



Installation view of "An Archive of Performance Art," part of "The Present and Presence – Repetition 1," 2012. Photo: Dejan Habicht



Installation view of "Bosnia Archive," part of "The Present and Presence – Repetition 1," 2012. Photo: Dejan Habicht

Repetition in the form of historical self-reflection is further asserted in the archival work on display: the *Body and the East Archive* revisits the Moderna Galerija's eponymous landmark exhibition from 1998, the first synoptic historical overview of body art in Eastern Europe; the *Bosnia Archive* documents the Moderna Galerija's 1994 project to collect works by significant regional artists for a future museum of contemporary art in Sarajevo; a performance art archive shows the numerous ways in which this type of practice can be communicated to future generations (photography, video, objects, reperformances); the *Archive-in-Becoming* contains oral histories (video interviews with significant artists from the region); and a further archive, *Questionnaires*, concerns the presence of artists from the Moderna Galerija collection in other public and private collections in Slovenia and abroad. Finally, the so-called *Punk Museum* documents the Slovenian punk scene from 1977 to 1987, and is open to donations from the public.

As at the Reina Sofia, MSUM's education program seeks to connect art to political activism, following the guidelines of the Radical Education Collective, developed at the Moderna Galerija in 2006.⁵⁹ Alignments are forged with other organizations also "struggling against commercialization, creative industries, and increasing ideologization of our local space."⁶⁰ Instead of the usual museum café, MSUM has a bookstore and seminar room, conceived by students of architecture and design who also program the space and organize an independent series of seminars and interpretation. The activist group Anarhiv uses the room for political theory discussions. Complementing these local ties, the museum has initiated international partnerships so that the institution's voice can be heard internationally. For example, the collaborative network L'Internationale, established by Badinovac, allows seven European museums and institutions to make their collections available to each other, disrupting the usual East/West European art historical narratives, but also conventional patterns of collection ownership.⁶¹

TIME

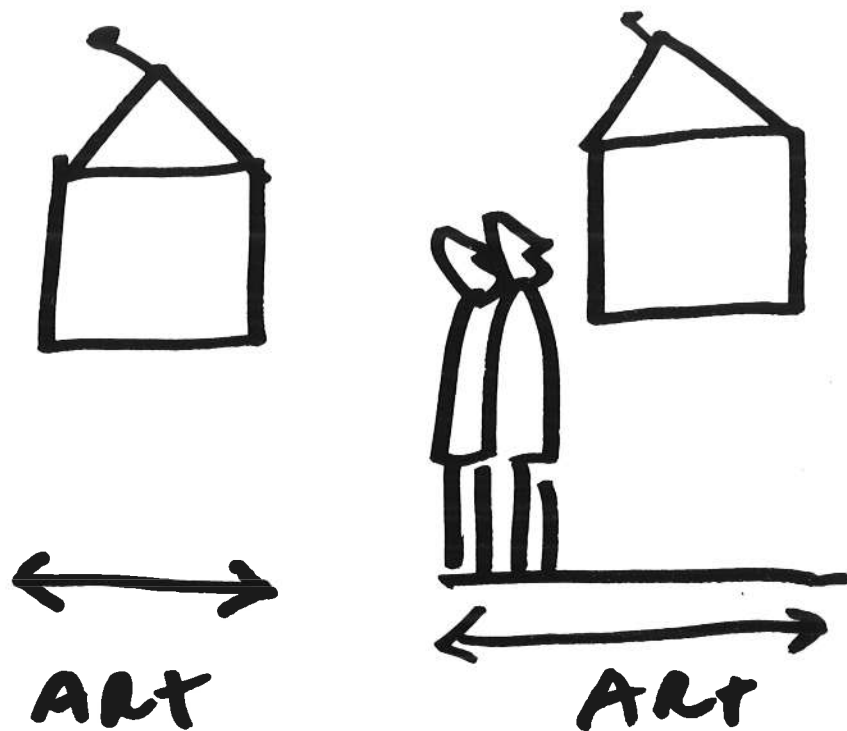
VII.
DIALECTICAL
CONTEMPORANEITY

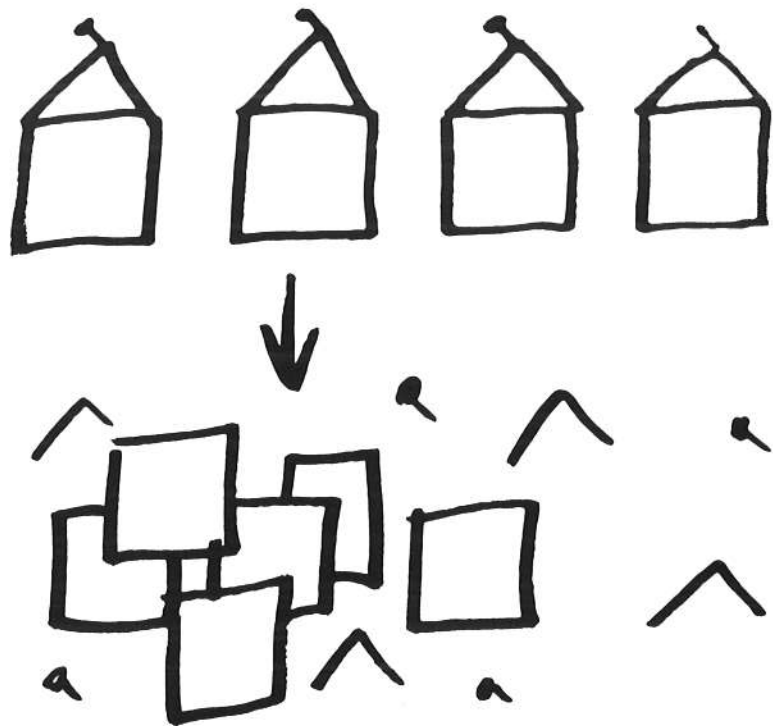
My respect for these three museums is not without reservations, and the shortfalls of each institution become apparent in the comparison. The Van Abbemuseum has failed to embed itself into the local culture in Eindhoven and the region; the displayed publications at the Reina Sofía cannot be read, while its approach to exhibition display is not always coherent (a projection of Hitchcock's *Rear Window* [1954] sits in uneasy dialog with Abstract Expressionist painting); while the MSUM's celebration of documentation is often unmanageable (the museum has so many banks of video monitors documenting actions, performances, and interventions that every visitor has to become her own curator, making decisions about which works to view or ignore). Overall, however, the varied propositions put forward by the Van Abbemuseum, the Reina Sofía, and the MSUM, only briefly sketched here, offer a trampoline from which to leap forward, suggesting alternatives to the privatized contemporary museum creatively and intellectually crippled by its reliance upon blockbuster exhibitions designed to attract corporate investors, philanthropists, and mass audiences. The Van Abbemuseum offers the exhibition apparatus of display as a vehicle of historical consciousness; the Reina Sofía rethinks education and the medium-specific status of the collection; MSUM deploys multiple, overlapping temporalities as a way to write an as-yet-unarticulated historical context.

These museums create multi-temporal remappings of history and artistic production outside of national and disciplinary frameworks, rather than opting for a global inclusivity that pulls everything into the same narrative.⁶² An apt term to describe the result of these activities is the *constellation*, a word used by Walter Benjamin to describe a Marxist project of bringing events together in new ways, disrupting established taxonomies, disciplines, mediums, and proprieties. This approach is, I think, highly suggestive for museums, since the constellation as a politicized rewriting of history is fundamentally curatorial. For Benjamin, the collector is a scavenger or *bricoleur*, quoting out of context in order to break the spell of calcified traditions, mobilizing the past by bringing it blazing into the present, and keeping history mobile in order to allow its objects to be historical agents once again. Replace 'collector' here with 'curator', and the task of the contemporary museum opens up to a dynamic rereading of history that pulls into the foreground that which has been sidelined, repressed, and discarded in the eyes of the dominant classes. Culture becomes a primary means for visualizing alternatives; rather than thinking of the museum collection as a storehouse of treasures, it can be reimagined as an archive of the commons.⁶³

It is of course banal and predictable to invoke Benjamin at the end of an essay in 2013, but it is striking that his theories have been so influential on visual art yet have had so little impact upon the institutions in which it is shown and the histories they narrate. In his *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (1940), Benjamin draws a distinction between a history spoken in the name of power, which records the triumphs of the victors, and a history that names and identifies the problems of the present day, by scouring the past for the origins of this present historical moment; this, in turn, is the determining motivation for our interest in the past.⁶⁴ Can a museum be anti-hegemonic? The three museums discussed in this book seem to answer this question in the affirmative. They work to connect current artistic practice to a broader field of visual experience, much as Benjamin's own *Arcades Project*

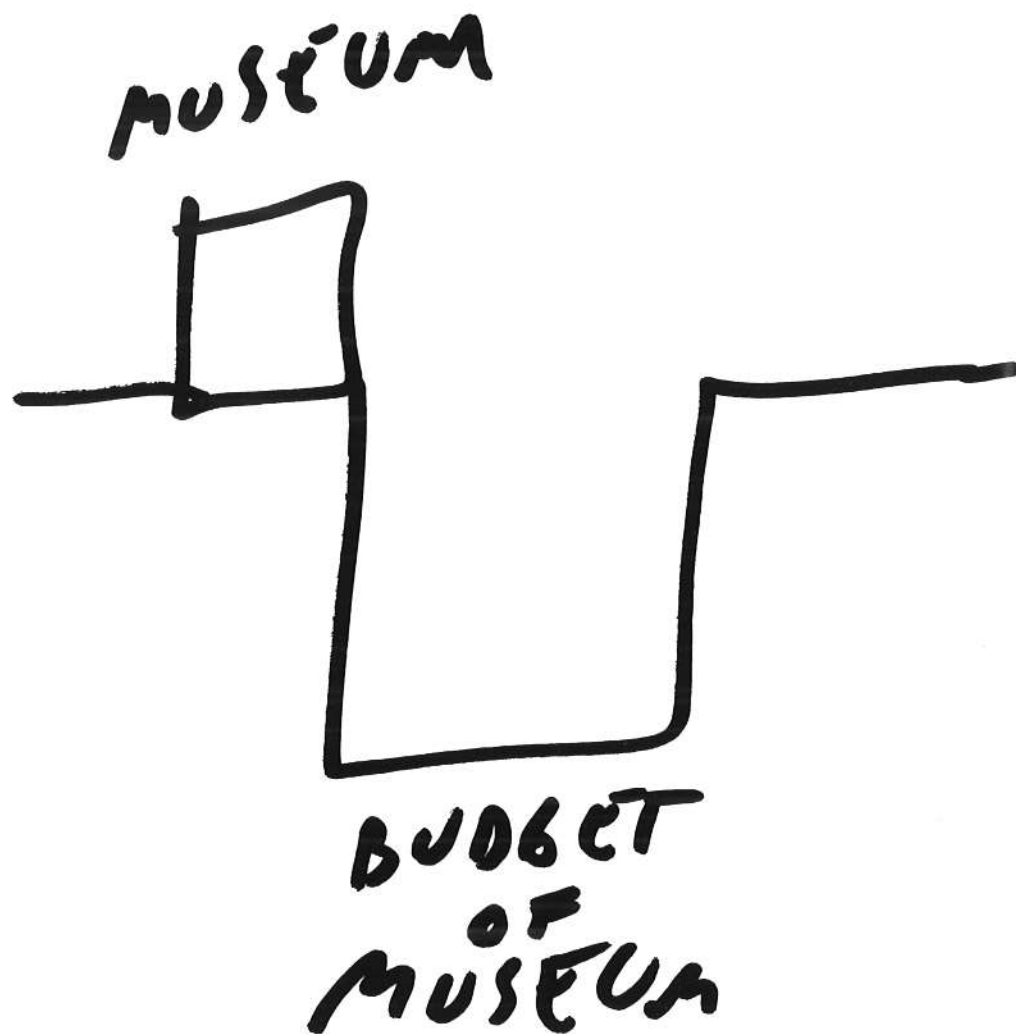
ARCHIVE OF COMMONS





sought to reflect on Paris, capital of the nineteenth century, by juxtaposing texts, cartoons, prints, photographs, works of art, artifacts, and architecture in poetic constellations. This present-minded approach to history produces an understanding of today with sightlines on the future, and reimagines the museum as an active, historical agent that speaks in the name not of national pride or hegemony but of creative questioning and dissent. It suggests a spectator no longer focused on the auratic contemplation of individual works, but one who is aware of being presented with arguments and positions to read or contest. Finally, it defetishizes objects by continually juxtaposing works of art with documentary materials, copies, and reconstructions. The contemporary becomes less a question of periodization or discourse than a *method* or practice, potentially applicable to all historical periods.

Some will of course argue that periodization cannot be discarded: only with a grasp of clearly delineated historical periods can we disrupt a distended now that colonizes past and future. But such a historicist approach condemns previous ages to a remoteness divorced of relevance to the current day, and does nothing to address the causes of our current presentism: the role of technology in collapsing spatial distance and accelerating our lived experience of time; the threat of global catastrophe, from nuclear war to terrorism to environmental disaster, diminishing our ability to project into the future; and the speculative short-term investments of finance capitalism, selling abstractions such as currencies, bonds, stocks, and derivatives rather than material production. All of these have unquestionably affected our spatio-temporal coordinates: for the average person in what used to be called the first world, the future is no longer equated with a hopeful modern vision of progress (if indeed it ever were), but a seething pit of anxiety about short-term work contracts, unaffordable healthcare, and a lifetime of debt repayments (mortgages, student loans, credit cards). Rather than succumbing to this presentism, a 'tiger's leap' into that which has gone before may be supremely



relevant to mobilizing an understanding of our situation. Dialectical contemporaneity is therefore an anachronic action that seeks to reboot the future through the unexpected appearance of a relevant past.

Others will say that the museum is itself a conservative institution and that is more urgent to focus efforts on social change. But it is not a choice of either/or. Museums are a collective expression of what we consider important in culture, and offer a space to reflect and debate our values; without reflection, there can be no considered movement forwards.⁶⁵ It seems telling that the three museums I have presented are named after an industrialist, a queen, and a military base—yet all of them denounce barbarities of power and exploitation, narrating the past through a diagnosis of the present, while keeping their eyes on the future. It is also significant that the activities of all three museums have, since 2011, come under pressure from neoliberal governments and city councils playing the mood music of austerity: their budgets have been decimated because access to culture is not perceived as a basic right like education and welfare—although these are also being systematically expropriated—but a luxury that can be farmed out to the private sector. And this sector is all too willing to step in, because museums are not only economic generators, but can enhance social status and the value of one's private collection. Two systems of value hereby come into conflict: the museum as a space of cultural and historical reflection, and the museum as a repository of philanthropic narcissism. In the face of this impasse, the ability of the public museum to adequately represent the interests of the ninety-nine percent might seem ever bleaker. It is therefore crucial to consider the alternatives that do exist, working below the radar to devise energizing new missions for the museum of contemporary art.⁶⁶

Neoliberalism's subordination of culture to economic value denigrates not only museums but the humanities more broadly, whose own systems of assessment increasingly have to justify themselves according to metrics (grant-income revenue, economic impact, cita-

tion as a measure of influence).⁶⁷ We seem hopelessly unable to devise an alternative value system: technocracy unwittingly abetted by post-structuralism has dismantled much of the vocabulary in which the significance of culture and the humanities was previously couched, making the task of persuasively defining this in non-economic terms ever more pressing. Yet we can and must argue for culture and the humanities to be appreciated as important and extraordinary in their own right, existing outside the language of accounting and use value, and whose acts of imagination are enshrined in the institutions we have devised to protect them.⁶⁸ The curatorial goals outlined in this essay might appear to be new forms of instrumentalization, but they are in fact a means of protecting this autonomy, since they build upon what is already implicit in works of art in order to question and raise consciousness, rather than merely consolidating private prestige.

The task of articulating cultural value is now urgent in both the museum and the academy, where a tsunami of fiscal imperatives threatens to deluge all that is complicated, creative, vulnerable, intelligent, adventurous, and critical in the public sphere. Significantly, it is a question of *temporality* around which this struggle now takes place: authentic culture operates within a slower time frame than the accelerated abstractions of finance capital and the annual cycles of accounting (based on positivist data and requiring demonstrable impact). But it is precisely this lack of synchronicity that points to an alternative world of values in which museums—but also culture, education, and democracy—are not subject to the banalities of a spreadsheet or the statistical mystifications of an opinion poll, but enable us to access a rich and diverse history, to question the present, and to realize a different future. This future does not yet have a name, but we are standing on its brink. If the last forty years have been marked by ‘posts’ (post-war, post-colonialism, postmodernism, post-communism), then today, at last, we seem to be in a period of anticipation—an era that museums of contemporary art can help us collectively to sense and understand.

MUSEUM
POWER

A hand-drawn diagram in black ink. At the top, the word "MUSEUM" is written in a slightly irregular, uppercase font. Below it is a large, hand-drawn square box. Inside the box, the word "POWER" is written in a similar, slightly irregular, uppercase font. To the left of the box is the letter "P", and to the right is the letter "R". The overall composition suggests a relationship between the institution of the museum and the concept of power.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Rosalind Krauss, "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum," in: *October*, no. 54, Fall 1990, p. 14. Krauss goes on to discuss an article in *Art in America* that reports museums deaccessioning their collections, noting the incursion of a managerial mindset and the pressure of the art market upon museum activities.
- 2 Here I am referring to Susan Buck-Morss's arguments in *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 2009. Buck-Morss argues that universal history involves the denationalization of events in order to reinscribe them as questions of universal concern. (The Holocaust, for example, does not belong to German history or to Jewish history, but is a calamity for all humankind.) In retrieving the universal as a category, Buck-Morss joins a number of recent thinkers, including Slavoj Žižek and Alain Badiou, who seek to recuperate the universal after its dismantling by poststructuralist assaults on metanarratives. Her aim is not to interpret universality as inclusivity (i.e., pulling everything into the same narrative), but rather to use it as a methodological intervention into history.
- 3 As artist Hito Steyerl notes, "Contemporary art is a brand name without a brand, ready to be slapped onto almost anything for a quick face-lift touting the new creative imperative for places in need of an extreme makeover [...] If contemporary art is the answer, the question is: How can capitalism be made more beautiful?" Steyerl, "Politics of Art: Contemporary Art and the Transition to Post-Democracy," in: *e-flux journal* #21, December 2010, available online at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/politics-of-art-contemporary-art-and-the-transition-to-post-democracy/>.
- 4 In fact, as Richard Meyer has shown, MoMA's program during the 1930s had been remarkably varied, including exhibitions of prehistoric rock painting, Persian frescoes, and reproductions of Cézanne paintings. US artists had been shown at the museum, but Reinhardt and the organization American Abstract Artists objected to the fact that these artists were too old, too conventional, or too popular to qualify as authentically modern. See: Richard Meyer, *What Was Contemporary Art?*, MIT Press, Cambridge/MA, 2013, chapter 4.
- 5 Alfred H. Barr, Jr., letter to Paul Sachs, October 1940, cited in: *ibid.*, p. 38.
- 6 The outlier here is the City Gallery of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, founded in 1954. It changed its name to the Museum of Contemporary Art in 1998.
- 7 "The Institute's intermingling of curating and commerce would, for better or worse, increasingly come to mirror the logic of contemporary art in America." Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 251. In 1950, MoMA, the Whitney Museum and the ICA Boston issued a joint manifesto declaring the modern tradition alive and well—a public reversal of Boston's previous assertion that modernism had died in 1939. See: J. Pedro Lorente, *Cathedrals of Urban Modernity*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 1998, p. 250.
- 8 Saatchi's acquisition strategy has controversially involved buying young artists' work wholesale and then reselling the entire set once the market value has increased. See, for example: Arifa Akbar, "Charles Saatchi: A Blessing or a Curse for Young Artists?," in: *The Independent*, 6/13/2008: "Saatchi's most outspoken protégé-turned-critic was the Italian neo-expressionist painter Sandro Chia, whose work was bought and then disposed of in the 1980s. There was speculation that Saatchi's sale of his entire holdings of Chia's work effectively destroyed the Italian's reputation."

- 9 See: Brian Goldfarb et al., "Fleeting Possessions," in: *Temporarily Possessed: The Semi-Permanent Collection*, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, 1995, pp. 9ff.
- 10 See: http://www.newmuseum.org/files/nm_press_faq.pdf. Recent work to have been purchased for the museum by its trustees includes Ugo Rondinone's *Hell, Yes!* (2001), installed on the façade of the building 2007–2010. None of the collection has been included in any of the exhibitions at the New Museum since its move to the Bowery in 2007. Email from Gabriel Einsohn, press officer at the New Museum, 3/29/2013.
- 11 See, for example: Alex Alberro, response to "Questionnaire on 'The Contemporary,'" in: *October*, no. 130, Fall 2009, p. 55; *Global Contemporary: Art Worlds After 1989*, exhibition at ZKM | Karlsruhe, 2011; Alexander Dumbadze and Suzanne Hudson (eds), *Contemporary Art: 1989 to the Present*, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 2013.
- 12 See also: Okwui Enwezor and Chika Okeke-Agulu, *Contemporary Art in Africa Since 1980*, Damiani, Bologna, 2009: "[C]ontemporary African art comes both at the end of traditional arts (seemingly precolonial) and at the end of colonialism; that is to say, its condition of existence in the present is postcolonial" (p. 12).
- 13 Peter Osborne, "The Fiction of the Contemporary," in: *Anywhere or Not At All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art*, Verso, London and New York, 2013, pp. 15–35.
- 14 Boris Groys, "Comrades of Time," in: *Going Public*, Sternberg Press, Berlin, 2010, pp. 84–101.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 90, and the following quote, p. 94.
- 16 Giorgio Agamben, "What Is the Contemporary?," in: *What is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2009, p. 41. Italics in the original.

- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- 18 This world came into being in the late 1980s, he argues, but exists decisively in common consciousness after 9/11. Terry Smith, *What Is Contemporary Art?*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 2009.
- 19 The term 'historicity' is used by the French historian François Hartog to describe the dominant order of time in a given era: how society conceptualizes and treats its past. See: Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 2003. 'Schizophrenic' is the term deployed by Fredric Jameson to characterize postmodernism's preference for heightened but disconnected experiences of the present. See: Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," in: Hal Foster (ed.), *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, The New Press, New York, 2002, pp. 13–29.
- 20 In Eastern Europe, the disavowal of the communist past in official discourse has given rise to numerous video works exploring the psychological impact of the transition, therapeutically incorporating old film stock or technology (such as Anri Sala's *Intervista* and Deimantas Narkevicius's *His-Story*, both 1998); in the Middle East, a powerful body of work has addressed the Lebanese Civil War and episodes from the history of the Israel/Palestine conflict (consider the extensive archival work of the Atlas Group/Walid Raad or Emily Jacir). In Western Europe and North America, by contrast, artists have seized upon overlooked moments in the history of psychotherapy, colonialism, feminism, and civil rights—at their best, interested less in the past for its own sake than in the possibilities it contains for opening up alternatives for the future (Stan Douglas, Sharon Hayes, Harun Farocki).
- 21 Christine Ross, *The Past is the Present; It's the Future Too: The Temporal Turn in Contemporary Art*, Continuum, London, 2013, p. 41.
- 22 Dieter Roelstraete, "The Way of the Shovel: On the Archaeological Imaginary in Art," in: *e-flux journal* #4, March 2009, available

online at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-way-of-the-shovel-on-the-archeological-imaginary-in-art/>. Italics in the original.

- 23 Georges Didi-Huberman, "History and Image: Has the 'Epistemological Transformation' Taken Place?" in: Michael Zimmermann (ed.), *The Art Historian: National Traditions and Institutional Practices*, Clark Studies in the Visual Arts, Williamstown, 2003, p. 131.
- 24 Georges Didi-Huberman, "Before the Image, Before Time: The Sovereignty of Anachronism," in: Claire Farago and Robert Zwijnenberg (eds.), *Compelling Visuality*, University of Minnesota Press, Minnesota, 2003, p. 41. See also: Didi-Huberman, "The Surviving Image: Aby Warburg and Tylorian Anthropology," in: *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2002, pp. 59–70.
- 25 Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, Zone Books, New York, 2010, p. 14.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- 27 My position also differs from that of Thomas Crow, for whom the work of visual art has a unique temporality compared to that of literature, music, or dance, because its objects are "the actual things fashioned and handled by the subjects of history themselves." (Thomas Crow, "The Practice of Art History in America," in: *Daedalus*, vol. 135, no. 2, Spring 2006, p. 71.) The use of reproductive technologies in contemporary art has weakened the viability of this claim; see the discussion of documentation at the Reina Sofía on p. 44.
- 28 At the New Museum, for example, history appears only in the register of fashionability, like a well-chosen retro interest. Even group exhibitions whose themes provide a perfect opportunity for historical research are presented without argumentation. For example, *Ostalgia* (2011), a survey of Russian and Eastern European art

since the 1960s, juxtaposed works on the basis of sensibility, without any acknowledgment of the ideological transition that took place 1989–1991. The show replaced the frame of political history with that of good taste, effectively permitting the market to hold sway (appropriately, the show was funded by a Russian gas oligarch, Leonid Mikhelson, whose art foundation is called VICTORIA—the Art of being Contemporary (*sic*)). Moreover, the exhibition title grouped all work under the rubric of 'ostalgia', despite the fact that the majority of exhibits dated from the pre-1989 period.

- 29 In Western museums devoted solely to work from the 1960s onwards, thematic clusters have become the norm, since there is an assumption that the art of this period shares enough context to make the practice of decade-shuffling unproblematic. When the thematic approach is seen to fail, it tends to result not from *generational* juxtapositions but from *geographical*: the creation of dialogues between Western and non-Western art, especially if the latter is positioned as belated and derivative (if modern) or simply non-modern (if indigenous).
- 30 However, such relativism is clearly not value-free and is belied by hierarchies within the temporary exhibitions: in the case of Tate Modern, for example, the majority of (income-generating) solo exhibitions continue to be by Western male artists, while female and non-Western artists tend to be confined to the (unticketed) Turbine Hall and project spaces. See: T. J. Demos, "The Tate Effect," in: Hans Belting, Andrea Buddensieg, and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Where is Art Contemporary? The Global Art World*, vol. 2, ZKM | Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, 2009, pp. 78–87.
- 31 One notable exception is Okwui Enwezor's critique of Tate Modern's neo-colonial gaze. See: Enwezor, "The Post-Colonial Constellation," in: Terry Smith, Okwui Enwezor and Nancy Condee (eds.), *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, Duke University Press: Durham/NC, 2008, pp. 207–229.

- 32 For example, the 2012 collection hang at Tate Modern was organized around the following four suites: “Poetry and Dream” (which took its lead from Surrealism, but also includes John Heartfield’s photomontages, Santu Mofokeng’s 1997 slide show *Black Photo Album: Look at Me*, and sculpture by Joseph Beuys), “Energy and Process” (centered on Arte Povera, but which also included a gallery of gifts from the collector Janet Wolfson de Botton), “States of Flux” (based around Cubism, Futurism, and Vorticism), and “Structure and Clarity” (devoted to inter-war abstraction, but spanning Cubism and Cory Arcangel).
- 33 Below these timelines, an oppressive apparatus of bright red multimedia booths emblazoned with corporate sponsorship keeps the museum on message with the dominant neoliberal norm.
- 34 Another series of displays, called “The Living Archive,” presented elements of the museum’s own history to visitors, while also holding a mirror up to the museum itself as a reminder of what it has been and could be once more (the museum’s website describes the series as “a treasury of ideas about the future”). The series revisited key exhibitions from the museum’s history (such as *The Street*, 1972) and presented archival information about an experimental space in Eindhoven called Het Apollohuis (1980–1997), but also showed facsimiles of the museum’s documentation files (“Museum Index—Research in Progress”), the result of research into the provenance of works in the collection that were looted by the Nazis before or during World War II.
- 35 Some exceptions to this rule have nevertheless taken place, such as the temporary exhibition *Forms of Resistance: Artists and the Desire for Social Change from 1871 to the Present* (2007), a manifesto of sorts for the Van Abbemuseum.
- 36 The most notable experiments in this series included “One on One: Frank Stella’s *Tuxedo Junction*” (Plug In #32), which showed Stella’s

- 1963 painting alone in a gallery, accompanied only by a chair and a small table with reading matter relevant to the work (publications, correspondence, exhibition history, condition reports, and illustrations of previous installations of the painting); also on the table was a tape recorder on which one could listen to an interpretation of Stella’s work by art historian Shep Steiner. “Kijkdepot” (Plug In #18) offered visitors a chance to select their favorite work from the collection on the condition that they provide a reason for wanting to see it. The results were then brought out of storage and put on display, providing the museum with a sense of what local residents were interested in seeing, and leading to a “collective accidental curating” (Christiane Berndes, in: *Plug In to Play*, 2010, p. 78). Plug In #28, curated by the Dutch artist duo Bik van der Pol, displayed work by Joseph Beuys and Bruce Nauman alongside 140 books published by Loompanics Unlimited (1975–2006), which produced controversial self-help guides such as “How to Start Your Own Country,” “Homemade Guns and Homemade Arms,” and “How to Clear Your Adult and Juvenile Criminal Records.”
- 37 Van Abbemuseum promotional literature, available online at: [http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl/en/browse-all/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1\[ptype\]=24&tx_vabdisplay_pi1\[project\]=546](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl/en/browse-all/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1[ptype]=24&tx_vabdisplay_pi1[project]=546).
- 38 Created by Fuchs after he had returned from directing Documenta 7 (1982), “Zomeropstelling van de eigen collectie” (Summer Display of the Museum’s Collection) continued his hallmark celebration of the autonomy of the work of art, the neutrality of the exhibition space and the visual experience of the viewer.
- 39 See: [http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/browse-all/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1\[ptype\]=18&tx_vabdisplay_pi1\[project\]=863&cHash=d56b07668a1b6f7825238b4941c741a1](http://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/browse-all/?tx_vabdisplay_pi1[ptype]=18&tx_vabdisplay_pi1[project]=863&cHash=d56b07668a1b6f7825238b4941c741a1). Video documentation of the project by Khaled Hourani and Rashid Masharawi was shown at Documenta 13, 2012.

- 40 Different viewing behaviors were also encouraged via a map of the museum as a fantasy geography (for the tourist) or an empty notebook to be written in and passed on from one viewer to the next (the flâneur). Throughout “Play van Abbe,” institutional transparency was foregrounded: diagrams outlining the number of male, female, and non-Western artists in the collection (among other statistics) were placed on the gallery walls, while Charles Esche made video responses (still available on YouTube) to questions from the public about the displays.
- 41 See Jesús Carillo and Rosario Peiró, “Is the War Over? Art in a Divided World (1945–1968),” p. 15, downloadable pdf: www.museoreinaSofia.es/images/descargas/pdf/2010/21JC_en.pdf.
- 42 As Borja-Villel writes, “What would happen if we substituted Descartes’ *ego cogito* with Hernan Cortes’ *ego conquiro*, or Kant’s principle of pure reason with what Marx called the principle of primitive accumulation?” Manuel Borja-Villel, “Museos del Sur,” in: *El País*, 12/20/2008, cited in English by Ricardo Arcos-Palma in “The Potosí Principle: How Can we Sing the Song of Our Lord in a Foreign Land?,” in: *Art Nexus*, issue 80 March–May 2011, available online at: http://certificacion.artnexus.net/Notice_View.aspx?DocumentID=22805. The exhibition went on tour to Berlin and then to La Paz, Bolivia.
- 43 Two years later, the exhibition *Atlas: How to carry the world on one’s back?* (2011) revisited the montage method of Aby Warburg in order to provide a counter-reading of twentieth-century art. As its curator Georges Didi-Huberman writes: “The ‘Atlas’ exhibition was not conceived to bring together beautiful artifacts, but rather to understand how certain artists work—beyond the question of any masterpieces—and how this work can be considered from the perspective of an authentic method, and, even, a non-standard transverse knowledge of our world.” Available online at: http://www.museoreinasofia.es/exposiciones/2011/atlas_en.html.
- 44 The diagrams are based loosely upon Jacques Lacan’s Seminar XVII from 1969–1970, *L’œuvres de psychanalyse*, in which the permutations of a four-term configuration are used to elaborate “Four Discourses” (of the Master, the University, the Hysteric, and the Analyst). Rather than relying upon fixed terms (subject, object, history, etc.), the diagrams are dynamic models that explain the relationship between each discourse and its agents.
- 45 As Slavoj Žižek has argued, today’s tolerant liberal multiculturalism is a form of neutralization: “an experience of the Other deprived of its Otherness—the decaffeinated Other.” Žižek, “Liberal multiculturalism masks an old barbarism with a human face,” in: *The Guardian*, 10/3/2010. See also: Žižek, “Multiculturalism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” in: *New Left Review*, September–October 1997.
- 46 Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1991. In this much-cited book, Rancière describes how the idiosyncratic French schoolteacher Joseph Jacotot used a bilingual book to teach a group of students who spoke only Flemish. See: Ángela Molina, “Entrevista con Manuel Borja-Villel/Debemos desarrollar en el museo una pedagogía de la emancipación,” in: *El País*, 11/19/2005, available online at: http://elpais.com/diario/2005/11/19/babelia/1132358767_850215.html.
- 47 See: “Declaración Instituyente Red Conceptualismos del Sur,” available online at: http://conceptual.inexistente.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=56:declaracion.
- 48 Boris Groys argues that documentation is one of the most prevalent forms of contemporary art today: it is not the presentation of art (because that happens elsewhere), but merely a *reference* to art. Groys, “Art in the Age of Biopolitics: From Artwork to Art Documentation,” in: Groys, *Art Power*, MIT Press, Cambridge/MA, 2008, pp. 52–65.

- 49 This policy is a continuation of Borja-Villel's efforts at MACBA, which resulted in the Centre d'Estudis i Documentació (established 2007). The Centre was set up "out of the conviction that since the beginning of the last century, and especially from the fifties onwards, artistic production cannot be understood simply through the artwork in itself, and that the document is an element of the language that makes up complex cultural productions such as art. The Archive also aspires to contribute to counterbalancing the lack of attention that documentary holdings have been given in this specific context." Available online at: <http://www.macba.cat/en/the-archive>.
- 50 This type of recategorization has precedents. John Carman has demonstrated the shifting status of archaeological heritage in the UK, from a Liberal concern with public welfare and education in the nineteenth century, to a discourse of 'good nations and a stable international order' in the mid-twentieth century, through to the current managerial discourse of heritage as a 'resource' (value for money and effective use). See: Carman, "Good citizens and sound economics: The trajectory of archaeology in Britain from 'heritage' to 'resource'," in: Clay Mathers, et al. (eds.), *Heritage of Value, Archaeology of Renown: Reshaping Archaeological Assessment and Significance*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 2005, pp. 43–57.
- 51 See: http://www.museoreinaSofia.es/programas-publicos/centro-estudios/practicas-criticas_en.html. The 150-hour program offers a striking contrast to the profit-making educational courses offered by MoMA (where five two-hour classes cost \$300) and Tate Modern (where five ninety-minute seminars cost £120).
- 52 It is telling that the present government of Slovenia prefers the former display option, while the museum prefers the latter.
- 53 See: www.cultureshutdown.net. On 4 October 2012, after 124 years of existence, Bosnia's National Museum (Zemaljski Muzej) closed down due to the government's failure to secure adequate funding.
- 54 This list is not complete: other sections include "Time Without a Future" (subcultures of the 1980s) and "Quantitative Time" (individual systems founded on autonomous forms of logic).
- 55 Although Badinovac definitively equates contemporaneity with periodization ("war in the Balkans marked the beginning of our contemporaneity"), the collection displays contain works that go back to the 1950s. Zdenka Badinovac, "The Present and Presence," in: *The Present and Presence—Repetition 1*, Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana, 2012, p. 106.
- 56 Ibid., p. 103.
- 57 Zdenka Badinovac, "New Forms of Cultural Production," 10/1/2012, available online at: <http://www.artecast.org/pages/arte-news/article/1551/>.
- 58 The museum has been criticized for not pairing this with the art of the White Guard, the movement that collaborated with the occupying forces during World War II.
- 59 See: <http://www.mg-lj.si/node/168> and <http://radical.temp.si/>.
- 60 Adela Železnik, "On Education in MG+MSUM," unpublished document, p. 1. Železnik is senior curator for education at the MSUM and Moderna Galerija.
- 61 The other institutions are the Július Koller Society (Bratislava), the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst (MuKHA, Antwerp), and the Van Abbemuseum. In 2012, the Reina Sofia and SALT (Istanbul) joined the network. See: <http://internacionala.mg-lj.si/>. In 2013, L'Internationale received a five-year grant of 2.5 million euros to support the program *The Uses of Art—The Legacy of 1848 and 1989*, coordinated by Esche at the Van Abbemuseum.

- 62 One might argue that biennials already do this, and none more so than the most recent Documenta 13 (2012), with its abundance of works memorializing history and archives (e.g., Michael Rakowitz's installation in which library books damaged by Allied bombing in 1941 are recreated in stone by carvers in Kabul, and placed alongside vitrines of texts and objects comparing the Taliban's cultural destruction to that suffered by Kassel in World War II; or Kader Attia's installation with books, vitrines, and a slide show, comparing the 'repair' of African objects to the 'reconstruction' of soldier's faces, through plastic surgery, after World War I). Yet I would draw a distinction between Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's project and the one I am outlining here, primarily because the huge range of artistic positions represented in her exhibition (from social practice to performance to painting to the 'archival impulse') did not, as a totality, produce an identifiable position so much as yet another example of indecisive relativism, while its pervasively retrospective mood communicated—as per Roelstraete's article, cited above—only a resigned inability to face the future.
- 63 John Carman has begun to map out a related project in archaeological heritage with the idea of "cognitive ownership." See: Carman, *Against Cultural Property: Archaeology, Heritage and Ownership*, Duckworth, London, 2005.
- 64 "The Copernican Revolution in historical perception is this: before one held the past for the fixed point and saw the present as an effort to advance knowledge gropingly toward this point. Now this relationship is to be reversed and the past becomes the dialectical turn-about that inspires an awakened consciousness." Walter Benjamin, cited in: Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, MIT Press, Cambridge/MA, 1989, p. 338.
- 65 As Charles Esche writes, "Art contributes to a democratic culture by stimulating skills, like open-mindedness and the possibility to see and imagine things differently that are of vital importance for a

constructive political process where differences have to be constantly negotiated and there are always alternatives." Esche, interviewed by Dominiek Ruyters, "A Cosmology of Museums," in: *Metropolis M*, 4/17/2013, available online at: <http://metropolism.com/features/a-cosmology-of-museums/>.

- 66 For a discussion of museums and the ninety-nine percent, see: www.occupymuseums.org. At its worst, museum value is no longer determined by a politically conscious art history, but by an art market bloated by the disposable income of hedge-fund managers and Russian oligarchs; hence the preponderance of oversized, glittering works by male artists. Alternative institutions under socially conscious directors in the Americas have also managed to produce singular new models, such as the education program of Queens Museum of Art, New York, or the integrated art and education program of the new Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro.
- 67 This is exacerbated by the tendency for the position of museum director to be split into two positions, the artistic and the financial, with the latter holding sway. For an impassioned plea for reconceptualizing the value of the humanities, see: Stefan Collini, *What Are Universities For?*, Penguin, London, 2012.
- 68 Use value includes the perception of culture and the humanities in terms of the 'cultural industries', 'education', 'recreation and tourism', 'symbolic representation', 'legitimation of action', 'social solidarity and integration', and 'monetary and economic gain'. See: Carman, *Against Cultural Property*, op. cit., p. 53.

BIOGRAPHIES

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COLOPHON

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