THECREATIVITY

A FREE ACCIDENTAL NEWSPAPER DEDICATED TO THE ANONYMOUS CREATIVE WORKER

HAVE WE BEEN CREATIVE YET?

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◼ BY GEERT LOVINK & NED ROSSITER

Conferences on 'creative industries' have become a set feature in many countries over the past few years. They usually consist of government policy-makers, arts administrators, a minister or two, a handful of professors, along with representatives from the business community eager to consolidate their government subsidies. What's missing? Forget about analysis or critique. And there's not going to be any creative producers or artists about - the condition of possibility for 'the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. For students and starters, these conferences cost too much to register. These events are captains-of-industry only. Why bother anyway to mix up with the dressed-up? There are coffee breaks dedicated to 'networking', but the deals appear to have been done elsewhere.

The Tragedy of the Suits

From an anthropological perspective, such policy-meets-business events index the class composition of the creative industries. And in some respects, the endangered species might be those positioned as managerial intermediaries - the policy writers, consultants and arts administrators, government ministers and business representatives. The increasing proliferation of social networks associated with new media technologies is one explanation for this: who needs an intermediary when you're already connected? The consultancy class is in danger of becoming extinct due to Web transparency. The other key reason concerns the disconnect between political architectures of regulation and the ever-elusive transformations of cultural production situated within information economies.

Dream, Yo Bastards

The MyCreativity project, of which this newspaper is a part, is not focussing on the critique of creative industries' hype. It was our intention to go beyond the obvious deconstruction of the Richard Florida agenda. Our interest has always been about setting forth expansive agendas and understandings of the interrelations between culture, the economy and network cultures. Critique should aim to change policies, and define alternative models, instead of merely deconstructing the agenda of today's business politicians. MyCreativity emphasizes re:: and search. Let's formulate questions and new strategies. Neither excitement nor scepticism are sufficient responses. Since policy formation is never about the production of original ideas, but instead is a parasitical function, we have some confidence that eventually the range of activities and concepts generated within MyCreativity and similar events will trickle up the policy food chain of creative industries. No need for extensive lobbying. Copying, after all, is the precondition of TheirCreativity - an activity engaged in concept translation.

Trading the Playful

The scattered and fragmented character of experiencing work and working conditions, in short its postmodern nature, means that young people in particular that enter the labour market are fully exposed to neo-liberal conditions. The rhetoric of deregulation has always been a ruse for ever-increasing stratagems of biopolitical re-regulation.

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APPLY TO ALL

→ Intellectual property regimes are the official doctrine behind that story. But how many get a taste of the revenues? Where are the property disputes and why don't we hear from dissidents that refuse to sign copyright contracts? Technologies of control and the surveillance society comprise a more sinister, invisible power.

No Sublime
Where lies creativity in all this? Isn't all this talk about economy and money killing the very untamable energy to tinker? The delicate, subversive and playful act of putting things together can all too easily be destroyed by pragmatic considerations. What creative industries calls into question (and in fact destroys) is the romantic position of the artist. In this, there is the notion that artist is destined to be poor and will have to be desperate in order not to lose inspiration. Wild gestures and inspiration will be killed by a professional approach in which the artist gets stuck into fixed patterns and styles. This, we all know: a rich artist is a dead artist and current intellectual property arrangements only further strengthen this rule. What is important to note is that today's creative work leaves behind such notions and places the creative producer in the midst of society. As a proposition this is a provocation, as the creative subject is neither a worker with rights, a trade-unionist with health care, nor is he or she an entrepreneur. The freelance position is somewhere in-between these two and this is what makes the Creator so precarious (to use a fashionable term).

The Untimely Untimely
Meanwhile, creative labour establishes its own technics of border control. Who's cool? What's in, what's out? Being subversive is the ultimate consumer behaviour. This sell-out of the rebel act has made it difficult to define what is, and what's not political. All creative expression can--and will--ultimately undermine power relations and establish a New Order. The queer muslim squatter is inevitably an agent of global capitalism and on the forefront of things to come. This cynical look on the ambivalent aspects of identity and urban life makes it increasingly difficult to act out and make a stand as all gestures, including the right to remain silent, can--and will--be integrated into the Creative Machine. Instead of desperately looking for the next wave of Artificial Dissent, we may as well reject this logic and search for common strategies. The untimely style no longer exists. All retro is in fashion, all media are cross-bred. Hyper-cultural connections in-between here and there, now and then, us and them are fully exploited. Both critical and imaginative concepts have ceased to be visionary and instead can become operational (from meme to brand in a week) in no time. We need to take these mechanisms into account when discussing alternatives.

Are You Created?
Before we start talking about an 'industry' or an even a 'creative economy' we will have to sort out a variety of topics that in fact remind us more of the late mediaeval 'guild' system than of modern 'industrial relations'. The guild operated as a self-regulating mechanism whereby best practices were defined within the peer-system of artisans. In this sense, we see creative workers as embodying the information-middle ages. And this is a key reason why creative industries policy rests safely in its own stratosphere of self-regulation and outsourcing, albeit with welfare recipients in the form of creative consultants, incubators low on ideas, and academics susceptible to directives from above. Art and design and many other creative processes are proclaimed to be integrated in society and are consciously no longer situated in the margins.

Operation Create Freedom
Do we really want to economize all creative efforts? Of course giving away for free is also an economic act. Peer-to-peer production is also taking place within the existing economic framework. As many have concluded before, gifts are not undermining power structures per se. Free production, outside of the money equation, should be a matter of choice, not the default option. This is the task ahead of us. To share has to be an option, a voluntary gesture. We have to think up, and experiment, producing culture with other economic models, on a global scale, and this newspaper wants to play a role in that process.

OF COOL

CREATIVITY IS ALL WE HAVE LEFT

■ BY KOERT VAN MENSVOORT – I regularly meet people who seemingly have no life. They are alive, of course. They breathe, they move, their hearts beat. But it's not convincing. It's not that they don't do things. They go to parties, take holidays – in fact, they take a lot of holidays. But to me their behaviour comes across as fully instrumentally programmed in fixed, predictable patterns. They are fleshy machines, not living beings. Of course, it is impossible to prove that these people have no lives, and so we keep on smiling discretely and try not to break each other's trance. It seems to be getting more and more common to have no life.

This is probably connected with the high degree of organisation in our society. We are all born into a world that has largely already been invented and designed: twenty kinds of body lotion, motorways for cars, nuclear bombs, glamorous gadgets, frying pans, mouthwash to mask your dog's bad breath, dildo-shaped remote controls. For primitive hunter-gatherer people, work and private life were intertwined. The hunt served the practical goal of food production but was also a mythical event in itself. Contemporary humans buy meat in the supermarket. We are managers, shareholders, employees, consumers. Modern humans play a part in a system and live in a personal world parallel to it. Jürgen Habermas delineated this distinction in The Theory of Communicative Action [1]. The 'lifeworld' is the terrain of culture, personality and social networks. It is a world in which people concentrate on reaching agreement – Habermas speaks of 'communicative action' – about what is happening (truth), what is good (rightness) and what is real (truthfulness). The system is the terrain of the bureaucratic apparatuses of state, science and economy. The system world is less oriented to communicative action than to the achievement of concrete goals; acting instrumentally and strategically are paramount. The separation of lifeworld and system world increased in step with the rise of symbolic means of representation, such as writing.

This is no surprise. Symbols allow us to explicitly express all sorts of values. Money is a good example. It brings us to agreement over the relative value of objects. This facilitates trade between apples and pears. It becomes more problematic when you express 'a great day out with the family' in money. This making-explicit of everything is difficult to relate to our everyday experience of existence; there is a part of us that has no place in the database. The more we make our lives explicit, the further removed from them we seem to become. A major drawback of the information society is that just about everything is made explicit so that it can fit into a database. Removal from the lifeworld to the system world is a side effect. For centuries, humans were an unexplained miracle. But thanks to the scientific methods that have dissected us down to our DNA, we have come to see human beings as systems we can mould and manipulate. People with odd noses get them corrected by plastic surgeons. People who are depressed simply have the wrong chemical in their heads, and are prescribed pills so they can have fun with everybody else. How is it, wondered the eighteenth-century poet Edward Young, that we are all born as originals yet most of us die as copies? We have arrived at the point where we must ask ourselves if there is even a 'lifeworld' left. Have we outsourced ourselves for good?

YOUR CREATIVE INDUSTRY TACTICS WILL COME BACK AND HIT YOU IN THE FACE

Organisational structures usually have no interest in nurturing human beings' true life potential. Organisational structures are mainly concerned with keeping themselves alive. Indeed, a human being can easily become the prisoner of his own organisational ability. But despite the fact that we sometimes get mangled in our systems, we have proved to be hugely creative at introducing lifeworld elements into the system world. Paul Schnabel, director of the Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands, calls this 'domesticating the system' [2]. Domestication is a word originally used to refer to the taming of wild animals, but evidently it is currently something humans do to systems.

Meanwhile, the organisational structures have recognised that human creativity is a valuable asset (organisational structures are not stupid). Policymakers are going all out in their efforts to make creativity explicit within the terms of the system world. Regulated arts platforms and incubators are springing up like mushrooms – naturally, with generous state support, financial performance forecasts and scientific underpinnings. You will have gathered that I am sceptical about all this. But let's agree not to hold it against the poor policymakers; once they get home from work, they're good parents every one, aren't they? Rather than criticising a couple of inconsequential barometers, I wish to speak directly against organisational structures in general. I know that you hear me. I know what you are thinking. I know that you know that I know. I am not afraid. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but creativity is more than a new strategy for bolstering the economy or science or politics. Every one of us human beings is born with the potential to come up with ideas and forms that are original, truthful and useful. Human creativity promotes a better lifeworld, based on the dreams people have about themselves. Of all human traits, creativity is the most difficult to make explicit – let alone automate, as has successfully been done with physical labour and computing power. The creative is precisely that which by definition does not allow itself to be standardised. Those who try to standardise creativity have not understood it, and run the risk of coming across as somewhat pedantic. If ever people do somehow succeed in standardising creativity, then it will be able to be automated and handled by computers and bureaucrats. As soon as that happens, however, it will by definition no longer be the creative. Your creative-industry tactics will come back and hit you in the face. People will come to work in flip-flops! Like a virus, our creativity will screw up the system world. Even if that is the only thing we have left.

1. Habermas, Jürgen. Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981
2. Schnabel, Paul. 'De crisis in de verzorgingsstaat als sociologisch probleem en als probleem voor sociologen', in P. Thoenes et al.: De crisis als uitdaging. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Kobra, 1984

THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT DIFFERENCE

■ BY DAVID GARCIA – 'Increasingly, the concept "creativity" is replacing "knowledge" as the pundit's defining characteristic for the modern economy'. It is a truism that 'creativity' is no longer seen as economically marginal but is eagerly embraced by government and industry alike as the redemptive horizon for increasingly nervous western economies. Similarly, the public perception of the role of artists has changed from one of cultural outlaws teetering on the edge of social acceptance to honored guests and shock troops of neo-liberalism. But on what is the idea of creativity based and when did it arise? At a time when a minor industry of critique has sprung up attacking the spurious rhetoric of the Creative Industries, and yet the bureaucracies in government or education appear immune to denunciation, it seems more worthwhile to spend some time recuperating some of the origins of the cult of creativity.

At the heart of the peculiar status the concept of 'creativity' has for our culture is philosopher Herder, whose writings are one of the key pillars of the counter-enlightenment – the movement of the late eighteenth century we call Romanticism. Herder is the first to have articulated a modern understanding of freedom as expressive self-development. Through a theoretical and poetic project which involved a fundamental rethinking of the role of language and expression in relationship to both knowledge and human freedom, Herder lead the revolt against the principles of doubt and calculative reason, which were the foundation of the enlightenment project.

As Wittgenstein would do much later, he began by repudiating the notion of language as founded on designating events or objects in the world. For Herder and the Romantics language was not calculative but expressive with its roots in

poetry and music; not merely describing the world, language institutes how we collectively bring our worlds into being. This approach deliberately minimises the distinction between expression and discovery. The fact that we seldom know exactly what it is we are going to say before we speak is an illustration of what Herder means by this. We know through speaking (or painting or singing).

LANGUAGE INSTITUTES HOW WE COLLECTIVELY BRING OUR WORLDS INTO BEING

This philosophy was fundamental for the way art was understood: the content of the work could no longer be abstracted from the particularity of the work itself. One of the clearest expressions of this idea is to be found in Robert Frost's definition of poetry as 'that which is lost in translation'. This quasi-mystical belief in the centrality of 'expression' is the reason why Romanticism placed artists at the centre of their philosophy. Hence Shelley's declaration that poets were the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

Moreover, it is not through observation but through introspection – 'from the inside' – that we must derive our understanding. Freedom is thus associated with inwardness and inner depths. Depth comes to be associated with quality. It is this 'from the inside' which is the defining characteristic of the romantic movement from which Isaiah Berlin drew so much. This understanding of human life as 'expression' lead Herder to register a new status of individual difference. For Herder each of us has our own way of being human and we somehow miss the point of life if we fail to live these differences to the full, whether as individuals or as cultures.

This is a momentous step in the development of our western European understanding of what constitutes culture. All previous philosophical movements had been aware that we were all different, but it was not until Herder and the later Romantics that difference in and of itself is given such a unique moral status. From this correlative relationship between freedom, expression and difference flows a host of modern cultural and political movements from nationalism to identity politics, from the cults of authenticity and self-

development through to celebrity culture and the expressive differentiation of neo-liberal consumerism. And last but not least, the organised optimism and promises of creativity for all held out by the 'creative industries'.

A more effective critique of the contemporary commodification of creativity lies in a set of lectures by Isaiah Berlin, published posthumously as The Roots of Romanticism in which he speaks of romanticism as the origin of a darker side to the freedom to live our differences. In the first lecture Berlin proposes that the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century introduced a new understanding of the notion of tragedy into western culture. His proposition was that from Oedipus to Othello the view of tragedy is consistently one in which the tragic events are the inevitable result of some human weakness or error, some avoidable or perhaps inevitable lack of something in men: knowledge, skill, moral courage, ability to live, to do the right thing when you see it. But for the Romantics of the early nineteenth century this is not so, argues Berlin. For Berlin, tragedy in this iteration is not the result of any fault, error or weakness in the protagonists but a collision between heroic individuals sincerely and uncompromisingly perusing incompatible values. There is a collision here with what Hegel called the good with the good. It is not due to error (or weakness or even fate) but to some kind of conflict of an unavoidable kind.

Berlin reminds us not only that this is the moment in cultural history when we started to celebrate difference, but that it also came at a high price. With the value of pluralism at its heart, Romanticism forces us to face and to live with the irredeemably divided nature of human psychology. Our values are frequently incompatible; justice and mercy, equality and liberty often find themselves irreconcilably at odds in daily life, in principle and (most happily) in art. This is the origin of the dissonances that erupt in Romantic art, which are extended and intensified in modernism. It is here that we live out fully the implications of the incommensurability uncovered by the Romantics. It is this tragic and (more often) hilarious core that will prove indigestible to commodification.

RISE of THE CREATIVE CLASS
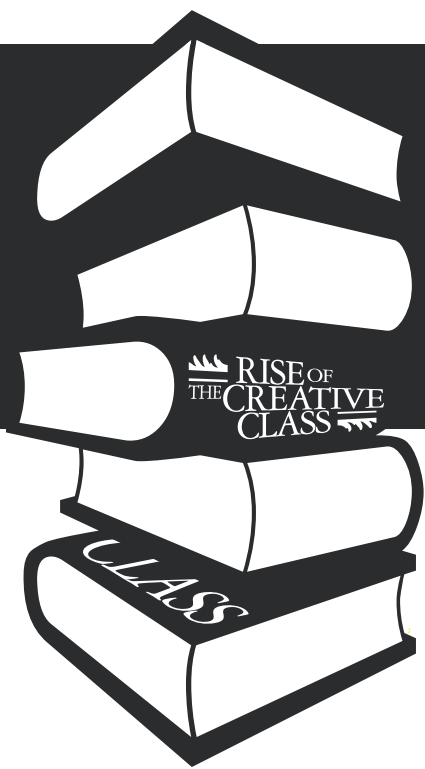
CLASS

CREATIVE
THE END OF

BY THEO PLOEG – The proposal of Dutch minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, Sybille Dekker, to make squatting of empty houses and office-spaces illegal is another strike against the creative underclass in The Netherlands. It seals the destiny of the creative city. He or she who doesn't contribute to the economic system can, and will, leave.

Saturday, June 10, 2006. The Landbouwbelang in Maastricht throws a party. After months of negotiations, the former industrial plant on the verge of the city centre has been officially granted with the status of 'art centre'. For years the impressive building was empty, until squatters took over the place and turned it into one of the most interesting spots in the city. Since 2002, the Landbouwbelang managed to become an important place for contemporary art and culture in the south of The Netherlands. That's also what the city council thought. Even though one of the local political parties tried to establish a large gambling-palace in the old building, the council decided to preserve the Landbouwbelang; a choice in favour of creativity.

The Netherlands have many creative spots like the Landbouwbelang. Some of these old squatter-locations – de Balie and Paradiso in Amsterdam, Tivoli in Utrecht and Worm in Rotterdam – are currently important cultural institutions. Most of the new ones, however, do not last long. Until the end of the nineties the Graansilo, west of the central railway station of Amsterdam, was an important metropolitan centre of culture. The building was vacated by force, sold to a real-estate company and turned into luxurious apartments and lofts. More recently, the same happened to the old Warehouses Vrieshuis Amerika and Pakhuis Afrika, located at the Oostelijke Handelskade in Amsterdam. The British pop-group The Prodigy did their first Dutch live-show there in 1996. People interested in underground-culture crowded the two buildings each weekend. Meanwhile, creative people without money moved to other places like Rotterdam, Antwerp, Berlin and Marseille, where cheap workspaces and housing could still be found. Oddly enough, the debate surrounding the prohibition of squatting is only aimed at housing. The role squatting plays within the structuring of creativity is marginalised or ignored, not only by the mainstream media but also by the government. This, despite official policy that claims to create an environment in which creativity in the city can flourish. Thanks to the work of the American scientist Richard Florida, the Dutch government knows that making an economy healthy implies investing in the creative industry. According to Florida, creating a liberal, relatively free and open atmosphere is essential for a climate in which creativity can thrive, such as social climates like

Amsterdam, Paris and London have. Well, Florida has a point in saying that the cultural class begins with the people who can make a good living out of there creativity.

In his theory there is no room for the creative underclass. The people who make art without money, who throw parties out of necessity and launch new magazines in order to change society, or at least to let people know what is going on in the underground. This group can't be found in liberal and rich cities like Amsterdam, because it is too expensive to live and work there. Strangely enough the creative underclass is present in Antwerp, Berlin and Rotterdam. Cities where opinions keep clashing, where polarization – of rich and poor, of left and right – is strong. Cities where conflict is part of everyday life, and the city council gives people space, literally. Compared to Amsterdam, Rotterdam has not been creating special places for creatives, where everything has been taken care of. On the other hand, the cultural polity of Rotterdam lacks the jungle of terms, rules and control-mechanisms. The combination of conflict and a not extremely present government makes cities like Rotterdam attractive to the creative underclass.

In his article 'The Creative Class-struggle', Geert Lovink underlines the importance of a creative underclass for the city. Lovink states a delicate issue: 'The message is clear. The creative city has no interest in collective spaces that withdraw from the money-economy, let alone pirate-radio.

COSMOPOLITANISM, NATIONALISM, AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

BY DANNY BUTT – It's a cliché that the currency of the creative sector is cosmopolitanism. The artist who sells hundreds of paintings through the commercial gallery system can be snubbed at the fancy opening, in favour of the artist with critical cachet who has just returned from exhibiting at a Biennale in Venice, Taipei or São Paulo. And while the visual arts is notable in its disavowal of the financial capital that enables it, this paradigm nevertheless exerts an influence on the more commercial strands of the creative industries.

The designer and the film director, no matter how mainstream, will feel some anxiety about the 'quality' of their work, and their position within an aesthetic hierarchy. At the end of the day, everyone wants to be cool. What constitutes being cool is an ever-elusive prospect that consumes the minds of both the finest and highest-paid cultural analysts. But there's no doubt that a key part of being cool is cosmopolitanism, of being able to transcend one's social location to be 'at home in the world'. Returning home with tales and trinkets from afar has long been a role for a particular class of the upwardly mobile. To be cool, you know what makes a good caipirinha, and are a regular at the new Vietnamese restaurant before it gets reviewed in the newspapers (by which time, you've found a cute new Thai-fusion joint). These displays of taste will give confidence to your collaborators and employers that your aesthetic is contemporary, in the zeitgeist.

It was while teaching in an art school that I realised how often the development of the creative cosmopolitan was based on a disidentification with one's cultural environment. The paradigmatic art school student (like that other cosmopolitan, the academic) is one who never quite fits into their peer group while growing up, who was forced to retreat to a world of the imagination, expressing creativity from a kind of cultural exile, sending aesthetic remittances back to the homeland.

In his essay 'The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travellers', Craig Calhoun states that most cosmopolitan versions of theory 'share with traditional liberalism a thin conception of social life, commitment, and belonging'. What non-urban creative type didn't dream, at some stage, of making it in New York, Mumbai, Osaka, Mexico City, or Milan? Of packing it all in to find the imagined community of similarly exiled others, gathered happily in urbanity and escaping the small-mindedness of their immediate environment? I don't mean to cheapen the cosmopolitan ideals that have been my own survival strategy in a sometimes hostile cultural environment. However, cosmopolitanism has always raised interesting contradictions for national arts policies, because it is in unavoidable tension with cultural nationalism, and the production of national culture has been the policy justification for arts funding support by the state. During the expansion of Western economies – largely built on colonisation – cosmopolitanism played an important role in opening up new markets and providing aesthetic narratives of globalisation that were recognisable at home: one saw one's nation making it on the world stage. But during periods of economic decline, the creative cosmopolitan seems less tolerated, as they become a reminder to citizens that only a select few have the opportunity to move to where the action will be in the future.

Deep down, even ardent nationalists realise that a discussion of 'culture' always exceeds the nation-state, and to closely investigate one's own cultural history uncovers relationships to many different peoples and nations. The very existence of diverse cultures within the nation-state attest to its potential undoing, its artificiality. No surprise, then, that the discussion of culture so often raises discomfort, and that while many desire the worldliness of the

cosmopolitan, they are also aware at a visceral level of their own inability to be as cosmopolitan as they might wish, due to a lack of economic, social or cultural capital. For those less able to move, the cosmopolitan represents a privileged elite who at the same time might be perceived as not sufficiently local or out of touch with the wishes of the ordinary person.

The shift of the creative sector's 'policy shelters' from cultural nationalism to creative industries seem to be at least partially in response to these problems in mandating a static, official culture. By transferring the supposed 'public benefits' from the content to the economic returns, these tensions can be suppressed. 'Listen taxpayer, you may not think that this film should be representing our people, but it's making money, so who are we to judge?' After all, there are few more patriotic statements than the acquisition of wealth in the country where one lives. But the success of an economic sector is increasingly tied to its export potential and so, in a roundabout way, the linking of culture with global capitalism only increases the problem. Even though creative industries exports might be promoted in the name of the nation's economy, the reality is that to be a good exporter one has to know one's market, and have experience outside of the nation. Exporting is not a vocation for the culturally insular. Perhaps for that reason, the cosmopolitan traders and creatives can be treated with suspicion: the exports of capital and culture open the gateway to potential cultural contamination, of the flows being reversed along the two-way trading streets.

This suspicion of the cosmopolitan who claims national economic development as a justification for governmental support of their sector might be well-founded. The rhetoric supporting development of informational industries like the creative

sector emphasises the threat of the manufacturing sector's migration to developing economies of cheaper labour power. But as Christopher May has noted, informational markets are highly competitive, and informational occupations are more subject to occupational 'task migration' than non-informational work. If Hollywood can hire creative talent working in your city, there's a good chance they can also hire it somewhere else, and the factors structuring this decision are based on factors largely outside the control of policy. Every country would like to believe that its unique culture and creativity will be recognised and could form the platform for a new economy. In that respect, the optimistic glow of the creative industries economic development advocate is not unlike the freshly minted fine arts graduate who believes their talent will furnish them with a successful art career. It might happen, but you sure want to have rich parents and a good backup plan. And as the famous art 'agony aunt' Mark Kostabi makes clear, in the arts, talent is only the price of entry into the game: more important are relationships that are based on how sexy and interesting you are to those with control of distribution channels.

The same is true of the creative industries. It might be possible to support development of creative sector SMEs, but how does a nation develop multinational, vertically-integrated production and distribution systems, which can make the financial decisions on where and how creative production occurs? Answering that question probably requires a different kind of research into the sector than mapping scale and growth in 'hard numbers'. And to gain political traction outside the cosmopolitan classes, our creative industries advocacy will also require a more sober account of the street level socio-economic impact of a highly informationalised economy – particularly among those not enrolled in frequent-flyer programmes.

Attr. y. man (29, ©©) looking for attr. y. won

POLITICS

THE CREATIVE CLASS?

The potential of the autonomous movement to exploit has appeared to be surprisingly small. Individual artists, designers, theatre-makers and other creatives have to alter to hip, flexible entrepreneurs who pay commercial rents for their working spaces just like everybody'. In the neo-liberal society that dominates the West, most especially since 2001, there is no space for elements that can't be translated into money, let alone being able to grasp the hegemony of society. The latter has always been the most basic function of creativity in Western society. Creating another new world, an ideal, a utopia, showing what is possible when thinking outside the existing paths. Needles to say, the neo-liberal system is not eager to give this creativity a chance and has defence-mechanisms to marginalise and exclude it effectively. To be honest, exclusion isn't even necessary anymore. A marginal existence in contemporary culture is basically the same as a non-existence. A possible solution? That's not easy to say. In 'The Creative Class-struggle', Lovink raises an interesting point about the growing class-struggle between those who see themselves as an economic factor, and the those who don't. 'It's a question of whether both groups have anything in common – or ever had', suggests Lovink. Good question. In the nineties, however superficial they might have been, both really had something in common. Graphic designers, marketeers and product-designers did participate in projects together with people who had the word 'creative' tattooed on their forehead. Businessmen from the beer-multinational Heineken – dressed in tie and suit – really admired the inappropriate designers from DEPT, who were smoking weed the whole day while making their designs – heavily influenced by street-culture – on their Apple-computers, spinning some wheels on the turntables that were situated in the middle of the office-space in case they experienced a creative dip.

The relationship between both groups – the creative class and the creative underclass – has changed dramatically in less than ten years. Reason? A change in who stipulates the cultural hegemony. Who is that? Hold tight: no one. There is no single party that dominates the cultural agenda. The government, businesses and media – the representatives who dominate the cultural landscape – are driven by the same goal: to eliminate risk. The result? Mainstream culture without any tension. The only solution to prevent real creative culture from extinction is conflict. Sadly enough the last few years the alternative left-wing institutions have given their faith to the 'multitude'. To be short, the idea that, when it comes to creativity, individuals who are loosely connected can make a fist and in the end affect real change. A very naïve lullaby. And therefore dangerous. Let's make some conflict! Seen in that light the proposal of Sybille Dekker doesn't seem to be that bad after all.
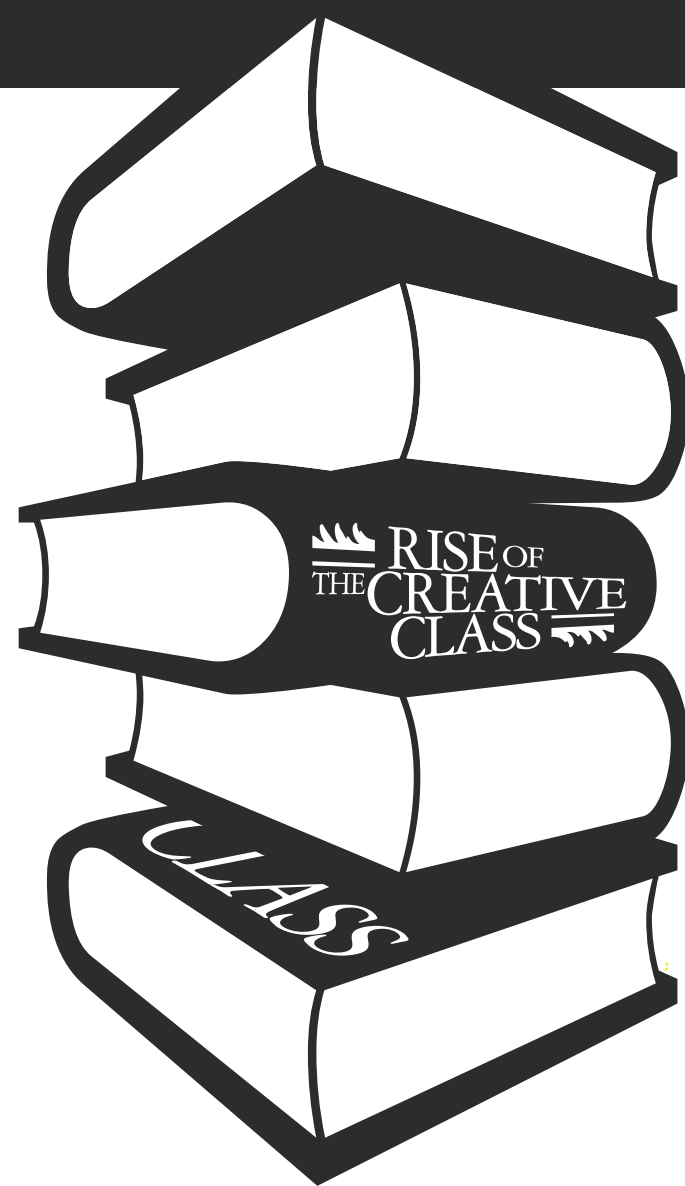
HOW STRANGE

■ BY ANNELYS DE VET – 'Rules serve the people, and we cannot allow the people to serve the rules,' argued the Dutch MP Femke Halsema during the debate over ex-MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali's naturalisation. She couldn't have summed up the problem any more succinctly.

The creative sector is crying out for a similar argument. It is becoming a pet of politicians, but there is a risk hanging in the air – one which has everything to do with the zeitgeist – that the creative industries will become an extension of political economic policy. After the industrial and digital revolutions, a creative revolution has evidently now dawned. The swing, however, must be and stay creative. The creative industries, as part of the field of the arts, must not be restrained. On the contrary, they need confidence, depth, experimentation, brainpower, and, especially, space. These things must come first, and rules only later. Recently I attended a gathering of the ACX (Amsterdam Creativity Exchange) at which Robert Marijnissen (the city's creative industries project leader) was one of the speakers. With a proud look on his face, he told us the city had set aside twenty million euros for the creative industries, to be spent in the next government term. Inarguably, this was a terrific decision. He asked the audience what ought to be done with this pot of gold. But their questions about the specifics of the agenda were derisively laughed off. 'We don't want professional committees or artistic rationales – just good simple ideas that politicians can understand without mediation from others.' What ideas would be honoured, and with what goals and expectations, was never made clear. It remained completely obscure what those 'good simple ideas' might be, and who would determine it. What was crystal-clear was that Marijnissen, too, has got Richard Florida's The Rise of the Creative Class on his nightstand. It is the bible of policymakers.

But alas, it is not creativity that has crept into their dreams, but hard cash. The twenty million is above all else an economic investment whose goal is to strengthen the financial position of Amsterdam. The creative industries are viewed as the basis for a future economic boom. It seems to have been forgotten that creativity also implies a creative way of dealing with rules. This city is over-regulated; every square metre has a purpose. Any unexpected movement is nipped in the bud. Where is the noise? Where is the undefined? The uncontrollable? A 'creative city' needs a humus layer – a layer of research, space, confidence, and many, many margins. This includes unsuccessful projects. Creativity arises from dialogue and a public sector that supports it without economic motives. It arises from a physically and mentally inviting public space where people are paramount, not financial interests or carefully thought-out instructions. 'Cultural' space like this needs political protection. It is not a sector in which money grows, but a field that gives shape to meaning. It is the domain in which Prime Minister Balkenende's debate about norms and values could have achieved more depth. It is not the Minister of Economic Affairs who should be the standard-bearer of the creative revolution, but a Minister of Culture. A member of government who can convince the Lower House of the importance of culture; someone who understands the social and moral significance of creativity. It is the job of the next cabinet to appoint such a minister. And – to jump ahead of things – Femke Halsema seems to me to be the obvious candidate. Because she understands that culture begins with people, with humanity, and with 'freedom as an ideal' (1).

1. Femke Halsema, 'Afterword' in: Bart Snels (ed.). Vrijheid als ideaal. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij SUN, 2005.

n/girl (25+, also ©©) for serious relationship

PLANET
THE IMAGE OF OTHERS

■ BY MIEKE GERRITZEN – In the 17th century artists mostly painted clouds and windmills, because these were things they often saw around them. Today, many artists work with symbols and logos because their environment is largely comprised of these. Logos make an imprint on the meaning of a place. Louis Vuitton, Burberry and Italian trattorias give international appeal to chic neighbourhoods. In the suburbs, exotic bakeries, Muslim butchers, markets and groups of young people globalise the street scene.

Logos arise out of a strategic interest: you can use them to differentiate yourself from others. But lately the logo has expanded into lifestyle, neighbourhood strategy, and business model. We sometimes forget that we live in the real world of houses, cities and infrastructure. We prefer to think about the knowledge industry and network strategies, and go searching for new models for commercial success. Structures we have learnt from the Internet are becoming recognisable in the streets. Ten years ago, we tried to look at the Internet as a metaphor for the real world. Digital cities and online shopping malls popped up everywhere. Since then, through study and experience, we have adapted the characteristic traits of the Internet, and we copy its strategies and methods in the real world. Things we can do online – networking, blogging, chatting, gaming, collecting, shopping and using – drive the contemporary world, offline as well. More and more, we get our groceries delivered at home, our Tom Tom navigation tool marks out our route, we buy microwaveable meals in the supermarket, and DIY stores allow us to put together our houses ourselves.

Digital media and technological developments have taught us to rank information and images, order content, and think in structures. We are skilled at designing new commercial models and innovative products and services: communities, GPS technology and throwaway culture have created a gap in the market for sustainable new recycling methods (McDonough & Braungart, 2002). With what we produce, we try to surpass what we have made in the past, and this has indisputable consequences for the future of our environment. Not only can we see store advertising, traffic signs and billboards as logos, but also buildings, cars, high-speed trains, petrol stations and airports. In spite of our growing ability to organise, structure and institutionalise, though, chance still exists. Alongside all the strategic models, some successful projects are developed without business plans. One example is the British student Alex Tew's famous Million Dollar Homepage. Looking for a way to earn money for his tuition, Tew decided to sell a million dollars' worth of

pixels to companies, organisations and individuals. The result was a quickly sold-out project and a beautiful image that can be considered a work of art.

The Sandberg Institute postgraduate design academy in Amsterdam has copied the idea of the Million Dollar Homepage and executed it on the front of its building. The façade consists of 16,000 tiles. We are hereby transferring an Internet idea to the physical world. We are enchanted by the exceptionally colourful effect of the multitude of logos, and in this project we are carrying out an investigation into the meaning of the environment as an information carrier. More and more, our environment is coming to resemble the virtual lives we lead. The Sandberg building is one result of this. Acquiring ads and selling ad space for the sake of a work of art is not the everyday activity of the artist. Commercial tendencies, the slow disappearance of cultural subsidies, and the rise of the creative industries teach us, though, that artists must take care of themselves. The idea of creative industries is actually not about industry but strategy: a strategy for promoting tourism and entertainment. In architecture, icons are taken as the starting point for every important new project. The intent is that tourists will want to photograph themselves in front of your building, and the media will reproduce it many times and thus publicise it, as has happened with iconic structures like the Eiffel Tower in Paris and Frank Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao. The effect of the creative industries is an increase in designer bars, designer products, art biennales, trend development and the production and promotion of superstars. Marketers will be the artists of the future.

ARTVERTISING: LET'S MAKE THINGS BIGGER

The Artvertising project proved itself before it even existed; the media did the work. The project has already become iconic – it is a media icon that piggybacked on the success and recognisability of Alex Tew's Million Dollar Homepage. Copying the model in the physical world, however, brought a different reality with it. It provided six months of full-time work for three students: telephoning, selling, collecting images, emailing, image processing, assisting with production, and last but not least, fielding reactions from people who opposed the project. The Million Dollar Homepage on the Internet is mainly aesthetic, while the Artvertising project is a physical confrontation, a spur to discussion and spectacle. Is it art or advertising? The Artvertising project brings together cultural and commercial images in a very direct way. The Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam has sold its skin. The tiles on the front of the

building are covered with art, logos, poetry, graphics, portraits, ads, one-liners, tags, declarations of love and other messages. We call it Artvertising, and we consider it a work of art. It reflects a contemporary society in which people, organisations and environments visually represent their identities in distinctive ways, designed as well as possible.

Today's artists' raw materials are images from the media. Images others have already created. Using others' images to create new work is often difficult because most images are copyrighted. 'Digitalisation chips away at the foundations of the copyright system,' Joost Smiers has written. 'We expect an alternative to appear that will recognise that thanks to the Internet, the world looks very different from how it did in the 19th century, when copyright came into force and the bizarre idea took hold that an artist is a genius who invents everything he or she creates him- or herself, almost in the name of God, and who therefore owns his or her creation.' The Artvertising project is an example of a work of art based wholly on the copying of an idea and a success strategy. The characteristic self-willed quality of this copy has proved its legitimacy as an artwork. The copyright system will change, and through this, the images around us will also change. If intellectual property changes, economic interests will be different, and the image will take on new forms and meanings. The image will no longer belong to the other.

www.sandberg.nl/artvertising

■ BY HANNE MUGAAS – A new generation of cultural producers is challenging notions of media, art, distribution and copyright. The development is taking place online where the popular archive is being modified and reused.

The Internet contains media previously unavailable outside of controlled broadcasts or locked into consumer products such as records and videos. Through the web, this media becomes accessible, and its usage and mutability becomes its main attraction to cultural producers. Working methods once the domain of hackers and the 'open source' movement are nowadays an everyday practice for many. The Internet has seen an explosion of creativity among young people who grew up with technology – their situation or subjectivity is coextensive with contemporary media. As with any visual style, web aesthetics and practice often rely on the appropriation of non-original media. People often copy or hack html codes from other websites in order to sample images, video or graphics. In this context, amateurs become empowered to create and distribute sophisticated and layered work. A practice like this tends to challenge copyright or, let's

COPY-PASTE CULTURE

say, money matters, but with the new evolvement and re-circulation of creativity, is there any longer such a thing as a copy? With every copy and paste, the context of the duplicate changes, creating a new original. On the web, the usage and modification of other people's media has become the rule rather than the exception. In most cases, creativity on the Internet has upset the standard legal notion of copyright.

Chris Moukarbel, an MA art student at Yale, got hold of the script for the then upcoming blockbuster World Trade Center directed by Oliver Stone. He shot a scene from the director's epic using the bootlegged script and a cast of students. Moukarbel leaked the scene on the Internet, where thousands of people linked to it. The student is now being sued by Paramount Pictures, which claims the movie clip is almost identical to the scene in Stone's production.

Jean Baptiste Bayle, an Internet activist based in Paris, has recently copied the structure of MySpace to create MyOwnSpace. The site is operated as its original, enabling social networking, although the advertisements are

links to Bayle's projects on the web. Bayle also created 'Popautomate', a project made in collaboration with the Internet personality Talk-Over, that lets participants write their own pop hits. If the participant writes a text, the software performs this text as music by stitching together small samples consisting of these words from different pop hits. In an effort to combat copyright laws, Bayle also created a website where one can download pop hits played in reverse.

The New York based artist Michael Bell-Smith launches his work both in galleries and on the Internet. Drawing on the Internet phenomenon of 'mash-ups', where different parts of popular culture are mixed together to create new meaning, he synced and layered the chapters of the R&B performer R. Kelly's DVD Trapped in the Closet, creating a new work which is the 'sum' of R.Kelly's originals. The artist Cory Arcangel, also living in New York, recently outsourced the American cult movie Dazed and Confused to India where it was dubbed from English to English with an Indian accent. Such hacking or remixing comments not only on the big business of outsourcing in America; it also

highlights the blurry lines between the export of American ideology and the export of American entertainment.

These artistic means of production are creating new fields for artistic work. Refusing to stay in their field, the artists move out of the art system to inhabit and modify popular culture. The Internet has created an unlimited space for finding and developing ideas and material. Warhol's 15 minutes of fame has become a truism on the web. No matter how good one's idea is, there is a very good chance that a college student somewhere has already extended that idea and become famous in the process. Art after the Internet is evolving, and some claim that the Internet is becoming art's final frontier. In a society of comprehensive image production, the distinction between art and non-art is already blurred. Art continues to be legitimized within the frame of the gallery system or art magazine. With the introduction of the Internet, memory, knowledge and culture are inherited in new ways. A work no longer needs to be seen. One consumes the documentation by googling. Information is gathered through appropriations. The popular archive of the Internet is changing what is considered worth noticing and thus what is to become history.

ART

CREATING WITHOUT ADDING

MORE AND MORE ARTISTS ARE DANCING TO THE RHYTHM OF THEIR OWN ECHO

■ BY MICHIEL VAN IERSEL – To remain true to your own creative ideas is the biggest challenge in this era of unlimited choice and all-encompassing creativity. This has become even more difficult as market forces continue to push the demand for designers and other creative people. They're all trapped in a whirlwind of product launches and never-ending design upgrades, which is spiraling out of control. Fuelled by the gospels of a global herd of creativity gurus, star architects and trend watchers, the boundaries between culture and commerce are getting blurred.

All over the world cities and companies are forced to compete for creative talent in order to upgrade their public image and to attract investors. City marketing depends heavily on picture postcard icons; buildings and artists that catch the imagination (and the credit card) of the rising number of people who can afford a plane ticket. Multinationals have incorporated the aesthetics and vocabulary of the art and design world in their core business. Every step on the way from the initial design phase to mass consumption is affected by a set of values and believes that used to be the exclusive domain of the artistic world, including uniqueness, beauty and political incorrectness. From design and fabrication to marketing and logistics and even after-sales: the whole production chain has become an extension and manifestation of the creativity hype. Every product appears to have been coated with the same global gloss and everyone involved is aspiring for the same Wallpaper fame. Autonomous artists and designers are no longer outsiders, but instead they are becoming part of a system that rewards the creation of the new and despises the old. Creative rebels are now responsible for so-called guerilla marketing campaigns for Nike, for covering up badly constructed products at IKEA, and for designing corporate headquarters for car manufacturers and media conglomerates. Moreover, creative people have become the prime target group for the very products that they themselves have created. More and more they are dancing to the rhythm of their own echo. They crowd the design bars they have decorated, drink the beer they helped to promote and buy the products with the logo they personally designed. This self-fulfilling prophecy will eventually lead them into a dead end street, where there is very little room for critical reflection and true inspiration. The triumph of the creative class could easily become a deadly trap. Locked in a golden cage, people will suffocate from their overwhelming output of luxury items and hollow signs. Or, as Truman Capote once said: an artist faces the danger of consuming himself. Instead of eagerly contributing to this vast overproduction of imagery and products that are burdening today's world, the creative vanguard should look for alternative ways to express their ideas. They should try to abstain from playing the 'more is more'-game and be cautious before wasting their creative talents on repeated tricks and self-exposure. It's time for them to break out of this regime and to refuse the demand for more as an act of defiance. But how can you reach fame and fortune or more noble ambitions without joining the unstoppable troops on the creative front? The solution might lie in the idea of creating without adding, which can be illustrated with the following strategies of artistic mavericks who stopped materializing their own vanity and repressed the urge to constantly inflict themselves on the world:

1. DESTROYING
Artist Michael Landy received much attention from the public and the media with Break Down, his performance at an abandoned C&A department store in London's Oxford Street. During two weeks, Landy shredded all his tangible possessions in front of an audience, including his Saab, passport and clothes, together with his own and other artists' works. It was a political and almost ritualistic act of self-sacrifice and creative destruction that required a complex division of labor to catalogue and destroy all of the 7,000 items he possessed

2. ALTERING
Gordon Matta Clark is most famous for his works that radically alter existing structures. His 'building cuts' (he would cut a house in half vertically or drill huge holes in walls) change the experience of the building and its surrounding environment. By working with absence he tried to expose 'the ambiguity of a structure, the ambiguity of a place' in order to 'redefine the given'.

3. ERASING
Back in 1959, Robert Rauschenberg, asked Willem de Kooning to participate in an art project by donating a drawing. The drawing De Kooning submitted was carried out in crayon, pencil, ink, and graphite. Rauschenberg slowly removed these materials, thus erasing the drawing completely. Eventually he put his own autograph and a new title on the drawing: 'Erased De Kooning Drawing, 1953'. By doing this he had not only erased de Kooning's work, but he had also presented the act of 'erasing' as his own unique work of art.

4. ERODING
The Swedish designers of Front deliberately incorporate randomness and fate in their work. They allow uncontrollable forces such as gravity, UV/sunlight, and animalistic behavior to eat away existing objects. Wallpaper by rats shows the traces of rats that have gnawed on rolls of wallpaper. The holes make a repetitive pattern that reveal the old wallpaper. And Table by insects is composed of paths in wood made by insects that form a table-top pattern.

5. NEGLECTING
When asked by the Hermitage to advise on the renovation of the museum the architect Rem Koolhaas proposed to do as little as possible. 'Why modernize at all?' Koolhaas asked his client. 'At what cost modernize? Can one abstain from it?' And, he wonders, 'could authenticity flourish in what remains untouched' and can neglect be used 'to expose value' in a museum that is rich in objects but poor in resources?

6. VANISHING
The project Vanishing Point, put together by designer Mauricio Arango, consists of a map of the world connected to a database fed by news coming from various international newspapers. The visibility of each country on the map depends on the quantity of media coverage the country receives, so those countries that do not make the headlines disappear progressively.

7. RECYCLING
The artist Marcel Duchamp has changed the way we look at ordinary objects by turning them into works of art. While talking about his famous readymade, the urinoir, he has said that 'whether Mr Mutt made the fountain with his own hands or not has no importance. He chose it. He took an ordinary article of life, and placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view and automatically created a new thought for that object'.

8. ABSTAINING
Composer John Cage is best known for his performance called 4'33', in which a pianist sits at a piano, not hitting any keys or producing any sound for four minutes and thirty-three seconds. Basically, the entire piece consists of a well-considered silence. Although 4'33' leaves almost no room for the pianist's interpretation and musical talent, the piece offers an enormous freedom to the audience. What you hear when you listen to 4'33' is far more complex than with any other piece of music. The composer produced silence so we could discover music by hearing the ticking of the clock or the sound of our own breath.

Perhaps 4'33' could act as the new soundtrack or hymn for the creative class, as it enables people to listen to their own creative thoughts and their inner voice that sometimes says: stop!

ALL KINDS OF DESIGN

■ BY HENDRIK JAN GRIEVINK – Since the death of the modernist designer, style has exploded into a universe of styles and substyles. In the nineties, the heady days of the information economy, the main questions for a designer were: what is information and what does it look like? The aesthetics of the information itself and the act of coding, decoding and recoding became the main quest for every designer with self-esteem. Now, we're facing the Creative Economy. In return, we can now see the impact on the design world. The main questions at this very moment seem to be: what was creativity again and what the fuck does it look like? Writing in 2006, I proudly present you All Kinds of Design:

THE STRATEGIC DESIGN ®
THE IT'S NOT AS BORING AS IT LOOKS DESIGN ®
THE PIXEL BASED DESIGN ®
THE I'M A MACFREAK DESIGN ®
THE TRASHCAN DESIGN ®
THE NOSTALGIC DESIGN ®
THE DIGITAL LEFTOVER DESIGN ®
THE DATA-BASED DESIGN ®
THE FULL COLOR-IS-FOR-FREE DESIGN ®
THE BLACK IS BACK DESIGN ®
THE DESIGN FOR THE MASSES ®
THE THAT IS OBVIOUS DESIGN ®
THE THAT HOW IT'S DONE DESIGN ®
THE I DESIGN THEREFORE I AM DESIGN ®
THE I CAN'T DESIGN I JUST DO IT ANYWAY
THE I WANT TO ORGANISE OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES DESIGN ®
THE I AM AGAINST EVERYTHING DESIGN ®
THE I TAKE DECONSTRUCTIVISM TOO LITERALLY DESIGN ®
THE WE ARE PROFESSIONALS DESIGN ®
THE I MISS THE LETTERPRESS DESIGN ®
THE I READ HEADY BOOKS DESIGN ®
THE I LIKE TO HIDE DESIGN ®
THE I GET PAID A LOT DESIGN ®
THE INDUSTRY OF COOL DESIGN ®
THE LIFE IS A FUNNY PICTOGRAM DESIGN ®

THE DESIGN ® FOR DEBATE
THE DESIGN ® FOR MONEY
THE JUST FOR MYSELF AND FOR FRIENDS DESIGN ®
THE I SHOULD HAVE QUIT WITH THE BUSINEZZ YEARS AGO DESIGN ®
THE I'M ALMOST 80 AND STILL HAVE FAITH IN MODERNIST DESIGN ®
THE I'M ALMOST 21 AND STILL HAVE FAITH IN MODERNISM DESIGN ®
THE I ONLY MOCK OTHER DESIGNERS DESIGN ®
THE UNDESIGN ®
THE HAPPY CLAPPY DESIGN ®
THE LICK-N-STICK DESIGN ®
THE THIS IS MY HOBBY DESIGN ®
THE I CAN'T HANDLE COMPUTERS DESIGN ®
THE I LIKE TO CONFUSE YOU DESIGN ®
THE EVERYTHING YOU KNOW IS WRONG DESIGN ®
THE I KNOW MY CLASSICS DESIGN ®
THE I DON'T BELIEVE IN DESIGN ® DESIGN ®
THE I NEVER READ A BOOK DESIGN ®
THE FUN WITH WORD ART DESIGN ®
THE SHOP AROUND DESIGN ®
THE I MAKE FUNNY ORNAMENTS DESIGN ®
THE NOW THIS IS FANCY DESIGN ®
THE THIS COST A LOT OF MONEY DESIGN ®

THE I FIND TYPEFACES VERY IMPORTANT DESIGN ®
THE I WATCH TOO MUCH MOVIES DESIGN ®
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST DESIGN ®
THE EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED DESIGN ®
THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING DESIGN ®
THE I LOOK LIKE A ROBOT DESIGN ®
THE I AM DRESSED UP AS CINEMA DESIGN ®
THE MEDICINAL PACKAGING IS MY INSPIRATION DESIGN ®
THE I GET MY INSPIRATION FROM THE STREET DESIGN ®
THE I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WORLD DESIGN ®
THE LET'S MAKE THINGS BETTER DESIGN ®
THE JUST DO IT DESIGN ®
THE REAL THING DESIGN ®
THE I SEE THINGS DIFFICULT DESIGN ®
THE THE WORLD IS NOT SO SIMPLE DESIGN ®
THE I REFLECT MY POLITICAL COLOR IN DESIGN ®
THE I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS BUT IT LOOKS LIKE IT DESIGN ®
THE TECHNIKALLY SKILLED DESIGN ®
THE BUT IT SERVES A PURPOSE DESIGN ®
THE BUT NOW WE'VE GROWN OLDER DESIGN ®
THE MY CLIENT IS MY BEST FRIEND DESIGN ®
THE MY CLIENT IS MY WORST ENEMY DESIGN ®

THE I JUST DO THIS FOR A LIVING DESIGN ®
THE IN FACT THIS IS ART DESIGN ®
THE SOCIAL AWARE DESIGN ®
THE ROMANCE OF EARLY MODERNISM DESIGN ®
THE PLAY WITH ME AND FIND EVERYTHING OUT YOURSELF DESIGN ®
THE THIS IS REALITY DESIGN ®
THE DEMOCRATIC DESIGN ®
THE EASY DESIGN ®
THE I'VE MADE THE PROFESSION WHAT IT IS NOW DESIGN ®
THE THOSE WHERE THE DAYS DESIGN ®
THE IT IS SO GOOD BECAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE NOT BEING DESIGN ® ED DESIGN ®
THE I JUST WANT TO PUT A SMILE ON YOUR FACE DESIGN ®

FREE AFTER JOHN KÖRMELING

PRECARIOUS
IMMATERIAL CIVIL WAR

PROTOTYPES OF CONFLICT WITHIN COGNITIVE CAPITALISM

■ BY MATTEO PASQUINELLI – In early 2006 the term Creative Industries (CI) pops up in the mailboxes and mailing lists of many cultural workers, artists, activists and researchers across Europe, as well as in the calls for seminars and events. An old question spins back: curiously, for the first time, a term is picked up from the institutional jargon and brought unchanged into the alt culture, used so far to debate other keywords and other post-structures like network culture, knowledge economy, immaterial labour, general intellect and of course Free Software, Creative Commons, etc.

After years of fetishising precarious labour and the abstract gift economy, a Copernican shift is taking place (hopefully): the attention focuses on autonomous labour and autonomous production. Here comes a new consciousness around the creation of meaning: a creation of value and – consequently – a creation of conflict. It is the political re-engagament of a generation of creative workers (before confused among chain workers) and at the same time the 'economic' engagement of a generation of activists (as the Seattle movement was more concerned about global issues than their own income). My creativity = my value = my conflict. And backwards.

In this article I try to frame a missing part of the debate around the 'creative labour'. First, I point out the collective dimension of value creation: that is the social processes behind creativity, the creative power of collective desire and the political nature of any cognitive product (idea, brand, media, artefact, event). Question: what or who produces the value? The 'social factory' produces the primary value (and its attendant conflicts). Second, I spotlight the political space of cognitive competition. I do not focus on labour conditions or neoliberal policies within Creative Industries, but on the public life of immaterial objects. I put cognitive products in a space of forces, framing such objects from outside rather than inside. I am also trying to answer another question: if production goes creative and cognitive, collective and social, what are the spaces and the forms of conflict? As a conclusion I introduce the scenario of an 'immaterial civil war', a semiotic space of which the Creative Industries are only a small part.

So far it seems a linear scenario, but there is also a grey zone to take in to consideration: the massification of the 'creative' attitude. 'Everyone is a creative' is a common slogan today. Many years after Benjamin's artwork, the mass artist enters the age of his social reproducibiliy and 'creativity' is sold as a status symbol. The social base of Creative Industries is getting bigger (at least in the Western world) and unveils new scenarios. In its first period, Creative Industries becomes hegemonic (as a fact and as an concept). In a second phase, they face an entropy of meaning and producers. Thanks to the Internet and the digital revolution, every day we witness the conflicts of the latter stage.

We suggest the term 'civil war' as conflicts within cognitive capitalism have no clear class composition and share the same media space. Moreover, if it is true that 'there is no more outside ' (as Negri and Hardt state in Empire) and that 'there are no longer social classes, but just a single planetary petty bourgeoisie, in which all the old social classes are dissolved ' (as Agamben puts it in The Coming Community), conflicts can only take the form of an internal struggle. The multitude has always been turbulent and fragmented. If Florida dreams of a 'creative class struggle' (where fashion victims are the first casualties, we guess), we push for a civil war within that 'comfortable class' (and within a comfortable notion of multitude). Moreover, 'civil war' is a link to the glorious resistance of Barcelona (a political background that interestingly fuels its current social capital) and also a memo of the internal fights of any avant-garde group (anarchists and communists started to shoot each other then).

On the other hand, 'immaterial' is the constant struggle on the stage of the society of spectacle: a cruel Ballardian jungle of brands, pop stars, gadgets, devices, data, protocols, simulacra. Immaterial exploitation is the everyday life of precarious workers, in particular of the younger generations, quite aware of the symbolic capital produced by their life 'put to work' (new trends and lifestyles generated by what post-Operaism calls biopolitical production). The immaterial civil war is the explosion of the social relations enclosed in the commodities. In his book Les révolutions du capitalisme, Lazzarato says that 'capitalism is not a mode of production, but a production of modes and worlds' (engineered by corporations and sold to the people) and that the 'planetary economic war' is an 'aesthetic war' between different worlds.

Immaterial are also the usual conflicts between brain workers despite all the rhetoric of knowledge sharing and digital commons. It is the joke 'a friend of mine stole me the idea of a book on Creative Commons'. It is the well-known rivalry within the academia and the art world, the economy of references, the deadline race, the competition for festivals, the envy and suspicion between activists. Cooperation is structurally difficult among creative workers, where a prestige economy runs like in any star system (not to mention political philosophers!), and where new ideas have to confront each other, often involving their creators in the fight. As Enzo Rullani points out, there is almost more competition in the realm of knowledge economy, where reproducibility is free and what matters is speed.

The parasite is the parallel exploitation of social creativity. There are indeed modes of exploitation of creative work that are not based on intellectual property and produce more value and conflict. As we have seen, David Harvey introduces the framework of the 'collective symbolic capital' and suggests that 'cultural interventions can themselves become a potent weapon of class struggle'. Political activism in the cultural sector, creative industries and new economy has always remained within these fictional enclosures, making local protests and claiming more cultural welfare or stable contracts. Recently, a more radical request against the exploitation of social creativity is about a basic income for all (see www.euromayday.org). Conversely, Rullani notes that a welfare system transfers both innovation and risk to the state apparatus reinforcing it. However, what Harvey suggests is to take action not only on the level of collective symbolic capital, but also on the level of the parasite exploiting the cultural domain. A point difficult to grasp for the radical thought is that all the immaterial (and gift) economy has a material, parallel and dirty counterpart where big money are exchanged. See Mp3 and iPod, P2P and ADSL, free music and live concerts, Barcelona lifestyle and real estate speculation, art world and gentrification, global brands and sweatshops.

A form of resistance hinted by Harvey in the case of Barcelona is an assault on the myth of the 'creative city' rather than wanna-be-radical reactions that can contribute to make it even more exclusive. If the people want to reclaim that symbolic surplus-value vandalised by few speculators, we can imagine but a re-negotiation of the collective symbolic capital. Here comes the option of a grassroots rebranding campaign to undermine the accumulation of symbolic capital and affect to the flows of money, tourists and new residents attracted by specific marks of distinction (Barcelona as a tolerant, alternative, open-minded city, etc.). Moreover, another field of action hinted at include the specific areas where the 'art of rent' plays (particular districts like the Raval or Poblenou), where the symbolic accumulation could be reset by a less symbolic sabotage. In the case of Barcelona the 'parasite' to spotlight is the real estate speculation, but we could apply that intuition to a broader scale.

Recent forms of resistance have almost always been quite representative and media-oriented, dreaming of the rise of a new cognitariat or of a repoliticisation of the collective imagery and its producers, just like in the golden 60s. Many activists and artists are aware of the risk of overcoding of their messages and practices. In the end, many actions of protest succeed in rising the attention economy around their target. Traditional boycotting of big brands can mutate into free advertisements promote the enemy. Creative workers should start to recognise the surplus-value of imagery they produce beyond their immaterial objects and all the remote political effects of any sign. Here we leave the symbolic, entering the economy of the symbolic. We are waiting for a generation of cognitive workers able to mobilise out of the imagery.

CREATIVITY

YOUSERISM

■ BY DEBBIE MOLLENHAGEN – It is clear that technology replaced the world as we thought it. Removing physical barriers, technology has empowered people to share whatever they want at the speed of light. Radically decoding and globalising social life, it has created the autonomous user. The user is in pursuit of self-reflection but simultaneously experiences a collective existence. The user is often characterized by an ongoing effort to use more. His language is reduced to symbols and references. He extends beyond his physical realm, his rules are technical and social. He is a star in his own universe.

Copy creativity

Copy right. With the rise of new economies focussed on cheap mass production of consumer goods, the old economies were forced to reorganise. The new economies with their enormous potential of cheap labour attracted industrial activities which used to be at the heart of the power of old economies. The old economies tried to protect their markets by creating import barriers and by financially subsidising their industries. But it was clear that these measures would not be sufficient to maintain their economic power in the long term. The projected decline of their economies forced politicians and other authorities to undertake an analysis. Their attempts to segregate the world led to the strategy of merchandising creativity, which soon resulted in suits talking about creativity. We reengineered the class society and the creative class was born. Copy left. Lawsuits regarding copyrights became commonplace while the liberation of creativity had been attributed to the willingness to share. Works of creativity were no longer confined to the surfaces of libraries and museums. With the global distribution of tools, everybody became an artist, a designer, a photographer, a film maker, a publisher, etc. The collective was no longer pending on a vertical hierarchy but on a horizontal hierarchy where the user became an active participant in youserism.

Sueing suits

Suits were flying left, right and centre, the western system of vertical hierarchy was under attack. The public were sueing fast food companies, claiming they were responsible for their obesity. Law suits were filed against tobacco companies seeking to hold them liable for cancer. Environmentalists were sueing oil companies for pollution, stock holders sued company directors for malpractice and employees sued companies for breach of contract. Governments bailed out failures. The world was changing, multinationalists were held accountable. In 2005, Ahold was subject to negative media attention due to the dismissal of employees. The reason for dismissal was their age, they were considered too old already at the age of 18. The commission for equal rights filed a report stating that on many occasions employees were encouraged to leave or were simply not accounted for their contract hours. Ahold had no legal right to act in this manner. But the employees had every right to sue them for breach of contract. Unfortunately, because legal procedures are costly and lengthy, many did not claim their rights. Now everybody is a lawyer. Go to www.multinationalists.com. Using this website you can generate a legal concept letter to sue a multinationalist for breach of contract in 5 minutes. You can send the letter by e-mail or by post. Sending the letter by post makes it legally binding. The generated letter is based on an existing letter drawn up by a practising lawyer, in a representative case of breach of contract. Youserism is the new consumerism!

www.multinationalists.com

THE GAMES INDUSTRY AND THE CRISIS OF CREATIVITY

■ BY JULIAN KUECKLICH
A spectre haunts the videogame industry – the spectre of *E.T. The Extraterrestrial*. The game, which has been elected Worst Video Game of All Time by Electronic Gaming Monthly, was one of the last games produced before the Video Game Crash of 1983. Atari made five million copies of ET, most of which, according to legend, were buried in a New Mexico landfill because people wouldn't even take them for free.

What had dealt this mortal blow to the American videogame industry was a crisis in creativity. As videogame journalist J.C. Herz recounts, 'a tide of ticky-tack clones washed 1983 Christmas videogame sales into the garbage disposal […]. A flood of less-than-thrilling games triggering a vicious cycle of discounting and loss. The more games merchants relegated to the discount bin, the more game companies slashed their prices just to compete.'

The game industry's revenue dwindled from a staggering 3 billion dollars to a mere 100 million. Game companies folded, and staff was laid off. To add insult to injury, a Japanese toy manufacturer beat the Americans at what they considered to be their own game. Three years after the crash, Nintendo introduced the Nintendo Entertainment System, which outsold every other system on the market at that time. Twenty years later, it seems like the videogame industry is ready for the next crash. The market is awash in derivative titles, and innovation is mostly confined to increasing frame rates and polygon counts. Sales of the new Xbox 360 have been sluggish, and the PlayStation 3 is expected to be shunned by many gamers for its 600$ price tag. And while the quirky Nintendo Wii has generated quite a bit of advance buzz, not a single unit has been sold so far.

The games industry is still relying heavily on intellectual property created in other sectors of the entertainment industry, such as television and film. And when games companies succeed in creating their own IP, they usually exploit it mercilessly by creating sequel after sequel. The shelves of game stores are full of licensed games such as the *Lord of the Rings* series, and sequels of successful games such as *Grand Theft Auto 3*.

In the highly competitive games market only outstanding titles will recoup their costs. At the same time, however, creating games that break the mould is seen as a business risk. Hit titles can cost up to 6 million dollars to produce, and this figure is expected to double or even triple during the lifecycle of the next-generation consoles. For many game publishers failure is not an option. Concentration is often seen as the only viable strategy to avoid risk. Super publishers such as Electronic Arts own successful franchises which generate revenue year after year, which allows them to spend more on the marketing of games which are not yet an established brand. The example of *The Sims* shows that this strategy can enable publishers to create new successful franchises, which generate profits over an extended period of time.

Third-party developers, i.e. developers that are not owned by publishing houses or console manufacturers suffer the most from the publishers' risk-averseness. Not only do the contracts with the publishers require the developers to conform to a very tight schedule, they often also have to part with the rights to their intellectual property after the completion of the game. In addition they often receive only a fixed payment rather than royalties on units sold.

For the people working in game development this is bad news. During the 'crunch times' before the release of a new game, 80 hour work weeks are normal. And increasingly, crunch time is no longer the exception but the rule. Job security is also an issue, because developers tend to retain only core staff when they cannot immediately find a follow-on project after having finished a title.

The crisis in creativity thus directly affects the people working in the games industry. Nevertheless, the computer games sector is still regarded as an attractive employment opportunity, especially among hardcore gamers. Unsurprisingly, this is also the demographic from which the games industry recruits most of its members, thus creating a giant feedback loop.

And labour in the games industry may well become even more casualised. Computer game modification is a practice that still generates innovation for the industry, but it is also a breeding ground for teams of workers who are content to work long hours without adequate compensation. While some, like *CounterStrike's* creators Minh Le and Jesse Cliff, may hit pay dirt, most will remain nameless, unrecognised, and unemployed.

THE DETRITUS MANIFESTO

■ BY BRENDAN HOWELL – It is obvious at this point that one constant of bourgeois society is the production of waste. Some of this waste is unpleasant, unusable or downright dangerous but a large proportion of this waste is in fact a simple matter of fashion.

People of means throw out perfectly good stuff every day, not for lack of utility, but because these objects have gone out of style. For artists who lack benefactors, survival is a key question and art and lifestyles are often compromised in the name of economic survival. Our revolutionary goal is to become parasites of the bourgeois. Like fungi and dung beetles, we must learn to live on the detritus of those more affluent than us as their production of waste is guaranteed.

The true revolutionary must be cheap cheap cheap! And the cheapest things are in fact free. Always remember that for every $5.15 saved you have one hour to indulge in your art.

The revolutionary cheapskate must define himself in constant dialectical opposition to fashion. When 'exposed brick' becomes the backdrop to every yuppie porn scene, we will shift to cinder blocks, form-stone or aluminum siding. If your 60's bric-a-brac is the hot item on eBay, it's time to sell. In much the same way, the revolutionary cheapskate must choose her medium in defiance of trends. As the Jones toss their VCR, take up the helm of analog video. Eschew the pricey flat-screen in favor of the free CRT. Breathe new life into nearly defunct cassette tapes. Relish in the aesthetic of the scratchy, the imperfect and the obsolete Media-culture is even more subject to the whims of popularity. Hence, the cheap asshole must also mine the landfill of junk film, stale print and audio of expired copyright. Unlike the contrived appropriation of the postmodernists, the cheapskate artist steals images out of necessity and proximity.

Refuse to upgrade. Does the 10 year old PC not send email, print essays and surf the web? Does the '91 Mazda hatchback not go from point A to point B? New things are shiny and the lights are blue instead of red but new functions are superfluous. Resist the seduction of the new. The rat race is tough but you can't lose if you don't play. Sentimental attachment to material is the greatest threat to our revolution. Any cultural innovation can be co opted by power structures and the only resistance is to give it away willingly and freely. As soon as a material or mode of production becomes hip or expensive, it must be abandoned like a sinking ship.

When Alexander the Great visited Diogenes and asked whether he could do anything for the famed teacher, Diogenes replied: 'Only stand out of my light.' Perhaps some day we shall know how to heighten creativity. Until then, one of the best things we can do for creative men and women is to stand out of their light. (Scott Adams)

CREATIVE

FROM CULTURE TO CREATIVITY

■ BY MICHAEL KEANE – China's first symposium on the creative industries was held in Shanghai in November 2004. Although it was attended only by Chinese speakers, it was clear that a consensus was emerging about the role of creativity. By January 2005, the idea of creativity had come onto the radar of government, think tanks and academics in China. During the ensuing year the idea of cultural clusters, centres and precincts provoke animated discussion at several 'international' conferences and seminars. It seemed as if the creative economy was set to follow the path of the high-tech sectors through national and local tax incentives and foreign investment. Articles and books appeared. In July 2005, Beijing hosted China's first international conference Creative Industries and Innovation, during which the vice-minister of education, Wu Qidi spoke about the importance of nurturing creative educational infrastructure.

How had this change in language occurred so rapidly? Why had creativity – a concept previously confined to the rarefied academy of the arts and approached with clear suspicion by Communist ideologues – been rehabilitated and set the task of reforming unproductive sectors? The answer to this lies in the genesis of the concept, its association with urban renewal, and the restructuring of the Chinese economy in large Chinese cities. The turn to creativity in China is an important part of the great leap forward. In order to understand the success of the idea, however, it is necessary to explore the translation and the diffusion of the term creativity from its Western origins into what was by 2004 fertile Chinese soil. Lydia Liu provides a way of understanding this cross-cultural translation through the idea of a 'super-sign'. Liu writes about the translation of terms such as barbarian, sovereignty and rights into China during the period of China's engagement with Western powers. These terms were contentious because they were central to treaties that were signed. For instance, the British forbad the use of the character for barbarian (yi), a term that had a much more diffuse usage throughout Chinese history. She asks if we can recapture the true identity of language when such problematic terms are embedded in new territories. She says that a 'supersign' 'is not a word but a hetero-cultural signifying chain that criss-crosses the semantic fields of two or more languages simultaneously and make an impact on the meaning of recognizable verbal units . . .' (Liu 2004: 13). The term creativity is arguably a supersign, not just across linguistic and cultural barriers but across disciplinary boundaries. Nevertheless, it quickly became an article of faith among business and policy makers in China. Widespread benefits would accrue from creativity, whether it was individual, collective, or organisational creativity. By 2004, it was clear that something new was occurring in Beijing and Shanghai. The creative economy was a 'new wave' and it was ready to break. A short list of its benefits for China included wealth creation, renewal of traditional resources, enhanced productivity combined with cleaner greener production, and the ever-present theme of industrial catch-up.

However, the benefits of the intangible creative economy in China are difficult to measure, not just because of the rubbery nature of Chinese statistics. There are definitional and categorical issues that don't disrupt the accounting of the manufacturing industries, on which China has based its development model. This is a problem that faces those who advocate the creative industries as a growth model. What is in? What is out? What is the core and what is non-core? Are they just another industry or do they deserve special attention? While 'creative industries' appears to break down the foundations of rigid notions of culture, some regard the term as oxymoronic. How can creativity, essentially something emanating from the individual be an industry? To understand the nature of these misunderstandings, it is useful to explore how benefits of creativity are framed within disciplinary-specific pigeon-holes.

To take an idealist position first, creativity is ex nihilo: it comes out of nowhere, at least it seems. In the Buddhist tradition, the idea of beginner's or empty mind predisposes the sage towards illumination uncluttered by the past. In the creative industries, however, the past—and especially the recent past—is the key to success. John Howkins argues that most creative industries thrive by being repetitive or derivative. One can ask: just how creative or original are formatted game and reality shows that reproduce formulas? Is there a difference between creativity and innovation that allow us to deconstruct the supersign? Innovation emphasises the role of R&D. Early innovation models (for instance, the OECD models of the 1990s) were based on linear processes. This began with basic knowledge breakthroughs and moved through successive stages – seeding, pre-commercial, testing and prototyping. Finally, the new knowledge was built into commercial applications that were diffused through consumer and business adoption. Contemporary models now take account of the complex, iterative and non-linear nature of innovation. This complex model has multiple feedback loops, and seems to favour creative commons approaches. This is sometimes loosely referred to as open innovation.

Approaches to creativity and innovation
The following are several approaches to creativity and innovation that help to understand the uptake or rejection in China of what is arguably a Western concept. I have attempted to indicate where possible if models reflect some source of inspiration, the role of external actors, and varying degrees of creativity and innovation.

THIS IS HOW PARIS WOULD LOOK IF WE WOULD BUILD THE TWIN TOWERS NEXT TO THE EIFFEL TOWER

CREATIVE CHINA: CUTTING AND PASTING ?

■ BY BERT DE MUYNCK – China's right to copy – it was a topic on the MyCreativity mailing list in early August 2006. It started with a link to the sinocities-website and included the following text: 'With the speed that the city construction (in China) is developing now, sometimes there is just not enough time to design something new. See how some architects find creative solutions'. What followed on the website was a list of 11 projects of internationally renowned architects, featuring one of their projects and under them the Chinese copies, unclear if these design were made by Chinese offices, the implication being that they were.

They were not really copied buildings (except for Le Corbusier's church design for Ronchamp), but renderings featuring highly similar buildings in a different setting. If they would be or were ever built was not clear at all – maybe they were just test models, a fairly normal procedure in the architectural practice (look, this is how Paris would look if we would build the Twin Towers next to the Eiffel Tower). A small discussion followed this posting, attempting to explain the causes of this seeming culture of copying. Some pointed in the direction of the lack of 'sufficient' education and a 'controlling body' to monitor works submitted by artists/creative talents and ensure copyright protection are adhered to; someone tried to connect a project on Global Cultural Cloning with this topic (and, having already secured a publisher for his book, gave some dubious importance to the call); but finally the discussion sank in the swamp of the right to copy DVD's, sharing files, China's own development as an exporter of content, MP3's and business models for the creative industries. In fact, since the first message, the discussion never touched the essence of China's right to copy (architecture). Without doubt in China one can question the right to copy, innovation, creativity and cloning. During the last decade China built a substantial amount of new architecture and within that boom, creativity, as we tend to understand it, played a dubious role. The real creative work seems to come from the foreign architects; for them China is an amazing opportunity to build audacious architecture. In this respect, some call China a playground. But is it inherent in the Chinese culture to copy, or is it due to the fact that local architects don't have enough time to be creative? In other words, how much time does an architect need to have to be creative? This is a question of labour power as much as anything.

Architectural Copyright
The issue of architectural copyright is not solely a question for China. In recent years, Western architecture has also had its share of this debate. This could be seen in the notorious case of Gareth Pearce, who brought Rem Koolhaas and Ove Arup to court stating that they had plagiarised and misappropriated concepts he had developed as a student for a town hall in the London Docklands. As we can read in the report of high court of justice in London, Mr Pearce claimed that Mr Koolhaas used his concepts: 'the accusation goes beyond plagiarism, for he (Rem Koolhaas) is accused of surreptitiously and dishonestly making or obtaining copies of the claimant's plans and using these directly in the design of the Kunsthal by a process of cutting and pasting'. The evidence brought in by Mr Pearce, and his expert, didn't wash, and the whole attempt was later described as a failure. Another example was the case of Thomas Shine, who sued David Childs and his Freedom Tower for former the World Trade Center site in New York, stating it was copied from his work done at the Yale School of Architecture. In this case the challenge for proving a case of copying was based on the following: 'In order to prove this allegation, Shine will need to show that the design elements in his plan are distinctive and creative, which the experts said would qualify his design for architectural copyright protection. Shine would also have to prove that Childs had access to his designs, but Childs has already admitted that he saw Shine's works when he served on a panel of jurists invited to evaluate students' work for a studio class at Yale in 1999'. The question is what does 'substantially' similar mean? To resolve the issue, the court refer to a checklist: they focus on the unique and creative elements of the designs, disregarding commonplace stock elements, since only original elements receive protection under copyright law, so the legal experts say. The legal standard for architectural copyright in these cases are normally based on the impressions of an ordinary observer rather than an architecture expert.

Architectural Education in China
Returning back to the supposed copying of Western architecture in China, the MyCreativity discussion touched on the topic of education as an issue. In China, architecture education is a possible reason, since it is only in the past twenty years that education has been thought of as an issue, starting with a discussion in the early 1980s between two possible directions: a debate between 'modernism' and 'national form', but is seems the differentiation of these two positions turns more on matters of external appearance than anything else. When it comes to architectural education, Stan Fung

CHINA

Individual creativity

The 'heroic artist' taps into society's collective anxiety. He or she is often unconventional and irrational, challenges conventional thinking, but needs to be rationalised or developed by (non-creative) management bureaucrats. These intermediaries might be specialist/experts (e.g. agent system, promoters, psychologists); for instance, rationalisation may be required to make the person work more productively, to realize their economic or creative potential, or work within a team. According to cognitive psychology such individual creativity is embedded in a domain (e.g. visual arts, literature) and monitored or regulated by a (creative) field (e.g. judges, critics, censors). The usual view, however, is that individual creativity is a natural talent and this supports the Florida arguments that cities and regions needs to attract more creative types and to do so must provide the stimulating open environment that these 'types' need. There is a corresponding emphasis on novelty and creation of pure ideas (although this is misleading; there are always precedents). This conceptual upstream front-end model of creativity lends itself to the support of intellectual property as defined in the DCMS. This is sometimes typified as Western individualism and is borne out of civil society, something that is said to be frail or hardly existent in China. The western approach privileges basic research, discovery, breakthroughs and great insights. The rewards are Oscars, patents, and Nobel Prizes etc.

Cultural creativity

The aesthetic or performative model of creativity uses traditional technique and training to master performance or achieve high skill level. This form places a high reliance on craft, acquired skill, and replication of authenticity. It has a high economic and social value, as Pierre Bourdieu has argued. It's not surprising that arts communities push the cultural capital argument in association with broader economic development agendas. Cultural creativity is often not about novelty but creativity as performance, fitting into a pre-existing form or genre. Is Zhang Yimou creative or is he just a fantastic cinematographer? In this model of creativity the performativity can transcend the form, genre, as in jazz improvisation. In these instances it produces incremental changes. Cultural creativity applies to individuals or groups and fosters idea of excellence and craftsmanship. The question, however, is who defines excellence? (see for instance John Carey). In China, this model has been dominant in discussions of creativity

Imitative innovation

Another oxymoron, but imitation can and does create a platform to produce incremental innovations although it is often an end in itself. In Confucian societies imitation was highly valued; it constituted a bridge for the novice to emulate the master before forging one's own style. The mentoring tradition (both West and East) accepts imitation as a process. This model deliberately takes from other cultures; in the past the famous Chinese writer Lu Xun celebrated 'take-ism' as a means to renew China's creativity. In this positive sense of taking, there is a transfer of knowledge. In the economics of creative or cultural industries, however, imitation is usually associated with low risk-taking and opportunistic market behaviour. In China's media industries during the past decade, this has been the de-facto model of development and value-maximizing, at least in short-term strategies; in turn, this model is dominant because there is little effective copyright enforcement.

THE TERM CREATIVITY IS ARGUABLY A SUPERSIGN

Adaptive innovation

The risk-taking role of the artist is de-emphasized in many eastern and indigenous traditions, where the artist is a transmitter. The adaptive creativity model favours harmonisation of the creative process through brainstorming and consensus. Adaptive creativity puts emphasis on idea refinement and recycling of ideas; the process may begin with recycling and testing of old ideas or formats; the Japanese lotus blossom or MY technique (developed by Matsumura Yasuo) was the key concept behind the spreadsheet program Lotus 1-2-3. A core theme is initiated and participants are required to think of related ideas or applications of the idea. The idea of cultural re-conversion (Canclini 1991) is a kind of adaptive creativity and refers to putting culture in new forms (for instance, traditional culture on digital media). This model is suited to applications more than breakthroughs. It 'produces' useful outcomes; it is more about innovation than creativity. The problem is that original 'out of the box' ideas may be stifled by consensus; some have argued that the failure to reward the individual within the group has locked in Japanese creativity.

Regulated creativity

The quota model of creative production is an industrial outcome-based approach. Under socialism the cultural form (for instance socialist realism) was predetermined by decree. Emphasis was placed on production and distribution with no attention to demand. In short, in this top-down model there was no feedback loop, and no need for one. This is an extreme closed systems model. The scientific management of cultural producers maximizes efficiencies (e.g. The Leninist model). The Chinese creators were engineers of the soul and as such they were charged with specific tasks, and were not tasked with breaking the mould. However, this regulated standardized model applies to much mass commercial culture. Cultural production is often low risk-taking; it is based upon an industrial model; the design is predetermined or supplied from outside the production unit.

Cluster-driven creativity

The current cluster industrial approach to development in China is linked to economic efficiency and use of available cultural resources and supply networks so as to maximize available skill sets and processes. Division of labour is high, production remains relatively standardized, and comparative advantage guides choices of clusters. While product development is high, inter-disciplinarity and mixing of approaches is low. The benefits of this model are associated with the question: what is needed? China needs growth and the industrial cluster provides this, whether it be hi-tech or 'creative industry'.

Mixed creativity

Cultural mixing promotes a greater chance of useful hybridity and serendipitous insights. The question is more than what is needed; it is 'what is possible?' Innovation occurs on the edges of cultures and disciplines. Project teams mix skills-sets, various knowledges and talents with a view to breakthrough innovations. Combinations of different types of thinking bring surprising results. These can be lead to product outcomes that are radical. The difficulty is in the translatability of terms and skill sets across the disciplines.

Open innovation and creativity

This is probably the most radical model of creative innovation with the attendant highest degree and rate of disruption. Open innovation refers specifically to selective partnering to achieve efficiencies. On a deeper transformative level, however, the role of users as innovators breaks down most of the linear models mentioned above. The role of communities of practice within the creative commons leads to a more rapid collision of ideas, which produces the effects of 7 (above) but without the same proprietary lock-in. In China's creative industries strategies this model is seldom discussed.

The above eight models are an attempt to encapsulate the contradictions and slippages associated with the transfer of the term creativity from the West to China. In fact, the Beijing-based think tank, the Creative China Industrial Alliance, is currently attempting to find a creative mother language that sits China. In this domestication of the supersign, individual and collective creativity must co-exist, the trouble-making attributes of creativity are erased, and the value-adding aspects speak to economic development, that is, China's Great new leap forward.

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and Zhao Yang point in their text 'Towards a New Chinese Architecture' (Domus 864, November 2003) – the title itself a copy of Le Corbusier's classic manifesto Towards a New Architecture – to the following lack in criticality in China's architectural education system: The contrast between critical internationalism and corporate modernism, or between critical regionalism and popular regionalism, were widely neglected. In the course of the last 15 years, the work of KPF has attracted as much attention and admiration in China as that of Tadao Ando and Richard Meier . . . . One consequence of this is that the work of Rem Koolhaas and other leading Western figures is received in China without the commentary that mediates the work and its audience in the West. Their heroic status is amplified in a critical vacuum free of nagging doubt.

Double Dutch

The issue of copying, perhaps in this context better rephrased as learning from, Western architecture should not solely focus on the so-called 'pure image' architecture that Western architects deliver. The 11 cases in the list-posting are best understood as an illustratration of broader conditions, and all too easilty place the creative architect in a corner he doesn't want to be in. In China, it's not only the Chinese who are responsible for such cut-and-paste design, or just-in-time practices; this is a strategy of delivering architecture. Opportunities give way to opportunists, as one can see in the case of Atelier Dutch (nomen est omen), that built Gaoqiao Dutch New Town in Shanghai, and Kuiper Compagnons (one of the big Dutch companies building in China) that built Gaoqiao Cultural Plaza, featuring a copy of the Palace on the Dam (Amsterdam), and Bert Roos and Teun Notenboom. So why not Chinese architects, who realized in Shenyang a theme-park called Holland Village (featuring a mishmash of Amsterdam's Central Station, the Peace Palace in the Hague and the bridge Kroonburg in Leiden, all in life size)? This crap and paste technique is indicative of an international corporate refusal to give Chinese people the potential of creativity, to give them a new image, a new identity and living environment. It is alarming that foreign architects (with their knowledge, content, design skills and other blablabla) are responsible for this.

Conclusion

Paul Rice, from the Shanghai offices of Atkins, the British firm of architects brought in to supervise the building of Thames Town, replied to her as following: 'This is not really a question of copying or mimicking. What we are trying to do in Thames Town is set an architectural idiom in a modern context'. In the end, according to the Telegraph, 'Ms Caddy decided that imitation was the sincerest form of flattery, and suggested to the China Daily that the two towns could be twinned. She even called for a plaque to be put up, referring to the original buildings in Dorset'. So much for creative copies.

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CONSIDER

INFORMATIONAL LABOUR IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

■ BY NED ROSSITER – Cultural and media research on the creative industries has tended towards a policy orientation, and it needs to be complemented with other methodologies, practices and fields of inquiry. Some are obvious, such as political economy, critiques of intellectual property regimes, the adoption of Creative Commons and the business implications of non-proprietary licenses such as Copyleft. And some are less obvious, such as the question of network socialities, the virtuosity of the general intellect, the precarity of creative labour, and so forth. By undertaking transdisciplinary practice to investigate the material conditions of international creative industries, my own approach forges connections between these complementarities with the aim of organizing new institutional forms of agency and sustainability for creative labour and life in an informational era of network cultures.

It is perhaps necessary to make a distinction between the cultural industries and the creative industries. For the occasional observer, it seems as though the cultural industries imperceptibly morphed into the creative industries at some stage during the late 1990s. But this shift was no accident. The rise of creative industries corresponds with two key moments, one to do with a Blair government policy intervention in 1998 and the other to do with the informatization of social relations inaugurated in 1995 by the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). And both need to be understood in the historical context of the dotcom era – a period in which start-ups were the unsustainable virus and boosterism infiltrated any number of discourses and institutional practices.

The shift from cultural industries to creative industries is also figured in the move from negative dialectics to network socialities. Such is the passage from state-regulated culture industries and broadcast media to creative production within informational economies and network media. In a more hesitant way, perhaps the remainder common to cultural industries and creative industries is the continuum of creativity as instrumental in the policy realm and autonomous in the realm of experience.

The policy moment of the creative industries is a case in which a structural determination takes place. The vast majority of academic research and local government initiatives associated with the creative industries was, and still is, shaped by government policy directives. Within the institution of the university, creative industries are essentially a research perspective derived from government policy interventions reflecting a regulatory commitment that in many ways exceeds that of the cultural industries. Here we find yet another contradiction internal to the ideology of the neoliberal state, which purports to deregulate institutional impediments to global capital flows. Academic perspectives have only gradually and reluctantly, if at all, articulated their own critical creative industries idiom in response. This stems from the mission set out by national governments for academics to undertake rather crudely understood exercises in 'mapping' the empirical scope of creative industries.

In 1998 and then revised in 2001, the Blair government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) produced the Task Force Mapping Documents that sought to aggregate 13 otherwise distinct sectors such as media and advertising, architecture and design, music and entertainment, interactive video games, film and even the arts and crafts, which are part of what is also known as the heritage industries. This diverse field of practices was subsumed under the primary definition of the DCMS, which has since gone on to define how the creative industries have been adopted internationally by governments and policy researchers: the creative industries, according to the DCMS, consists of 'the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. The informational dimension of creative industries, and the move away from the cultural industries, is embodied in this definition – economic value in the creative industries is derived from the potential of exchange value in the form of intellectual property. In other words, the creative industries are a brand economy. Even more so, the rise of creative industries has to be understood in conjunctural terms.

THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ARE A BRAND ECONOMY

Witness, for example, the rise of the information-form as the dominant commodity-form, which is also how the creative industries relate back to culture industries. The WTO's regulatory architecture for intellectual property is itself a consequence of this.

But there are some important aspects to the DCMS's definition that are too frequently and easily overlooked by most researchers: namely, the conditions and experience of creative labour as it relates to intellectual property regimes. This analytical omission and political abandon by academics who at earlier stages in their careers were not shy about their leftist persuasion is not to be unexpected. Many, after all, have been infected by the dotcom hype, and party like it's still 1999. The reasons for this have to do with temporal rhythms that differ across institutions, and even though government and the university are firmly enmeshed in market economies, they none the less move at a speed slower than industry. And this means the crash of the NASDAQ in April 2000 might as well not have happened.

While it's healthy for social ecologies to maintain a diversity of temporal modes, it has none the less lead to a form of obscurantism in most research on the creative industries. Here, I am speaking of the invisible remainder that operates as the 'constitutive outside' of 'the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. In assuming a link between creativity and proprietarization, the analytical and political oversight of most creative industries research is that it fails to acknowledge the fact that 'the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' is conditioned by the exploitation of labour-power. For this reason, most of the empirical research on creative industries paraded by academics and policy-makers alike is not only deeply unimaginative, it also results in research that holds little correlation with the actually existing material conditions of the creative industries. And it's at this point that my arguments on creative industries take off.

In studying the relations between labour-power and the creative industries my interest has been twofold: first, at a theoretical and political level, I have sought to invent concepts and methodologies that address the question of the organization of labour-power within network societies and informational economies. Here, my research relates to and has been informed by what the political philosopher Paolo Virno calls 'the thorniest of problems: how to organize a plurality of "social individuals" that, at the moment, seems fragmented, constitutionally exposed to blackmail – in short, unorganizable?' Out of an interest in new forms of agency in the creative industries, my research considers how currently disorganized labour in the creative industries might institute a mode of organizing sociality immanent to networked forms of communications media.

Secondly, my research has investigated the double-edged sword of precarity within post-Fordist economies, to which the creative industries belong as a service economy modulated through informational relations. The precarity of labour-power within the creative industries is double-edged in the sense that it enables the attractions of flexibility – the escape from the Fordist time of the factory and the firm – yet accompanying these relative freedoms and expressive potential for new forms of organization is the dark side of what researchers such as Ulrich Beck, Scott Lash, John Urry and Judith Butler have variously called risk, uncertainty, complexity and insecurity. Such fields of inquiry resonate with the concept of organized networks, neither of which are rarely addressed from within creative industries research, but hold tremendous potential for the development of the kind of critical perspectives that I think are missing.

While there is a distinctive homogeneity in the way creative industries travels internationally as a policy discourse, the material, economic and cultural diversity of neoliberal capitalism – its amenability and capacities for adaptation to national and city-state modulations – enables creative industry style developments to be translated in ways that seem improbable if analysis focuses exclusively at the level of policy reproduction. Such considerations reinforce the need to understand the variable and uneven dynamics of global capitalism, whose indices include the movement of cultural commodities, labour and ideas. The modern world-system of nation-states play a significant role here in regulating such mobility through the mechanisms of trade agreements, border controls and IPRs.

Here it is necessary to analyse the constitutive power of intra-regional, international macro-structural and trans-local micro-political forces. In other words, in order to make intelligible the patterns of global neoliberalism, one must attend critically to the peculiarities of subnational scales (the micro dimension) and weigh these against international forces (the macro dimension). Only then does it become possible to assemble the complex relations that compose the shifting cartographies and life-worlds of neoliberal capitalism. One place to start such analyses is on the institutional front, for all action is embedded in institutional settings of one kind or another.

UNCREATIVITY

PLEA FOR AN UNCREATIVE CITY

■ BY GIDEON BOIE AND MATTHIAS PAUWELS (BAVO) – In this self-interview, we take up some 'frequently asked questions' concerning the 'Pleidooi voor een oncreatieve stad' ('Plea for an Uncreative City'), which comprised part of the Reinaart Vanhoe exhibition Neo-beginners in TENT, Rotterdam Center for the Arts, in September 2006.

In the 'Plea for an Uncreative City', you make a remarkable argument. You say that the creative industries, given their instrumentalisation in the function of certain political-economic processes, should make efforts on behalf of 'uncreativity'. Aside from the question of what it means to be uncreative, I wonder in the first place if it's meaningful to assume a conspiracy theory. Okay, creative talents are often taken in by crude manipulation on the part of political and economic interests. They're often asked to live in buildings to prevent them being squatted, and are used to creating a bohemian climate. This can appear to the outside world as if the creative industries are the lapdogs of real-estate agents and the government. But don't forget that this only a half-truth. In reality, these groups are more often than not at each other's throats. Where does this fury toward the role of the creative industries come from?

First of all, we're not so much talking about 'certain political-economic processes'. Creating a bohemian climate, creating differentiated living environments, and bringing light, creative forms of production back to residential areas are, each and every one, must-dos in the field known as 'urban development'. As you know, 'urban development' is supposed to be the natural successor to 'urban planning'. We believe this is only true if you start by assuming a neoliberal ideology. We explain this in the Plea.

Fine, but my question was about criticism of the creative industries…

Well, you can't simply separate this background from criticism of the complicity between the creative industries and the current neoliberal regime of creative urbanity. So, to answer your question: you must distinguish between objective and subjective complicity. We can speak of subjective complicity when a creative actor – a visual artist, a designer, an architect – consciously participates in the current use of culture as a means of ratcheting up the spectacle value of public space. Or of simulating democracy there by, say, organising participatory events when you don't believe in them. This often happens: you hear architects say that the focus groups brought in by city governments don't measure anything and are hardly taken into consideration during a project's final calculations. In this case, the creative actors are endorsing the dominant definition of creativity. Or at any rate, they are failing to see its problematic character. But uncritical types like these are easy for a critic to dispense with…

But what about the group that consciously opposes such uncomfortably uncritical cooptation? When we talk about the creative industries, we're also talking about people who put their professional activities in the service of society in a very engaged way. They are the model of concerned citizens.

This is a much more difficult category to criticise. We definitely believe that many people in the creative industries are doing their jobs with the best intentions in the world – and thank goodness. In the many reactions we received to the 'Plea for an Uncreative City', one category stuck out. Specifically, it was the group that wholeheartedly approved of our criticism of the neoliberal misuse of creativity on the one hand, and on the other made clear that their own participation in these policies did not conflict with their own assumptions. After first expressing their unhappiness with the current 'neoliberalisation' of creativity in no uncertain terms, they proceeded to give an account of their own furious battle with these powers. One emphasised that he had received no subsidies for his contributions. Another argued that their progressive initiative was mainly a thorn in the side of governments and project developers and gave an account of the heroic battle they had fought to realise their plans as well as possible. Still others were proud of the way in which they had opportunistically secured government subsidies: if you stay good friends with the city council on the official level, on the substantial level you can keep doing your own thing.

Heartwarming, isn't it?

It is here that our notion of objective complicity is relevant. We argue that the absence of a relationship with government – or the presence of a negative relationship – does not mean that the cultural forces in question are not objectively complicit in the creative-city regime. By this we mean that, however much resistance an alternative cultural initiative might have encountered, it doesn't take away from the fact that it functions very well within the urban economy as proof of the city's high creative factor. In spite of themselves, many alternative cultural projects are communicating to the outside world that the city possesses a happening urban subculture – which is precisely what the city managers would like to see happen in their attempt to attract investors and highly qualified workers. Creating a bohemian climate has everything to do with conscious, concerned citizens who go their own way and don't allow themselves to be slotted into the system just like that. This is objective complicity: even if as a creative actor you are ignored by the government or market, you have no ambition whatsoever to work with them, and your only link with them is a meagre subsidy that you're opportunistically using for a progressive goal… your creative activity can still fit perfectly into their urban development strategy.

> THEY'LL GIVE YOU A FATHERLY SLAP ON THE SHOULDER AND ENCOURAGE YOU TO BE A BIT MORE AUTHENTIC IN FUTURE

Okay, but that is part of the strategy that's being applied: using the system's own means against it.

It's not that easy to undermine a system from the inside. You must not forget that objective complicity is separate from subjective attitudes. With all due credit, in practice, most heroic stories about 'subversion from within' are nothing more than a bunch of words that serve to cloak one's own actions in innocence. A lot can be said about 'subversion from within', but you have to take into account all the conditions – where, how, and in order to do what? If you don't, you might as well forget it. With that kind of strategy, you'll inevitably end up in the position of what Immanuel Wallerstein, speaking about racism, called the unpaid agents of the ruling order. In the case of the creative industries, we're talking about the unpaid agents of the ruling neoliberal order.

Are you saying that the creative industries should simply assume their own strength? Would it help if we just stopped lying awake worrying about the cooptation of the term 'creativity' by city managers? Maybe then it would become clear that their creativity is just a farce.

This strategy, too, is quite popular among cultural activists. We are, however, as sceptical of the strategy of indifference as we are of the strategy of working from the inside. The argument is that cultural forces that dislike the dominant discourse about creativity should simply keep searching for alternative forms of creativity. History will decide which definition wins. This position strongly resembles that of the 'multitude', as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri describe it

in their manifesto Empire. The multitude, they argue, is the new revolutionary subject, and in its struggle it should not relate itself too closely to the existing political channels or economic systems. By realising its own desires in the first place, sooner or later it will effortlessly make the existing order superfluous and irrelevant. This oppositional strategy sounds great, and yet it is naive. It does not see how, in practice, subversive, creative actions that situate themselves miles away from political, ideological or economic games and do their own thing precisely confirm the dominant discourse about the creative city.

You have already argued that. How does it further the discussion?

Well, by saying that regardless of which strategy you employ, you must always keep in mind that the ruling ideas are not those of the rulers. It was Slavoj Zizek who improved upon Marx with this formula. Without doing violence to reality, we can say with confidence that this is also true for the creative city. After all, doesn't everyone agree that it wasn't the city managers who invented the creative city? Meanwhile, they have also come to understand that they themselves are not creative, but are only good at bringing in profits – hence their endless search for 'authenticity'. In this, they show that they know that a creative city arises out of an 'underground' cultural scene. How can you then announce with a straight face that your 'indifference' is helping you to advance your revolutionary struggle? Let's be honest, you're just laying the groundwork for the city marketeers who 'see it all coming' from the margin.

Once again, you make it sound as if a seamless collaboration exists between the creative industries and the city managers. How do you explain the rising frustrations on the parts of both parties?

The city managers' frustration is of a totally different order than that of the creative industries. The creative industries' frustration is mainly a symptom of the struggle over who will claim 'authorship' of creativity. To a degree, the city managers join in this struggle – hence the continuous conflict. But as everyone knows, authorship isn't everything. Concepts are temporary in nature and are strongly determined by certain material or political circumstances. So don't count yourself rich if you have authorship: what's 'in' today is tomorrow's worthless historical artifact. You'll make yourself look ridiculous if you don't come up with something creative every now and then. It's more important to be quick as a flash to exploit every piece of creativity that appears on the scene – after all, creativity is just a disposable product. The city managers' frustration is concentrated on these quickly changing conditions. So it's of a totally different order than that of the creative industries. It's more of a worry about access to new sources of energy. So if city managers drop a creative group, it's more out of 'disinterested interest'. Rest easy: in spite of all the conflict, the city managers will always be back; they'll give you a fatherly clap on the shoulder and encourage you to be a bit more authentic in future.

That changes the perspective somewhat…

You can be sure of that: it calls for a rethinking of the label 'creativity'. We're not arguing for 'uncreativity' just for fun. It's more about setting aside the prevalent compulsion to be creative and creating a conceptual space in which we can think about the fate of the creative industries themselves. We must stop complaining about the recuperation and cooptation of so-called authenticity by the existing order. We all know those mantras, and they often can't disguise the fact that they're simply proof that the creative industries themselves don't know which way to turn. Can we please have a little self-knowledge and self-criticism? The designer Daniël van der Velden was absolutely right when he said that the 'creative industries' label is very dangerous because it obligates designers to be permanently creative. It supposes that as a designer, artist, or whatever, you can never stop being creative. You must pull something novel out of your hat again and again, because this is part of the nature of creativity. If 'creativity' still has any meaning for the creative industries, then it's about time it unleashed its creative ability on breaking through all this crude blackmail for what it is.

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WELCOME TO

SPEED DATING IN CREATIVE WONDERLAND

■ BY ALEX DE JONG – Pechakucha is Japanese for the sound you hear when a lot of people are talking to each other in small groups. 'Chitchat' or 'chatter' would be imprecise translations for it in English. Since 2003 'pechakucha' has been the name of a monthly event in the Tokyo nightclub SuperdeLuxe. The success story of this 'event concept' runs parallel to the rise of the Creative Industries. It offers a platform where creatives can present themselves to their peers and a broad audience in the informal setting of a nightclub. Now that the event can be visited in more than 30 cities around the planet, it allows us to ask the question if pechakucha is just another word for a nice evening out. Or, can it help to understand the ungraspable mechanisms of the Creative Industries?

I'm coming up, so you better get this party started
Mark Dytham of Klein Dytham architects (KDa) started his nightclub SuperdeLuxe in the middle of the Tokyo clubbing area Roppongi in his architectural office just after the Japanese economic 'bubble' collapsed. Chock full of ideas but no clients around to afford them, Mark decided to start a nightclub in his office. This way he was able to afford his rent and have a good time with potential new clients at the same time. Soon Mark's office space, a former cab station, was completely taken over by theatre productions, DJ's, dancing people and events. Employees that were not involved in the club activities had to move their desks to another place.

Sleeping around to get airtime
When the nightclub turns out to be a perfect excuse to meet interesting people, Mark Dytham comes up with a new concept for a club night in SuperDeLuxe. Tired of long lectures of 'important' designer stars, he wants to learn about ideas that are not limited to the establishment of the designer world. When he notices that possible clients, museums but also art galleries are not interested in unknown talented designers and artists he starts to organise Pecha Kucha Night (PKN). His aim is to give people a chance that 'normally would have to sleep with an editor of a magazine to get airtime'. PKN dispenses with the formal lecture set-up where a big star stands in front of a silent audience. Instead, the audience and speakers mingle and talk. The presentations are just an excuse to bring interesting people and ideas together in one room. Like a genuine speed dating night, 12 to 15 people give presentations with the same structure. Combining the old school 'slide show' with an 'elevator pitch', only 20 images can be shown for 20 seconds each. This way each presenter will have 6 minutes and 40 seconds speaking time with no control over the speed of their images. Architects, fashion designers, graphical designers, advertising agencies, game designers and students are all invited to stand up and speak. Frequented by around 400 people, the monthly night in SuperDeLuxe was an instant success. Students, emerging designers, fans as well as star designers are fighting for a place on the podium. Designers from abroad even extend their stay in Tokyo to be part of a PKN.

Pechakucha is a virus
Within a year the concept of PKN spreads over the metropolises of the world like a good flu. Infected visitors, former employees and other enthusiasts take the concept home and start organising it themselves. Soon after its start in Tokyo the event moves to Bern, Sydney, Los Angeles and London. Creatives get together in sweaty nightclubs and theatres to tell each other about their latest ideas. But the PKN flu does not stop there. The number of events and places is rapidly growing. New York, Rotterdam, Bogota, Glasgow, Bangalore, London, Berlin, Buffalo, Delhi, Groningen and Melbourne are now all having a regular night for their Creative Classes to meet and exchange ideas.

The power of the weak links
That PKN is more than just a good club night proves the strength of the original Tokyo edition, which will have its 37th edition this fall. In Tokyo rents are among the highest in the world. Apartments of 25 square meters can easily cost a 1000 euro a month. When you combine this with the fact that wages for people active in the Creative Industries tend to be very low, you can understand that Tokyo is a difficult city to maintain yourself as an architect or graphic designer. For example, the average architect in Tokyo has working days of 15 hours, 6 days a week for a payment of around 1500 euro. Everybody in the Japanese megalopolis knows you can only get ahead when you are recommended. The problem, however, is to get to know somebody that can recommend you. PKN bridges that problem. It offers a public private party by creating a platform for new talents to recommend themselves. Of course PKN plays a marginal role in Tokyo where social hierarchies are among the most rigid in the world. But it does offer the splintered groups and disciplines a night to meet and join forces. By having the different creative sectors speed date each other, the power of the 'weak links' is installed. Only the weak links introduce new knowledge into a network. As a result, the network receives new impulses and the opportunity to renew itself. PKN offers the possibility to create new connections between parties that normally would not meet each other. In Tokyo PKN offers the Creative Industries the chance to grow in importance and strength. More importantly, PKN installs global nodes around which local networks of the Creative Industries can enhance themselves.

Creative Wonderland
In London, the city where the notion Creative Industries was invented, PKN demonstrates its full potential. The organisers Max Fraser and Marcus Fairs have hooked up with ICON magazine, Creative London2 and the advertisement agency Harrison, Troughton and Wunderman to organise their version of PKN. Instead of looking for a nightclub like SuperDeLuxe the organisers opted for the formal setting of the auditorium of the museum ICA. For 18 euros 200 visitors can attend 12 to 15 short presentations of the rising stars of the Creative Industries of London. The success is overwhelming. All the shows sell out within hours without any real public announcements. The organisers discover London is too small for their night and take it to Glasgow, Belfast, Manchester and even Cannes. In June 2006 they organise the biggest PKN so far in Saddler's Wells Theatre in London where 1,500 people attend the night. Zaha Hadid architects, Nigel Coats, Future Systems, and Ekow Eshun are among the parties that present that night, sponsored by Bentley, Vitra and Bombay Sapphire.

Don't believe the hype, organise it
Although some might argue that in London the event has fallen back to the principle of blockbusters where big names dominate the scene, there is something undeniably impressive about the British version of PKN. They managed to lift the creative scenes out of the shadow lands where some still believe people from the Creative Industries reside. Their edition of PKN is well supported by companies that could benefit from the talents of the people that speak on a PKN.3 Also in the background governmental organisations like Creative London, Design Council and the British Council sponsor the night and make suggestions for speakers and how to organise the event. PKN in London makes clear that the Creative Industries do not grow as spontaneously as sometimes is assumed. It needs a strong promotion campaign and serious commercial parties that put the possibilities of the scenes to work. It is not an accident that 3 of the 10 most influential people in the art world are located in London4. In October 2006 an auction to raise money for the renovation of the Whitechapel Art Gallery collected 4,13 million Euros with new work that artists made for the occasion. The UK government stimulates its Creative Industries in any possible way. Through sponsor programs of the British Council the rise of the British creatives is not limited to the island either. Creatives are seen as key players in the promotion of the United Kingdom abroad and are sponsored as such.

From shoe gazing to looking around
The PKN epidemic proves that beyond Tokyo and London, architects, designers, fashion designers, game developers, writers, artists and even some cooks and hairdressers are waiting to be offered a chance to put their talents to work. PKN is one of the first events that successfully installs new weak links into networks of scenes that previously engaged auto-celebration in exclusive ways. Creating new connections, airtime, recommendations and chances for people generating and exploiting new content is one of the first steps the Creative Industries should take. But only when local governments are willing to invest and companies start to see the possibilities of 'out of the box' thinking can the Creative Industries live up to their hyped up reputation and transform into a real economic power.

1 Alex de Jong is part of Studio Popcorn (www.studiopopcorn.com) and co-founder of Pecha Kucha Night Rotterdam and Amsterdam.
2 Creative London is part of the London Development Agency (the Mayor's agency for economic development
3 Bombay Sapphire is not only sponsoring the event it also collaborates for a design competition for a cocktail glass. The advertising agency Harrison, Troughton and Wunderman is involved not only for the exposure but mainly because that way they are close to talents that might help them create new add campaigns that are less and less restricted to magazine and television only.
4 Artreview, Is Art Power? The Power issue, London, October 2006.

■ BY MAX NATHAN – Where does innovation happen? It's global, an international network of information and ideas. But it's also local, with activity clustered in a few key places.

OF LOFTS AND LATTE
TESTING THE CREATIVE CLASS MODEL

Why? The chancellor's favourite idea, endogenous growth theory, tells us that economies grow through innovation and knowledge transfer. Cities are good for this. They offer density, proximity and variety. This encourages firms to cluster together, and helps them share people and ideas. Add a university to the mix, and an innovation system may develop – a triple helix of education, business and public agencies spinning out knowledge, skilled workers and start-ups. We see this happening in a few well-known places – Oxford, Cambridge, Silicon Valley and Boston's Route 128 corridor. Can it take hold elsewhere? Manchester is having a go. The city is reinventing itself as a knowledge-driven 'ideopolis.' After decades of decline, it now outperforms most of its northern counterparts. Its new economy is powered by the airport, financial services, culture, retail and the public sector. The city also has a massive higher education base – four universities with over 110,000 students. At the heart is the University of Manchester – formed in 2004 by the merger of the old Victoria University and UMIST – which employs over 10,000. The new vice-chancellor, Alan Gilbert, has recruited the economist Joseph Stiglitz – the first of five planned Nobel laureate hires – and set up a number of public-private ventures, plugging into the city's embryonic life-science and hi-tech sectors. He has also established an IP regime to encourage spin-off companies. The approach seems to be working – in 2003-04, the university achieved the third highest spin-off income in Britain.

Manchester's universities are part of the city-regional 'Knowledge Capital' framework, a scheme that aims to remodel the urban economy around the research and science base. Manchester is also one of six 'science cities', a Treasury-DTI initiative to promote knowledge-based urban growth. In short, Manchester is trying to create its own innovation cluster. What are its chances? We know less than we'd like to about how clusters evolve, and how policy can help. Studies of high-tech hotspots highlight some success factors, however. First, legacy. History is a big influence on cluster growth: Oxford and Cambridge developed the right sectors at the right time, helped by proximity to London. Manchester lacks the strategic location, but has all the pieces in place. Second, critical mass. Large companies, like Siemens in Munich, can help drive innovation and foster a network of specialised firms. Manchester lacks the same manufacturing profile – but has strong growth in air transport, telecoms and creative industries, as well as life sciences. Can it use the university base to accelerate future development? Third, funding. US high-tech clusters are bolstered by a combination of university endowments, private venture capital and public spending. British universities don't have the same legacy funding, and the bulk of government research money still flows into the southeast. Manchester will need to grow its public-private funding base, and agitate for further injections of Whitehall cash. Fourth, leadership. In Boston and Silicon Valley, a few entrepreneurial figures drove things forward, connecting researchers, business and city government. Manchester has the right ingredients: strong city leadership, an activist vice-chancellor and an engaged business community. Can the birthplace of the industrial revolution nurture an innovation revolution? Public and private leadership is probably the key. Above all, it's the Manchester way of doing things that can help turn the vision into reality.

CREATIVE CITY

WE ♥ YOUR TALENT

CALIFORNIA ÜBER ALLES

■ BY TOBY MILLER – Of all the places seeking generation or regeneration through a strategy designed to stimulate the so-called 'creative industries,' California should be the last on the list. But in many ways, California 'created' such things. It's a cultural policy citadel, a model for the creationists among us who covet big consultancies and make big promises.

For all the claims made about Hollywood being laissez-faire, a blend of corporate capital and state aid animates the industry. That rhetoric is so powerful that even those who directly benefit from the way that public-private partnerships drive Californian film and television willfully deny – or are unable to perceive – the realities all around them. Yet there are close to 200 publicly-funded film commissions across the US, dedicated to subsidizing Hollywood; there is Pentagon funding; and there are ambassadorial services from the departments of State and Commerce.

State, regional, and municipal commissions offer producers reduced local taxes, free provision of police services and the blocking of public way-fares. The California Film Commission reimburses public personnel costs and permit and equipment fees. Hotel and sales tax rebates are almost universal across the country, and such services even extend in some cases to constructing studio sites, as in North Carolina. The Californian State Government offers a 'Film California First Program' that covers everything from free services through to a major wage tax credit and was due to begin a new tax credit in 2004, until this was overturned at the appropriations stage due to the state's deficit.

On the war front, Stephen Spielberg is a recipient of the Defense Department's Medal for Distinguished Public Service, Silicon Graphics feverishly designs material for use by the empire in both its military and cultural aspects, and virtual-reality research veers between soldierly and audience applications, much of it subsidized by the Federal Technology Reinvestment Project and Advanced Technology Program. This has further submerged killing machines from public scrutiny, even as they surface superficially, doubling as Hollywood props. The governmental-screen industry link was clearly evident in the way that film studios sprang into militaristic action in concert with Pentagon preferences after September 11 2001, and even became a consultant on possible attacks. The University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies uses military money and Hollywood directors to test out homicidal technologies and narrative scenarios. And with NASA struggling to renovate its image, who better to invite to a lunch than Hollywood producers, so they would script new texts featuring the agency as a benign, exciting entity? Why not form a 'White House-Hollywood Committee' while you're at it, to ensure coordination between the nations we bomb and the messages we export?

(There is one). The industry even argues before Congress that this is a key initiative against terrorism, since copying funds transnational extra-political violence.

When it comes to plenipotentiary services, since the 1920s and '30s, Hollywood lobbyists have regarded the US Departments of State and Commerce as message boys. The State Department undertakes market research and shared business intelligence. The Commerce Department pressures other countries to permit cinema free access and favorable terms of trade. Negotiations on so-called video piracy have seen PRC offenders face severe penalties, even as the US claims to monitor human rights in China. Protests by Indonesian filmmakers against Hollywood that draw the support of their government see Washington threaten retaliation via a vast array of industrial sanctions. A delegation to Hanoi in the mid-1990s of congressmen who had fought in the American War in Vietnam ushered in film scouts, multiplex salespeople and Hollywood films on TV. And the US pressures South Korea to drop screen quotas.

California boasts a massive economy – only five nation-states have larger ones – and a wonderful internationalism – more than a quarter of the population was born in another country. We have 10,000 not-for-profit cultural organizations, 700,000 artists, and 90,000 cultural firms. All very nice. Many big stars and elephant stamps should accrue in exercise books from teachers for our creativity and innovation. But a different type of boast would admit that the poor in California are the poorest and most sizeable in the Western world, while the obverse applies to the wealthy. Anyone for a really creative economy, like ours?

INTERVIEW WITH LARS NILSSON

WE ♥ YOUR TALENT

■ INTERVIEW BY SABINE NIEDERER
Lars Nilsson is an artist based in Sweden. In 2005 he started Talent Community, an ongoing documentary project about cultural entrepreneurs and freelance collectives in his hometown Gothenburg, Sweden.

Why did you start making the Talent Community series?

I was at my last year of the art academy in Umeå (2003), and everyone was talking about what to do after school, how to arrange your life, how to earn money and so on. The two German lads Jan Verwoert and Søren Grammel were teaching in Umeå at the time, and they introduced us to the work of Marion von Osten. I immediately connected to this discussion around immaterial labour and precariousness, not in the least bit because me and most of my friends found ourselves in the same 'flexible situation'. When I moved back to Gothenburg I decided to do a local version of Marion's video Schöneggstrasse 5 (the original film is about a freelance collective in Zürich). I was also very influenced by Angela McRobbie's investigation of young fashion designers in London (British Fashion Design: Rag Trade or Image Industry?). For me it was natural to situate the project in the town where I live. I also wanted to do this kind of investigation in a smaller city like Gothenburg, since you tend to think about the cultural industry in connection to the glamorous metropolis.

Can you describe the local creative industries? What's the difference between for instance Stockholm and Gothenburg?

The Swedish culture industries are centred around the traditional university cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö-Lund (to some degree also Umeå in the north). Stockholm is of course the most popular option with the capital's concentration of money, media, institutions, etc. Gothenburg used to be Scandinavia's major harbour city, and home of export industries like Volvo, Ericsson and SKF. Now, like so many other industrial cities in the world, Gothenburg tries to reinvent itself as a culture and information technology centre. The main investments in culture from the local government has been into a new fancy opera house and into festivals (film festival, music festival, dance and theatre festival, contemporary art biennale).

The lack of an art-buying bourgeois class means that there are no commercial galleries for contemporary art in Gothenburg, but a long tradition of artist run spaces. When it comes to popular culture, Gothenburg is mostly known for its great music scene with numerous successful bands, like Soundtrack of Our Lifes, The Embassy, The Tough Alliance and many more. Gothenburg is the largest university city in Scandinavia, with 60,000 students.

There are lots of things happening in Stockholm of course, but I would like to point out a few specific things that I find important right now: New kunsthallen in the suburbs for contemporary art. Tensta Konsthall in Tensta, KonstallC in Hökärängen and Botkyrka Konsthall in Botkyrka. A boosting creative centre in another suburb called Midsommarkransen-Telefonplan. Konstfack University College of Arts and Design moved there in 2004 and now they are building a new design museum next to the school. This is the major gentrification area in Stockholm at the moment. Stockholm is also the home of Pirate Bay, the world's largest bittorrent tracker and centre of the Swedish anti-copyright movement. This summer the police did a raid on PirateBay (after pressure from the Hollywood lobby), but their activities are not illegal so the servers were up an running again in a few days.

As a documentary maker, artist, teacher and journalist, are you an archetypical member of the creative class?

I guess so… The term 'creative class' is of course from Richard Florida, and it's funny how the critical discourse around culture industry and immaterial labour is dancing with neoliberal dreams of creative cities (I am talking about Gothenburg in this interview for instance).

How do you feel about the precarious side to your field of work? Or as you call it: 'flexible work'.

I hate the precarious side to my profession! Now, I'm happy to be teaching part time at an art school, so at least I know I can pay the rent every month. It's okay to have this wobbly life as long as you are healthy and don't have kids. One of the worst things is not being able to plan for the future.

Do you have a trade union for creative professionals in Sweden?

Journalists, software programmers, museum people (everyone with a normal, steady job) are all organized in unions, but freelancers aren't. Actually, the Swedish dancers and actors do have a powerful union, who fought successfully for generous unemployment benefits in-between theater jobs. There are two union-like organizations for artists (KRO and IKK), but they are very weak unfortunately. Recently, there has been a discussion about 'getting paid better when exhibiting in institutions' though. Someone found out that less than 1% of Moderna Museet's budget went to artists, and everyone was upset about that. Maybe this will change to the better.

The people you interview have all started businesses, or alliances, or collectives, or labels, are you part of a label?

No I'm not part of any group or label, although me and my girlfriend help each other with many projects (she is the photographer of my most recent video, More and More and More, for instance). But I think it's a good idea to work in a group and I could definitely see myself form some kind of collective with friends in the future.

Is this documentary series some kind of research to learn from their successes and mistakes?

Yes, I'm particularly interested in how they solve different problems that come up in the group. How they try to avoid to become enemies over economical issues and so on. And not the least is this idea of temporary contracts; you must be able to trust your companions to some degree, but then if someone gets an offer from somewhere else they might just disappear . . . It's like a marriage somehow.

What will be the future of creative industries?

In the future a growing part of creative industries will be outsourced to East Asia. The latest thing I heard was that the biggest Swedish animation studio, Happy Life, is producing their next film in Thailand. Just recently, the Swedish TV show Faktum did a program called something like 'the self employed are the new under-class', and showed statistics that 50% of the freelancers earn less than the worst paid normal job (cleaner or whatever). The new right wing government will cut down on culture funding and the cultural field will be even more dominated by middle- and upper-class kids who have economic security from their parents. File sharing will continue to grow, and have an enormous impact on creativity. Grassroots culture will flourish and everyone will be happy…

What will be the future of the Talent Community series?

I will continue working on it, but I'm not sure exactly in what way. Maybe I will do the traditional catch-up in five years from now, and see what happened to all the beautiful people in the films.

Watch Lars Nilssons videos online at www.larsnilsson.net
So far the Talent Community series consists of: More and More and More (2006, 27 min), Interview With Kokokaka (2005, 16 min), and IO Design Office (2005, 19 min).

WE ♥ YOUR TALENT
WE ♥ YOUR TALENT

XXXMSTERDAM

EXTREME MAKEOVER

■ BY MERIJN OUDENAMPSEN – A new urban renewal initiative of historic proportions is underway in Amsterdam. A considerable part of the city's reserve of social housing is being transformed into luxury apartments, lofts and maisonettes for the growing numbers of 'creative economy' employees. Meanwhile the waiting lists for social housing are being flooded by ex-occupants, forced through renovation programmes to leave their houses and neighbourhoods. In a re-working of a text originally published in the dutch Flexmens Magazine, Merijn Oudenampsen describes a new regime of urban renewal – the I Amsterdam model – where location has become, quite literally, a brand

According to a recent report of the Amsterdam city council, more houses are about to be demolished in coming years than ever before in the turbulent history of this town. It is the so-called 'restructuring neighbourhoods', poor areas such as Westelijke Tuinsteden, Noord en de Bijlmermeer, where most of the houses will have a close encounter with the wrecking ball. The pre-war neighbourhoods, such as the Staatsliedenbuurt, the Oosterparkbuurt, the Indische Buurt or the Kinkerbuurt are the subject of thorough renovations. Overall, tens of thousands of social housing apartments will disappear to make way for the sand blasted facades that distinguish the new middle class.

This development isn't restricted to Amsterdam. The core business of the national housing policy of Minister Dekker underlines the need to 'differentiate' and to 'socially mix', or, in other words, move higher incomes into the poor neighbourhoods where social housing predominates. Social mixing is – according to the urban planners of Dekker – a potent means to deal with the social problems of backward neighbourhoods. Although sociological research has so far been unable to prove any of its alleged social mobility-boosting effects. The perverse logic of the urban renewal plans is that the less well-off inhabitants of the 'backward' neighbourhoods, who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of the policy, are also its main victims. Large proportions of neighbourhood residents are being forced to leave when their houses are renovated into luxury apartments. The Turkish grocery stores and their patrons are being forced to make way for the beauty salons, art galleries and boutiques servicing a very different demographic.

Underneath the inflated rhetoric of the social mixing policy where terms such as social integration, upward mobility and cultural diversity populate the plans, there is another agenda. It's an agenda filled with the sober calculation of economic interests. Since the partial privatisation in 1994, social housing corporations are themselves solely responsible for balancing their budgets, and are allowed to compensate for the loss of subsidies by selling off social housing. In the current urban renewal process they do so with enthusiasm. However, to be able to sell or rent the houses for the appropriate price, the area has to be made attractive for new arrivals. Publicity campaigns are set up, PR agencies too, cultural festivals and poetry readings take place, artists are offered temporary residence; everything is done to change the image of the area from that of a loose cohabitation of migrants, unemployed, elderly, and other economic losers to the image of a dynamic and cultural hot spot, pervaded by the buzz of renewal. This is the place to be.

The I Amsterdam Model

The urban renewal plans are part and parcel of a bigger metamorphosis hitting the city, preparing it for the 'creative era'. In a age in which the creative knowledge economy has apparently become the most important economic sector, it is the creative, highly educated and talented workforce – the creative class – that decides upon the economic destiny of cities. Allegedly, this new class is also extremely mobile and savvy about its choice of city. Amsterdam is thus competing with other international metropoles – London, Barcelona, Berlin – to lure creatives with culturally interesting surroundings and the quality of its urban habitat. Amsterdam, not wanting to fall behind, brands itself as a 'Creative Knowledge City' and starts the marketing campaign *I Amsterdam*. While art and culture never rated high on the alderman's priority list, these tenets have now suddenly gained central importance in the marketing offensive: the figurative carrot that is supposed to persuade creative talent to nest here.

The urban planners have no reason to complain. The amount of Amsterdammers earning double the mean income has risen in the short period from 1999 to 2003 from 10,8% to 18%. Amsterdam gentrifies. As a result, space is becoming more and more expensive in the city, which means that it is now more attractive to sell some of the social housing in the popular neighbourhoods. Another consequence of the city's economic success is that the city edge, previously the territory of a frivolously experimenting group of artists and squatters, is being replaced with sterile environments of high priced houses and offices consisting of glass surfaced shoe boxes of little architectural imagination. The eviction of the squatted warehouse Pakhuis Afrika for the docklands spectacle of Sail 2005 marked the completion of this transition.

The influential ideologue of Amsterdam Creative City, social geographer Sako Musterd, states in his research that one of the shortcomings of Amsterdam is a lack of proper housing for the creative class. The Amsterdam business community – represented through the chamber of commerce – goes one step further, stating in their press communiqués that the lower educated have to leave town to make space for creativity to move in. Politicians and bureaucrats have meanwhile reinvented themselves as true entrepreneurs, the Mayor Cohen speaks about the brand Amsterdam, the city is being run as an enterprise and branding has grown to become *the new maakbaarheid*.

This new urban management, which I have called the '*I Amsterdam* model', has also reached the neighbourhood level. City regions are flirting for the attention of the higher educated middle class, and areas compete with each other for the attraction of success. Every neighbourhood organises cultural events, Westerpark has the Westergasfabriek, the Kinkerbuurt has de Hallen, Noord the former NDSM warf, the Indische Buurt the Timor-school and even in the notoriously boring suburban area of the Kolenkitbuurt in Bos en Lommer, apartments are being sold with the mention of new cultural establishments in the vicinity.

> ## DO NOT START WITH THE GOOD OLD THINGS; START WITH THE BAD NEW ONES – BERTHOLD BRECHT

Housing Shortage

Under the *I Amsterdam* banner a radically different form of urban management and renewal has arrived. Old architecture is being upgraded or completely demolished and, in parallel, accounts are settled with the ideas and ideals present amongst the previous architecture's foundations. From the red-brick-socialism of architect Berlage, Le Corbusier's gone-bad functionalist utopia of reinforced concrete embodied by the flats of the Bijlmermeer and the Parisian banlieues, to the 'bouwen voor de buurt' of alderman Schaeferi; the history of urban renewal is filled with the hope of achieving the elevation of the people, of emancipation through the drawing board.

The neighbourhood ideals of the '70s meant that integration, upward mobility and emancipation would take place at neighbourhood level, with the assistance of an entire infrastructure of neighbourhood centres and social workers. The new regime of urban renewal has abandoned this conception. Poverty can be moved – distributed – but not remedied. While before, urban renewal was targeted at the lower classes, the new urban renewal is directed towards the middle class, that is, it is being used as a Trojan horse to reconquer the poor neighbourhoods and expropriate property from their inhabitants. The ex-occupants are offered financial compensation, so for most the direct personal problem is limited to a rent increase or to the obligation to relocate, but nonetheless displacement of a stratum of the population is the result. What makes the Dutch gentrification process so subtle, is that the effect is indirect: due to the many displaced residents being conferred priority status, those that have no priority status have to wait longer to receive social housing. So the effect is displaced onto especially younger generations and newcomers in the city. For students in Amsterdam, big temporary container housing projects have been built.

The developments in the Indische Buurt in Amsterdam are a good example. The neighbourhood is one of the areas that will be given a thorough facelift in the coming years. About 20% of social housing (2000 apartments) will disappear through demolition, junction and renovation. Change in the composition of the neighbourhood's predominantly migrant population is officially the most important goal, and urban renewal thus becomes a form of social engineering, state-led gentrification.

Planners from the local council state that the new neighbourhood policy is no longer about 'fighting problems', but 'the creation of opportunities'. It is this kind of vague language that legitimises large amounts of subsidies meant for backward neighbourhoods being spent on marketing campaigns and subsidised business locations for creative entrepreneurs. The local council has acquired the services of a PR agency which distributes a colourful glossy. Leafing through its pages, you will see images of only white people – in an area where seventy out of every hundred inhabitants are first or second generation migrants – telling you how beautiful their new houses are and praising the cultural activities in the neighbourhood. The real perversity starts when it becomes clear that the renewal plans openly state the intention to remove migrant entrepreneurs from the neighbourhood. The plan literally reads 'the appearance of most of the shops leaves much to be desired. The amount of migrant shop owners has grown drastically the last couple of years.'

Exclusive Inclusion

The local council wants more luxury shops and has started a 'discouragement policy' to remove Turkish grocery stores, coffeeshops and call boxes from the main shopping street. While some policy makers mention growing migrant entrepreneurship as a great success in the integration process, others perceive it as a problem to be solved by removal. This is the new logic of inclusion and exclusion in urban renewal. In the *I Amsterdam* model talent is sought after and social problems kept at bay. But again; the model is not restricted to Amsterdam: also Rotterdam is part of the avant-garde. With less marketing and more fanaticism migrants and the lower incomes are slowly being removed from the inner city. It is becoming less and less clear where all these 'problems' can eventually go. Estimations of the Amsterdam city council show that by 2008 so many people will have had to leave their houses as a result of the regeneration process that the entire Amsterdam area does not have enough replacement social housing to re-accommodate them. At the same time fewer houses are being developed than promised. In the local newspaper of 01-07-05 a real estate broker said that the council is consciously fostering a housing shortage. Now that the upward course of the housing market is slowly abating, the strange consequence is that the council has an interest in keeping a housing shortage in place to guarantee a good price for the new houses produced by the city's redevelopment. For now, the policy is creating a situation where council statistics show that the official primary target group of the housing policy – those on lower incomes – are the people with the smallest chance of actually finding social housing. The main victims of the continuing housing shortage are predominantly migrant families and youth. For them *I Amsterdam* is, quite literally, a highly exclusive brand.

Postscript

In the west of the city, where one of the biggest redevelopment projects of Europe is being realised, operations have stalled. In this area, which due to its size serves as a role model for other operations, it turns out the market has its limitations after all. Middle class interest in the poor neighbourhood and its newly constructed owner occupant apartments is lower than expected; most of the clientele turn out to prefer single family dwellings. The new challenge for the scheme's designers is to concentrate as many of the original occupants as possible in high density constructions, while leaving luscious green space for the more intimate and expensive housing. What will assist the process is that the city council, in financial distress, has outsourced the decision making and neighbourhood participation schemes to the housing corporations. In general, statistics show that most of the people staying behind in the left over social housing in the neighbourhood have not benefited from the renewal as promised. The continuing social-economic problems in depressed neighbourhoods limit the marketability of space, forcing the city council to reconsider starting social investment programmes. The renewal in the West so far has turned out to be an economic and social failure. With elections coming up, a change in the housing policy might be possible, though not very likely.

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