generate abstract and subject headings. Moreover, the framework of *ArtLog* also included the function of commenting and social tagging by the artist community at the Centre (ibid.) The infrastructure of *ArtLog* on one hand reflects the Centre's desire to capture artistic processes as artworks are being produced; on the other, it reflects the Centre's desire to facilitate user interactions in a controlled setting, which can actively affect the artist's creative process.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)'s HyperStudio, in collaboration with the school's Art, Culture and Technology (ACT) department, suggested an approach in their researches for MIT ACT's *Future Archive Project* that takes the institution's role in artistic processes one step further. It aims to create a structure that simultaneously facilitates artistic processes and an institutional archive, attempting to immediately introduce processes into an archive.

According to HyperStudio's researcher Madeleine Clare Elish, the *Future Archive Project* aims to support, preserve and contextualize the production of time-based artworks.

As opposed to placing value on only final exhibitions of artworks or their physical objecthood, the *Future Archive Project* emphasizes the role of artistic process, as exhibited through documentation and collection of process-related materials. The researcher considers that such materials might consist of preliminary drawings, photographs, models, program code, but also administrative materials such as budget details, meeting notes, and research notes. Coming from the unique background of a university project, the *Future Archive Project* listed pedagogical (facilitating the process of documentation within contemporary art practice among ACT's students), communication (raising visibility of the ACT program, its artists, and the practices of the Future Archive Project itself), and scholarship (enabling scholars and curators to research and view the works and methodologies of ACT artists), among its three main goals (Elish, 2010). Identifying primary users being as varied as archivists, librarians, ACT professors, scholars, curators, ACT fellows and ACT students, HyperStudio conducted interviews with members of these groups to draw attention to the specific context, issues and perspectives at stake. It is among these studies that conflicts of interest among different groups become apparent. The ACT professors in general are excited about the project. One commented on the importance of fostering students' documentation skills in their creative processes. Yet the same professor also stressed the importance of "not having to spill it all out" of one's process (ibid. p. 7). Researchers, in general enthusiastic, list concerns of information overload, and raised questions over the subjectivity of documentation (conducted by ACT students/artists themselves in this case), versus archiving, which although is intellectually understood to be constructed, aims to remove explicit subjectivity. A group of researchers voiced concern over artist privacy and their right not to be required to include work (ibid. p. 8). Contrasting with other primary users, current ACT fellows and graduate students overwhelmingly expressed an attitude toward the project colored with anxiety (ibid. p.9). While the students are generally excited about intellectually engaging the idea of an archive and the process of building history, many expressed a resistance to having to document their work, as there was a general uncertainty as to what constitutes document and what kinds of work they would be expected to submit. They were also concerned about the conditions of their privacy as individual artists and how their work related to the institution of MIT. In addition, there were concerns about the workload. The students seem to be aware of the consequences of systematic structures. They did not want their work to be "homogenized" as a result of the documentation process, and were eager to be sure the project would be able to reflect everyone's individuality and unique process (ibid. p. 9). After the audience evaluation, the researcher suggested positioning these digital tools as

“organizing and facilitating artistic process, rather than ‘capture’ work for a public archive” (ibid. p. 10). The archival attempt with the MIT Future Archive Project, and the tension between different users it revealed was invaluable. On one hand, it could be seen as an institutional response to and absorption of the conceptual turn and its aftermath, by attempting to capture creative processes as flows centered around the figure of the artist; From another perspective, as archival structures renegotiate their boundaries with artistic practice, a conflict over the ownership of the raw materials of artistic processes and their representation and interpretation inevitably arise. At the same time, as the archival process now begins much earlier – alongside the artistic processes rather than after, participants of these processes (both the artist and the archivist) are confronted with the question of how to satisfy the documentation standard of a future audience.

AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT

In the previous chapter, I discussed how the conceptual turn of art, along with the emergence of the information society, demand that the audience, too, becomes an active part of artistic processes. I also discussed in a late-capitalist context, cultural institutions are expected to work with ‘the public’ and are held accountable via quantitative measures. In this situation, the Internet provides a wonderful solution for institutions to fulfill such demands. It is undeniable that the visibility and activities of the museum audience play an important role in cultural institutions. Nina Simon has written extensively on participatory models and projects within museum spaces (2010). As my discussions are mainly concerned with artistic processes, I will focus on how cultural institutions work with their audiences in artistic processes, particularly on the Internet, and explore some of the challenges and consequences.

The Internet has become a popular interface for cultural institutions to involve their audience. Museums such as the MoMA and the Tate, provide visitors to their website access to exhibition information as well as collection data and archival listings. I also discussed similar efforts at the Skissernas Museum of Public Art, which plans to link together photographs of processes pieces, related publications and documents on a database that will soon go online. To a certain extent, the Google Art Project could also be considered a database of works from various museums and collections where users can explore museum

exhibition spaces virtually, as well as creating their own galleries. In these cases, while the audience can access the artworks, the model of cultural institutions interpreting artistic work to a passive audience, remains. While the users can link to these works on the Internet (and even copy images in some cases), the audience members are still isolated from the archival practice and interpretation of the museum, and from other audience members. The development of blogs and comments on cultural institutions' websites allows for audience members to take a more active role. The Walker, for example, invites external writers to share their perspectives, while leaving room for audience feedback in the comment session (Kellaway, 2012, pers. comm., 11 April, and Walker Art Center, 2012). Another way of increasing circulation of a cultural institution's content is to use existing web service platforms and social media. Many museums already maintain a profile on Facebook, posting content and information that can be shared easily. Flickr is also used by quite a few institutions (Richardson, 2009). The Brooklyn Museum, even tapped into mini blog service Tumblr, showing scans from Keith Haring's journals in the duration of the artist's exhibition *Keith Haring: 1989-1982* at the museum (see Brooklyn Museum, 2012, and Keith Haring Foundation, 2012). With social media, members of the audience are connected with one another and contents can be easily shared. It is also easier for audiences to use these contents and form their own narratives beyond the walls of the museum. Yet, on social media, for the most part, artworks are presented as documentation or description, and audience members are still separated from participating in artworks hosted by these cultural institutions. Can cultural institutions go beyond presentation of conceptual art, and take advantage of the Internet, to enable the audience to be part of the work themselves?

The artist-run and -motivated *Unrealised Projects* provides yet another route to archiving artistic process that cleverly involves the user (Ely and Harris, 2012). *Unrealised Projects* collects proposals from artists, designers, curators, writers, performers and musicians in text and image forms, and publishes them in volumes on the *Projects's* website. It describes itself as an "active investigation into the potential of unrecognized, unfinished or unfulfilled ideas". By declaring the projects it archives to be "unrealised", it attempts to involve the projects' viewers and their perspectives. It also opens up space for projects that could not be realized in other contexts. Consider the following statement:

The project aims to create a space and context for this submitted information, a space where concepts are at the fore, are not fixed in a final product, and rely

on the viewer's imagination to be 'realised', where a de-material, ill fitting, perfectly formed, forgotten, never forgotten, in between, ridiculous, attainable, subjective, co-authored, text, image, sound, archive lives in the present through the never ending poetics of potentiality. (Ely and Harris, 2011)

Unrealised Projects could be interpreted as an adaptation of the operability of conceptual art into archive form, where the archive itself becomes an installation of sorts, inviting audience members to enter its space and form their own interpretations. There are other archive projects that invite the audience to become part of the project as an active contributor. *The Unreliable Archivist* is one such example. Commissioned by the Walker, *The Unreliable Archivist* was created by the artist collaborative of Janet Cohen, Keith Frank, and Jon Ippolito, with äda'web, a significant art project by Benjamin Weil on the early web, as its host (Walker Art Center, 1998). *The Unrealised Archivist* allows visitors to mix the original projects from äda'web, by adjusting four metadata category sliders (language, image, style, layout) and selecting text and visuals to their preferences. Curator Christiane Paul argues that in this case, the authorship and boundaries of the original projects are erased (Paul, 2006, p. 202). Yet as curator Steve Dietz points out, the viewers are only given the illusion of choice, as these choices are highly circumscribed (1999).

Both the *Unrealised Projects* and *The Unreliable Archivist* acknowledge and advocate the role of their audiences, including them to the structure of the archival project. The audience is no longer removed from the context in which artistic processes function, and the works themselves are no longer dead as documentation, but live on as concepts and ideas that involve the viewer. Yet one thing that should not be overlooked is that both projects depend heavily on the creators creating a frame within which users react. Here we witness a shift of the archive's role – from characterizing interests to the control of code, or mode of thought.

The operability of conceptual art will increasingly require institutions to incorporate the role of the audience in its institutional structure. Yet following operational properties of conceptual art and reconnecting the audience into artistic processes also creates challenges for documentation and archiving. The first problem is, how to trace, document and archive audience involvement, especially if it is in flux that flows outside existing institutional structures? And furthermore, where should the line be drawn between the actual work and its

archival form? When should the action of archiving take place? Is such separation still necessary? As art institutions commit to incorporating the role of the audience – or the user into their structures, as the *net.art* examples above have demonstrated, they will inevitably enter into a renegotiation of their relationships with the audiences, just as they did with artists. Finally, as audience involvement grows and flows beyond the walls of museums and archives, the context in which artworks and processes find themselves will expand exponentially. If this expansion is to be understood as the infinite extension of the museum, what role should the museum play in retaining its criticality?

CONCLUSION

Artistic processes are complex and manifold. It can vary from one work to another. It can reach a wide range of people and elements, which can in turn influence processes themselves. Sometimes they can be very difficult to trace. As institutions such as the archive and the museum attempt to preserve valuable records for society, they, as organs of authority, also contribute symbolic value to the records they hold. Within these organs, structures are built; validation and exclusion take place. Archiving artistic processes is no exception.

Archives and museums are organs of modernity which serve to preserve valuable records for society. They have been linked with memory on one hand, and authority on the other (Derrida and Prenowitz, 1996). It has been said that memory and history are controlled through what is recorded and unrecorded; what is sayable and unsayable (Merewether, 2006, Foucault, 1969). The modern museum as an enlightenment project embodies the ideals of the bourgeoisie and supports the bourgeoisie's legitimacy (Möntmann, 2006). As the archive and the museum encounter artworks and their processes, structures prevail. Artworks and processes are removed from their context as they enter the art museum, which, via tools of description and categorization, characterize points of interest of the works and processes to a passive audience. The 'finished' material objects of artworks are privileged, while processes are often discussed in relation to the 'finished' work. The heavy emphasis on 'finished' works over 'unfinished', effectively eliminates information on what the institutional structure excludes and suppresses. Works and processes are often organized with the artist being a common organizational principle, establishing the artist as a chief, single creative figure. The audience is encouraged to focus on the role of the artist and their excellence, while the role of the institution is downplayed or even invisible. Even though museums and curators often affect artistic processes, playing an important role in the interpretation of the artist and the artist's works, influencing their value and perception, or even bringing physical impacts to the works, institutional involvements are often not articulated by the art institution as part of the artistic process. Records of such involvements are mainly kept in an archive, separated from collections of artworks and processes. This creates a separation of roles between the artist and the institution. As the audience's attention is directed to the *apparent producer* –

the artist, the role of the institution – who creates the ‘creator’ (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 76-77, see also Burch, 2011, p. 23), becomes hidden from the creative process. The art institution is thus able to prevent its audience from actively engaging in the production of social and political realities, and instead answers to its expected role of contained, institutionalized image production. Yet as public art museums have demonstrated, the role of the artist, and the artworks’ institutional context, are not mutually exclusive. An art institution could serve as a site beyond merely aesthetic discussions. As the Raqs Collective has pointed out, just as the archive could be read as a statement by power about the world and to the world, it is also vulnerable to counter readings. The archive can be connected to other ‘documents’ or realities, and be made to reveal the inner logic of power (Raqs Media Collective, 2003). An examination of artistic processes and their institutionalization in the museum context could present such an opportunity.

As changes in artistic practices and the wider society took place in the second half of the twentieth century, the site of the art institution also saw changes in its own role, as it negotiated its relationship with artists and audiences. Artistic processes have become an element the art institution cannot afford to ignore. The structure of the aesthetic institution was confronted by the conceptual turn of art in the 1960s and its aftermaths. Departing from material objecthood, conceptual art focuses instead on ideas that can be owned and shared by everyone, depriving art institutions of the very objects they preserve, contain and upon which meaning and interpretations are built and controlled. Process pieces have filled this void for museums in some cases, while documentation, interviews, and software structures have also been generated by institutions in an attempt to archive artistic processes.

In addition to depriving museums of objects, conceptual art also attempts to renegotiate the relationship between artist, institution and audience. With radical questions addressing the structures and boundaries of the art institution, many conceptual art projects now involve the institution as an integral part of the work. At the same time, as conceptual art is characteristically unfinished, requiring the audience to finish the work with contemplation, the audience too become an integral part of artistic processes. The viewer is no longer the passive audience s/he once was, on the receiving end of the artwork and its interpretation, but rather, becomes an active user who is now in the same space as the cultural object (Lash, 2002).

Furthermore, the development of the Internet, while establishing an attractive platform to fulfill the archive and museum's mandates to increase access and to work with the public, also brought about a few significant changes. With its ability to digitally copy and distribute contents, the Internet changes the context in which the content is placed, and for whom the content is produced. In the society of information, as Lash points out, one witnesses an autonomy of objects, which in their global flow tend to escape from the intentions, and sovereignty of the subject (ibid.). These developments point to an inevitability of artworks, and their processes, flowing out of existing museum walls, renegotiating boundaries and authorities – at times bypassing the art institution altogether, as demonstrated by new media art and particularly Internet art.

Faced with these developments, the art institution inevitably needs to renegotiate its role with the artist and the audience, and adjust its relationship to artistic process. Meanwhile, the art institution's relationship to the wider society has also undergone changes as it enters late modernism. As curator Nina Möntmann pointed out, as the bourgeoisie loses its social influence, the traditional art institution has lost its peer group, which has thrown it into a crisis of legitimation (2006). It has been observed that politics now require the arts to reciprocate economically while required to solve social problems (De Bruyne and Gielen, 2009). In an adaptation to such expectations, the *raison d'être* for art institutions also changes. It now on one hand provides symbolic value for economic circulation; while on the other maintains a space for self-reflexivity and self-criticism to re-negotiate social relations. By facilitating such reflexivity and criticality, it functions as a site to increase productivity in a post-Fordist economy. The art institution – represented by directors, curators and even conservators – increasingly adapts a creative role, working with artists or alone by itself. It absorbs institutional critique into its system, influencing social relations in an institutional setting. As artists and art institutions renegotiate their relationships with one another, the art institution will eventually need to also acknowledge the role of the audience, and renegotiate their relationship. From one perspective, the operability of conceptual art demands that the role of the audience can no longer be ignored. From another, politics also requires the art institution work with 'the public'. The role of audience members should be accounted for not only as a passive recipient of museum education, but as an integral participants in creative processes.

As the institution and the audience both become an integral part of artistic processes; if conceptual art is to be a reflexive critique of its own conditions of existence, and self-reflexivity and self-criticism now provide the art institution with its very source of legitimacy (Wallenstein, 2006), the art institution must no longer single out the artist as the sole creator, and instead also account for institutional and audience involvement. Especially in the case with practices such as Internet art that push existing institutional structure, record keeping of reflection and critique, not only on the artist's part, but also of the institutions and audience involved, are particularly important. Without linking these processes together, the art institution will fail to preserve the very strength of conceptual art.

Another challenge that archives and museums must consider, is that with operability of conceptual art and the information society, artworks can now depart from its material form and instead be in constant flux, flowing beyond museum walls in a much greater network beyond what a museum can contain. Objects and documentation of artistic process reflects only fractions of the works – snapshots at best, and could cut off elements of audience and institutional participation, rendering a live project decontextualized, devitalized and isolated. In Christiane Paul's discussion of new media art, she mentioned the use of mobile devices by the audience in a museum setting, where a “beaming station” is set up. In this case, the museum becomes an access point or a node in the larger network that connects to other organizations, where the art project functions within (Paul, 2006). The notion of the node proposes a counter thesis to the fragmentation of documentation and archival practices by allowing artistic processes to be alive. Yet the vitality of art projects and the act of preservation also create a paradoxical situation that museums must address. The archive and the museum must not become a tool to cut off the vitality of the artistic processes, but rather serve as site where official narratives are connected with other realities.

As the context in which artworks find themselves in could expand exponentially, museums must also locate their roles in reflexivity and criticality. As the 1960s conceptual turn and its aftermaths have demonstrated, the desire to step outside of an institutionally defined space could also be interpreted as the infinite extension of the museum (Verwoert, 2006). As symbolic differences between various creative agents blur, so does the inside and outside of the institution. Aided with the global communication flows of the society of information, we will be dealing with a situation of total absorption with no outside to step into, and increasing difficulty to opt out of. For institutions seeking to maintain reflexivity

and criticality, Scott Lash offers a solution. Lash argues that critique itself must now be connected to today's social and technological forms of life through additivity. He writes:

The information order is inescapable. It gives us no longer an outside place to stand. But as supplement and operating inescapably in the media of information, critique can contribute to the reconfiguring of the information, to the re-fashioning of the technological object and its boundaries, to reworking the boundaries of proprietary and non-proprietary. (Lash, 2002, p. xii)

Working from the inside of rapidly expanding global flows, involving artists, institutions and audiences, functioning as nodes and additions that stretch the borders of the society of information, reflexive, operative and critical, it is here that I hope to find archiving artistic processes a place in the evolving network of relationships of our time.

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