AVANT GARDE MODEL ARTIST SUBJECT

THE AGMOAS IS NOW A CORPORATE AUDIT

TERRY ATKINSON

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Edited by Matthew Poole

kynastonmcshine.org.uk

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by Terry Atkinson

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Terry Atkinson founded two of the most influential artists' groups in recent history: Fine Artz, in 1963, with John Bowstead, Roger Jeffs, and Bernard Jennings; and, Art & Language, in 1968, with David Bainbridge, Michael Baldwin and Harold Hurrell.

Since leaving Art & Language in 1974, Atkinson has continued his practice as an artist via writings, object-making, and teaching.

Atkinson began teaching at UK art institutions in 1964 at Birmingham College of Art, and then moved to Coventry College of Art in 1966. From 1977 he taught at Leeds University's Department of Art History & Fine Art until 2005, when he retired from academia.

Atkinson's work, both as part of Fine Artz, Art & Language as well as outside of those and other collaborations is widely known and is critically acclaimed internationally.

His works have been exhibited extensively in the UK, Europe, Canada and the USA at venues such as: Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Kunstwerke, Berlin; MoMA, New York; Documenta, Kassel; the Venice Biennale; and, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. In 1985 he was selected for the Turner Prize.

kynastonmcshine.org.uk is the name of the curatorial practice of Matthew Poole, who is also Chair of the Department of Art at California State University San Bernardino.

Please note: kynastonmcshine.org.uk is not associated with the curator Kynaston McShine, and does not in any way claim to be.

PREFACE

By Matthew Poole

In the period of more than fifty years that Terry Atkinson has been a practicing artist, the world has, and continues to, experience and propagate an unprecedented consolidation of the commodification of social forces, which has led to this point where, unsurprisingly, selfhood, and whatever components constitute 'a self', are now nakedly marketed, exchanged and reproduced *as* capital; the essential matrix of forces that drive post-Fordist economies. It appears that we have seamlessly transitioned from a brutal form of ecclesiastical-feudal-aristocratic subjectivity to an equally, if not more, brutal form of cybernetic-neoliberal-capitalistic subjectivity in only approximately two hundred years. We have tacitly forgotten, and continue to forget every day tacitly, that we promised ourselves that we would be, at the very least, or at least try to become, subjects worthy of the ideas that fuelled the French Revolution. It may be too late. Lets hope not!

What recent election results and commentary around the globe show, alongside all manner of other phenomena in our capitalist world, is that the constituent parts of selfhood – elements of our subjectivity(*ies*) – are selected, highlighted and deployed for political effect, ethical effect, and aesthetic effect for reasons of expediency and very often cynically (albeit that the very separation of 'the political', 'the ethical', and 'the aesthetic' is itself a reductive and illusion-creating operation; an operation of the quasi-ideologies produced by engagement with capitalism that claim a non-ideological position, which is of course itself an ideological position and operation). For example, in the USA and across Europe especially, there is a rabid return to and a rapidly flourishing distrust and veritable revulsion of the language and ideas of collectivity; more virulent than even that seen in the 1980s. The normalization of the sovereignty of the atomized individual self is nearly and neatly completed. This is almost a total neoliberal triumph: unable to fully dismantle the State apparatuses of post-industrial nations via various institutional infrastructural levels by *fiat* alone, the forces

of neoliberal capital continue to successfully infiltrate the State (*qua* concept) at the level of subjectivity, slowly erasing its value, visibility, and veracity. Whilst many different sides of the political spectrum may agree that the withering of the State is a positive outcome, what is really being eroded by post-Fordist economies fuelled by neoliberal capitalism is the very notion that collectivity at a social level, outside of the imperatives of commercial markets, is the basis of humanity and human subjectivity. We, each of us, as subjects, are not so much regressing to a primitive or animal status (becoming more like objects), but rather we are re-defining human subjectivity as a complex of economic vectors.

To produce art today, an art that is progressive and one that does not reproduce the crypto- and quasi-ideological relations of production of capitalism - or even an art that is just cognitively complex - is almost unimaginably difficult under the conditions of this prevailing and increasingly calcifying political economy. Conceptual art, one of the main foci of Atkinson's essay, 'The AGMOAS is now a Corporate Audit', could have, and may still, deliver such an art.

Atkinson's was, and continues to be, one of the very earliest art practices that could be categorised as conceptual art. His practice continues to explore what conceptual art could achieve through the production of various forms and through collaboration. Whilst his practice does include the production of what might be more typically labelled as art works (objects, paintings, drawings, etc.) his practice, and his conception of art, continues to include equally importantly vast amounts of writing, and perhaps most importantly to Atkinson, teaching art. In this way, this book can be considered as a kind of exhibition and as a dialogical form of pedagogy. In fact, the dialogic effects of this work could be considered as a kind of collaborative exhibition also; a collaboration with you, the reader.

In interrogating the AGMOAS, the Avant Garde Model of the Artistic Subject, and its twists, turns, involutions and perversions under the conditions of capital, and attacking and dismantling 'the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth' wherever he finds it, Atkinson presents us with a map of where to look, where to tread, where to avoid, and where to apply pressure in order to resist what he calls 'the Corporate Tyranny' of a post-Fordist world in which art production finds itself trapped in a collapsed abyss where its relations of production and relations of distribution are so hopelessly imbricated, and where art practice has been almost irrevocably eclipsed and replaced by the AGMOAS career.

The AGMOAS is now a Corporate Audit

By Terry Atkinson

I - INTRODUCTION

9/11 was a seismic political event. *Pax Americana* attacked in two of its most celebrated self-congratulatory citadels. Spectacle returned, with traumatic interest, to the country of Hollywood disaster movies. But equally striking politically, although a much more dispersed spectacle, the year 2008, witnessing global markets tumble, was an equivalent seismic event. It signaled something of a return to the analytical centre of political critique for terms such as Capitalism as Greed, The Reserve Army of Labour and Primitive Accumulation. This after decades of teeming uses of such vapid aphorisms as The Death of Enlightenment, Relativism = no such thing as truth, and the pre-eminence of that intellectually scorched earth area of opinionated ignorance named Postmodernism. Not that the former three Marxian terms had ever faded away for some of us, we viewed them as a currency in the world, the stark fact of which was nearer the state of most people's lives than they cared to admit in the face of the sub-prime corporate rhetoric. But the retrieval of these terms should not be interpreted as a plea to return to their uses of 1968. To make them count, even descriptively, the meaning of these phrases will have to be applied to and inserted into areas of reproduction and image production that were scarcely dreamed of in 1968. The argument here is one that attempts to place an analysis of the cultural role of the Avant Garde Model of the Artistic Subject (hereafter AGMOAS) in this shift. The AGMOAS has become throughout the twentieth century an increasingly confessional mode of expression. Its celebratory champions have gone to dizzying pseudo-articulate lengths to articulate something they frequently claim it is impossible to articulate. Like Postmodernism itself, the AGMOAS is cognitively lite and self-rapt. In being absorbed by the Corporate Tyranny the AGMOAS becomes part of what Retort have called 'the elaborate machinery of forgetting'. [1] But again, to accuse the AGMOAS of forgetting does not mean I am arguing here for a return to the grand days of the AGMOAS in the 1860s and 70s. To the contrary, some new alignment of oppositional forces to Capitalism will have to be hewn from the application of the meaning of such terms as Capital, The Reserve Army of Labour and

Primitive Accumulation into today's social analysis if it is to lead to concrete change. Whilst we should not forget the resistance to the Thermidorian image-machine of the day of the likes of Reclus, Courbet, and Rimbaud at the time of the Commune, and a lot of what follows in these remarks is dedicated to contributing to an attempt not to forget, the transmitting and reproductive power and guidance systems of the micro-chip today demand new concentrations of application of the insights of the likes of Marx, Luxemburg, Debord, *et al*. Chomsky's name I reserve for immediately current times and the exchange with his continuing live commentary. His insights are just as incisive as any of the three aforementioned forerunners. Chomsky is a contemporary of Debord, in fact three years older, he has just lived longer and remains an ongoing critical producer, not to mention power. His book of 1969, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, persists as a prescient analysis of the path of American imperialism since then and up to the current juncture. [2] The AGMOAS like a good deal of the rest of Capitalist culture is now, and has been for at least the last three quarters of the last century, fully converted into a celebrity-endorsed cult of personal experience - possessive individualism in one of its most flagrant forms. This is its characteristic confessional mode.

In the remarks to follow I argue that the AGMOAS has been absorbed by the Corporate Tyranny, but interred is a verb that could be used with equal accuracy. But it is of little use disinterring the AGMOAS in order to restore it to its 1871 model, its 1912 model or its 1951 model, or any of its other many fluctuations of the last century and a half. To articulate effectively against Capital a new model will have to be formed. But if and how it can be is another matter altogether. It will not be formed by the likes of artists who attach themselves to the likes of White Cube or Gagosian or Sotheby's regardless of whatever neoliberal flag under which they claim to sail (or should it be sale?). Such instruments of the relations of distribution (hereafter ROD) are fully paid up (literally) members of the Corporate Tyranny. Nor will any new formation promoting a social community with a more equitable distribution of wealth be formed by 'public' artists displaying their wares in the piazzas and atriums of city centre 'regeneration' projects, or the meadows, woodlands and forests of rural aesthetically inflated idylls, or the tracts, streets and gated communities of suburban and exurban boutique lifestyle-addicted bourgeois collectives. If such an alternative model is ever to emerge, contributing to a more equitable society, then the

art schools will have to be in very different condition to the one they find themselves in now. Teaching in art schools will have to be different, maybe dropping the notion of artist altogether, not just the name, that's easy, but the concept – that will be much harder! And since, as with the rest of the knowledge producing system, the knowledge-structure of art schools is clearly dysfunctional, who can promise that? The idea that any Secretary of Education of any Western state will challenge the Corporate Tyranny's control of the AGMOAS, unless it be to drive it even more to the right, is patently laughable. Nevertheless, if a new model is ever to be made I suspect it will be in the state art schools or nowhere. As the state art schools stand at present they are a thoroughly integrated part of the relations of distribution of the Corporate Tyranny-enclosed AGMOAS. This is not at all surprising since the State is now seen, not least by State apparatchiks, as one more financial instrument frequently to be deployed almost at will by the Corporate Tyranny. Anyone who doubts this relationship need only examine the case of the Halliburton inspired 2004 second-wave reconstruction invasion of Iraq. And perhaps a bit closer to the AGMOAS corporate homeland, it is also worth taking note of the following comment from David Harvey, that 'when Lehmann Bothers tanked, the MOMA in New York lost a third of its sponsorship income'. [3] This relationship between the Corporate Tyranny and the State in respect of the art world simply means the relations of production (hereafter ROP) of art schools' studios are enclosed by the relations of distribution (hereafter ROD) of the AGMOAS, which in its subaltern turn is thoroughly enclosed by both the ROP and the ROD of the Corporate Tyranny. And it is worth remembering that the production of the ROD of the Corporate Tyranny is an integrated part of the ROP of the Corporate Tyranny, where branding and the production of logos are primary productions. Thus advertising and marketing are primary, perhaps the primary, ideology-producing transmitting instruments of the Corporate Tyranny.

There are many paradoxa generated in this Corporate Tyranny transmission, one being that the artist is most often characterized and advertised as possessing something like the unique skills of a super-imaginative artisan. This is in pretty stark contrast to the case of the worker in the neoliberal global market. In this market what seems to be demanded is that the worker (and if the logical implication of the art world notion of the artist is accepted, then in the jargon-ridden idiom - the 'less creative' worker) is

increasingly assigned the status of a flexible attachment to whatever the market requires. Singling out the artist as something atavistically superior is an illusion, since the artist is just as dependent upon, attached to, and certainly more amenable to the desires of the Corporate Tyranny. The priority increasingly granted to career over practice in art teaching is a clear signal of this. Consistent with this accommodation, the Corporate Tyranny markets the artist as a kind of culturally militant version of its sacred figure (the entrepreneur), the artist as 'radical' and 'challenging', as an immutable centre of self-confirming truth. The Corporate Tyranny is able to market this notion of the artist, to logo and brand it, much as it markets any other consumer item. And, as noted above, no group of cultural producers has embraced this branding more enthusiastically and with more self-congratulation, celebrity and all, than artists, except perhaps pop stars. The modern art museum, very often state owned, is a paradigm of not only the state as corporate instrument, but also as an important part of Capital's dependence on consumership and consumer sentiment and its consequent compulsion to organize these phenomena within the urban environment as the central machine of Capitalism remaining dynamic. [4] No fine art school teaching outfit I know of has ever shown the slightest inclination to confront the Corporate Tyranny. For one thing, too many mortgages rest on one or another financial cabal of the Corporate Tyranny. Moreover, increasingly and depressingly, art student communities seem less and less likely to challenge the Corporate Tyranny either. Regardless of this, if there is to be a move discarding the AGMOAS, it will almost certainly have to come from the student shop floor. The idea of a top down hierarchy in art schools (the art school version of Margaret Thatcher's 'We must let managers manage') is certainly the case in proportion to the number of art school teachers who have become increasingly managerial self-fashioned imitation business martinets over the past thirty or more years. But head for head in my experience there is nearly always some section of the student echelons that is more interesting than any of those of the staff. As I record in the remarks below, my first real confirmation of this view was my exchange with Michael Baldwin in the first few months of our friendship at Coventry in late 1967/early 1968. The meeting with Michael confirmed a predisposition formed due to the way I viewed my time at the Slade on leaving that august institution in 1964. Thus I started teaching at Birmingham College of Art in October of that year with the theory that the students would be more

interesting than the staff. This theory was tied to another theory with which I started my teaching – that teaching would be the centre of the practice. This too rested on some further fundamental more wide-ranging presumption that art students are more interesting than artists. Despite the art student body becoming more and more fixated on 'career-artism', students on arrival in art school have not usually yet made careers and thus become career artists.

However it should be emphasized here that Marx's categories of base and superstructure remain intact. Liquidating the AGMOAS is still work in the superstructure. Not withstanding the fact that the relation between the base and the superstructure has changed dramatically over the last forty years, it still remains the case that overarching any work in the art school and art milieu is the requirement for a wider movement of social transformation. Without this wider social transformation being underway then any framework to discard the AGMOAS will, I strongly suspect, more or less find it remains unmolested as a cultural instrument of the Corporate Tyranny.

II - APPRAISAL

I recently read a claim that Conceptual Art of the sixties "was one of the decisive movements of the twentieth century". By which I take it is meant that it is a decisive movement in twentieth century art practice. In this same article a director of a famous museum of modern art, is quoted as saying that Conceptual Art "radically challenged notions of the art object". [1] For the present, staying with the idea that this claim is meant as some kind of compliment, it does, for me at least, turn out to be back-handed one, since I think this claim seriously overestimates the long-term impact of sixties Conceptual Art in respect of what Conceptual Art might have achieved. Sixties Conceptual Art may have challenged notions of the art object, but, as things turned out, it did not challenge, radically or otherwise, notions of the avant-garde model of the artistic subject. But I guess hyperbole is a frequently occurring characteristic in the rhetoric of individuals whose job spec' at the institutions in which they work is to favourably represent the works the institutions acquire. It would be a perverse, or a very courageous, individual who mounted a serious social critique of the works he or she either purchases or accepts into the collection of the institution he or she is appointed to direct. Challenging the object in the sixties was relatively easy. Much more difficult, and still to this day awaiting an adequate articulation, is challenging the avant-garde model of the artistic subject (hereafter AGMOAS). Thus it seems very unlikely that such individuals as, say, museum directors, would mount a critique of the model of the artistic subject, which is so lauded as the characterizing virtue of twentieth century artists, the works of whom twentieth century museums of modern art are founded in order to collect. If sixties Conceptual Art had anything going for it, it was that for a brief only too few years in the late sixties it sufficiently attempted to deregulate the AGMOAS (not simply to attempt to revise, convert or expand the model) such that the attempt was to liquidate it. By the mid-seventies a conceptual artist was a pretty standard regulated version of the AGMOAS, thoroughly absorbed into the conventional and increasingly corporative twentieth century narrative of the avant-garde. By the eighties it was easy to see that

the AGMOAS, and with it not least the alleged conceptual artist, was a managed public relations exercise, the art world political order of the day. [2] The ROD of the art world were by then fully-fledged public relations instruments shaped for managing the relations of production (hereafter ROP) of the art world. [3]

There are a number of prominent conditions that constitute this current managerial hegemony of the AGMOAS. A first is the class nature of mass communication itself. This has a long post-World War 2 history. This history warrants some further commentary below, but to summarize it the following is worth noting. That the centre of both the ROD and ROP of the art world shifted in the fifties from Paris to New York, and this was a shift from a French speaking culture to an English speaking culture. And whilst French capitalists were never imperialist slouches it is a fact that in the twentieth century English is the most emphatic language of corporate capitalism. By the sixties, when, it is claimed in the above-mentioned quote, Conceptual Art initiated a 'decisive movement', the managerial structure of the contemporary art world was an English-speaking led managerial hegemony and was already showing every sign of morphing into the Corporate Tyranny. By the early sixties the CIA had invested, since the late forties, millions of dollars in the Western cultural front of the Cold War. It is worth reiterating that not only had the regulatory authorities of the AGMOAS settled and become established but these regulating authorities were now English-speaking; a language change that would ensure the dominance of corporate culture as the dominant centre of both the ROP and ROD of art. More will be recounted further on in these remarks on this change from a French-speaking culture to an English-speaking culture and its implications for the attainment of a corporately dominated culture, but first, more on the struggle in the US itself between the representatives of labour collectivism and the representatives of corporate individualism. The aim of the latter, it should be remembered, is to fashion a collective subject who rejects the notion of a collective subject. This increasingly turned on who would gain greater access to the emergent mass communications in the US in the two decades after World War Two. As it turned out, and not surprisingly in a capitalist culture, the class nature of mass communications was decided by which class had the greater financial resources, for financial resources decided not only access but also ownership and from this the character of its consequent development. [4] In response to the Depression in the nineteen thirties, Roosevelt's New Deal

had shifted the productive potential of the US economy away from private enterprise toward government structured organizations and an increasingly strong labour movement. The federal programmes became more concentrated and reliant on organized labour as the US was pulled into World War Two after Pearl Harbor. By the time of victory in 1945 the organized US labour movement was a powerful industrial force that maintained its strength throughout the forties and into the fifties. During this time corporate institutional ideology, which had brought on the crash of 1929 and the resultant Depression, lost much of its power and impetus it enjoyed in the twenties from this time until the end of the World War 2. But the corporate fight back began immediately after the end of the war and gathered in strength and in deceptive financial manipulation throughout the late forties and fifties. In 1956, for example:

"J. Warren Kinsman, chairman of National Association of Manufacturers PR Advisory Committee and vice-president of DuPont, reminded businessmen that "in the everlasting battle for the minds of men" the tools of PR were the only weapons "powerful enough to arouse public opinion sufficiently to check the steady, insidious and current drift towards socialism."" [5]

Well before this in a January 1950 radio broadcast (and perhaps worth noting in respect of gaining a fix on US foreign policy at the time, six months before the opening of the Korean War) Guy Nunn of the United Automobile Worker warned Detroit area workers of this "highly organized and systematic attempt to poison the minds of workers against liberal government." [6] Again, in January 1956, Kenneth R. Miller of the National Association of Manufacturers proclaimed that:

"One of the gravest threats to management's right to manage is the vastly increased size and power of organized labor." [7]

This latter sentiment could be taken right out of the mouths of the likes of Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, and Tim Bell thirty years later in the nineteen eighties. [8] It was patently clear in 1946 that corporate interest in the US was out to change the political climate of the legacy that Roosevelt's administrations and the requirements of organizing a wartime economy had placed upon US economic structures since the corporate led disaster of the Crash of 1929.

This was the corporate revisionary campaign to restore worker ideology to the pre-1929 Crash state and resurrect an order

of society in which widening income inequality would become accepted as the norm regardless of the standard capitalist recessions. It was to be the springboard for the entire direction of the US economy reaching its most extreme and ardent corporate form in the noughties until the sub-prime mortgage crash in 2008. By 1960 the widening income inequality pattern was well established. The idea was to remove from the corporate concept of market any restraint that Rooseveltian and wartime political and social institutions had placed upon it. By the nineteen seventies this corporate mission was more or less fulfilled. From the fifties through to 2008, accumulation of wealth occurred much more through dispossession than through investment, not least in the UK through Thatcherite obsessions to sell off social housing. Throughout the US the wealthy enhanced their position by simply appropriating a greater share of existing wealth at the expense of the rest of society. The US-led concept of the AGMOAS was not an inconsiderable cultural player in this appropriation. As it turned out in 2008 even the investment part of the economy fell apart and emerged clearly as risky and greedily unstable. [9] However, it is important to relate that one thing the forties corporate raiders into the US economy were happy to maintain and extend from the inherited World War Two organization of the US economy and state apparatus was the national security state. The CIA was created in 1947, as was the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Both bodies were formed to consolidate and extend the reach of security services and military organizations into the US state. Thus the state-formed legacy from World War 2 was not a more powerful labour representation and greater income equality as it seemed might be the case in 1945, but greater security and military intrusion in the US state apparatus. By the time of the invasion of Iraq in 2003 the military security state apparatus and corporate profit making were fully joined at the gun-slinging hip. This is the most marked example of what Naomi Klein calls disaster capitalism. [10] The character of disaster capitalism can be summarized as something like: inflict a disaster on a culture and country, say Iraq, in order to create as near as possible an unimpeded field for US (or Western) corporate investment and profit. Military expenditure, one of the big contract resources for corporate expansion, was, and remains, a good index of the increase in income inequality. On the Western cultural arts front a significant part of this corporate tyranny was the increased corporate regulation of the AGMOAS. [11] Corporate power by the eighties had so vastly increased in confidence and impudence to

sufficiently turn into the Corporate Tyranny, and this was due in no small measure to the by then forty year long close liaison between corporate power and CIA power. [12]

A second condition of the highly managed character of the AGMOAS is the expansion of the established managerial class in the art institutions themselves. An expansion not only required of the old bureaucracies as new art institutions were built and older ones extended, but also, from the 1980s particularly, the entry of a new managerial class into the art milieu. This new entry was called some such as 'art consultant' and operated not only intra-art world, but also these functionaries operated, in an advisory role and with the status of 'experts' as the term consultancy suggests, between the art world and civic government and corporate formations, not least in the realm of what has come to be called 'public art'. Art consultants, again as the name implies (consultancy in this context is a catch-all term), were consulted in matters of designing civic cultural projects and recommending, commissioning and placing art works in public spaces, operating as advisers as to the feasibility of projects and the use of both corporate and civic funds in such projects. Moreover, by the eighties civic funds passed increasingly through and into the hands of corporate formations In respect of the outcomes of the built urban environment the art consultants are an integral part of the corporate conduit. Whether naively or not, they are active agents of the Corporate Tyranny. It should be noted that some members of this new managerial class wore two hats; they were not infrequently both consultants and artists/art teachers. Certainly since the sixties both artists and art teachers have habitually, and predictably, as increasing receivers of corporate largesse, taken a considerable part in shaping the AGMOAS into its current servility in front of corporate power. By the time this new managerial class of art consultants emerged the AGMOAS was already heavily and increasingly corporately regulated and manipulated, but like any class of managers the consultants were eager to promote their function within the corporate hierarchy. This kind of careerism gave and continues to give even more impetus to the corporate regulation of the AGMOAS.

Characteristic of the two previous conditions is the inflationary liberal rhetoric that has been, and continues to be, issued on behalf of the AGMOAS. Standing in sharp contrast to this rhetoric is a third condition that is particularly applicable to British art institutions starting in the 1980s, although it does strongly

intertwine with the second condition outlined above. Following the US pattern, British art institutions, and this includes British art schools, became more and more dependent on corporate funds during the eighties. This inevitably meant these institutions tailoring their projects and bureaucratic shape to their corporate masters. The ideology of corporate business increasingly shaped the ideology of the art institution and consequently the resources of ideological transmission in which they were engaged, not least the art schools. The cognitive traffic of the art schools is increasingly the cognitive traffic of corporate exchange. Fine art degrees now are shaped much more closely to some such as degrees in art business studies – a kind of degree in some such as art practice business studies. Degrees that are avant-garde product-imitation oriented much more than critically-independent oriented. [13] Most outcomes of collector-friendly degree courses, which seem to be not unusual these days, are exercises in public relations. The art schools fear of ideology is itself ideology, since the claim to be non-ideological, to transcend ideology, is itself an ideological claim. It echoes the ideology of corporate business, which has always claimed ideology to be grubby and presented all left wing political opinion as such and claimed itself, corporate political opinion, to be above this grubby world of ideology, this latter claim itself being a febrile symptom of the ideological character of corporate self-interest. It is in this framework that the not uncommon art school claim that art transcends what it takes to be the grubby link to social concern is excellent material for absorption into the ideology of corporate business transaction. The Corporate Tyranny is just as ideological as any socialist collectivism, and more unjust than many since it is symptomatic of a society in which an unequal and income-widening gap is the norm. Any art school and art museum sustaining the claim that art is transcendent and therefore non-ideological, not least out of fear of having corporate sponsorship withdrawn, overlooks the above stated fact that the claim to be non-ideological is itself an ideological claim.

A fourth condition assails the AGMOAS though it is different in character from the three conditions set out above since it is claimed that this condition rests upon certain of the limits of human cognition and perception. Its effects are strongly intertwined with and contributory to the social conditions produced by the other three conditions, not least because the communities addicted to the AGMOAS manifest a tacit refusal to admit there may be such a

limit. If this fourth condition is the case, then it is a condition placed upon the AGMOAS as much by our biological limits as our social conditions. Thus, if it is the case then this limit, until it is admitted, is equally as debilitating as any of the social conditions. Thus once again, if it is the case then it is a permanent condition. Since it is a biological limit then any amount of social change can have little or no effect upon it. Steve Gould, in respect of the 'visual' arts describes what he argues to be this limit as follows:

"This perpetual striving for novelty may grant us joy forever if a limitless array of potential styles awaits discovery and exploitation. But perhaps the world is not so bounteous. Perhaps we have already explored most of what even a highly sophisticated audience can deem accessible." [14]

Gould is here suggesting a limit. He calls the point of this limit the 'right wall' and he explains it in contradistinction to another point that he calls, logically, the 'left wall'. This latter point is not a limit but a starting point. The 'right wall' refers to cultural change and the limit that governs it; the 'left wall' refers to Darwinian evolution and is the point from which it evolves. Gould insists the two processes are distinct. His usage here can be summarized through another quote as follows:

"The baseball example speaks of an encroachment upon a right wall of human limitations; the history of life invokes an expansion away from a left wall of minimal complexity. In this second example, I viewed life as expanding passively into a rightward domain of increasing elaboration – but I never addressed the principle that some constraint might eventually limit the spread by acting as a right wall." [15]

Gould's baseball example suggests a physical limit, whilst the 'novelty' example in respect of the visual arts suggests a cognitive limit. But perhaps it is worth reminding ourselves that the cognitive limit is established by the structure of the brain. Presuming there is indeed a right wall and the right wall has been reached, then, at best, all current fine art practice would be cultural maintenance. This seems to be something like the situation Gould is proposing in respect of his penchant for classical music. If it is the case that fine art practice is cultural maintenance then there is no such thing as the cultural progress when and where it is suggested by the current application of the concept of the avant-garde in its role within fine art practice. Thus within this view, fine art practice at its best is a

repetition of maximal excellence. Warhol is, at best, only as good as Manet, and Manet is, at best, only as good as Goya, and so on. This poses a telling question for the concept of the avant-garde. The question then arises as to what more precisely the concept is aimed at. Since devotees of the concept of the avant-garde have never seemed to be very clear about the distinction between cultural maintenance and cultural progress, then can cultural maintenance and cultural progress be counted as the same thing? [16] In much of the writing concerning the concept of the avant-garde in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and up to the present there is a strong implicit suggestion that the AGMOAS is *ipso facto* a progressive model of the artistic subject. The nomenclature of 'challenging' and 'radical' used for characterizing artists is a symptom of this presupposition. In respect of a category, 'visual' art, of what he calls the Creative Arts Gould expresses the following view.

"… then a third category of creative arts does face a potentially painful dilemma based on our decision to adopt an ethic of innovation that awards greatness only to those who devise a novel style (a criterion not always followed in Western history, but very strong at the moment)." [17]

As stated above, the notion of the artist being 'radical', 'challenging', etc. does seem to presume the AGMOAS to be progressive in some fairly marked sense. This, it seems, according to this prescription of being progressive, has nothing to do with aspiring to the achievement of a more just society or a more cognitively substantial critique of the practice as practice; the latter of which might well be a critical contributor to the former. To the contrary, the application of the notion of the artist as career celebrity contributes to more than just the maintenance of an unjust society it is an instrument of its further expansion. The primary economic characteristic of such a society is an ever-widening income gap (and it is worth keeping in mind that in a society organized according to neoliberalist dogma every aspect of life falls under the concept of economic attribute). The AGMOAS has been actively used by corporate power to promote this kind of society. For the purveyors of the AGMOAS, to be progressive is not simply to merely believe that the range of accessible styles cannot ever be exhausted, it is to believe, at the same time, not so much that a cognitively substantial style cannot ever be exhausted, but that a cognitively substantial style is not even a necessary condition required of the AGMOAS. One way to attempt to sidestep

this issue is to claim that 'style' rests only on 'visuals' and not on language-formulated questioning, where 'visual' is held out in contradistinction to 'cognitive'. But obviously accessible styles and cognitively substantial styles may not be the same thing, not least because we can always ask, accessible to whom? Remote as it may appear to cultural experts, it is perhaps at least worth acknowledging the possibility that styles that are accessible to a cultural expert and held by the cultural expert to be inaccessible to what the cultural expert may rank as a disinterested agent or an outright philistine, may be no more cognitively substantial than the styles accessible to the alleged philistine. This because those cultural-expert-valued styles become repetitious as they approach the right wall. Or, to put it another way; styles valued by the cultural expert, as they become repetitious and approach the right wall, may be no more cognitively substantial than those styles valued by those who the cultural expert ranks as philistines. And it is difficult for the cultural expert when s/he frames it in this way to avoid being condescending. It seems a prior requirement to answer the question 'Accessible to whom?' is an answer to the question 'How is the value laden term 'cognitively substantial' to be defined?' There does seem to be a presumption in the claim that good or great art is 'challenging' and 'radical', in some way, that such art is being assigned the status of being cognitively substantial where the term 'cognitively substantial' is granted to be equivalent to some such as 'imaginatively substantial' and where 'imaginatively substantial' covers and encourages the situation where what to one cultural expert indicates 'substantial' work to another cultural expert the same work appears as whimsical, repetitious and banal work. All too often in the art schools no attempt is made to define such terms as 'imaginative' and 'creative' and therefore to grade them. And this is passing over the problem of what 'imaginatively substantial' may mean, in the sense that imaginative activity is, presumably, a form of cognitive activity.

The claim that to be avant-garde is taken to be an implicit definition of what it is to be radical is an art world mantra. Whether such a claim can now offer up anything in the way of cognitively substantial work is what is in dispute. According to Gould reaching or approaching the 'right wall' is what he calls reaching or approaching a 'full house.' Nevertheless the concept of the avant-garde does seem to represent a belief that there is such a thing as cultural progress, especially within the Western democracies, and, staying within Gould's terminology but contradicting his argument,

there is, according to champions of the AGMOAS, always a 'new house' to be built. Thus, the matter seems to turn on whether the concept of the avant-garde can be re-assessed and redefined and consequently also the oft-claimed transcendent universal character of the AGMOAS as a self-confirming centre of truth. Or whether the concept of the avant-garde can be ditched altogether and the model of the artistic subject reinvented on a different base. Or whether it can, in some way, be re-evaluated such that it requires only cultural maintenance, which, in turn, may then be held to be the same thing as reinvention, which, I would argue, is just a description of the present state of the AGMOAS, despite the rhetoric of its advocates that it is 'challenging', 'radical', or whatever. At this kind of point the fourth condition of Gould's biological limit becomes subject to interface with the sociopolitical character of the other three conditions. Suppose the AGMOAS is primarily formed by sociopolitical arrangements and not biological limits. Such a formation would pose questions concerning all of the following. The concept of 'natural talent' in relation to the AGMOAS and the oft-claimed universal transcendence of 'great' art objects, and also what is the basic motivation of aspiring to become an artist in relation to the AGMOAS. The first raises the question of whether or not the term 'natural' is a socially constituted category, whilst the second is clearly a social definition. Suppose in secondary school a pupil is claimed by her teacher to be 'naturally talented' in, say, drawing and painting; then is, say, the matter of being able to draw or to paint *ipso facto* a necessary but not a sufficient condition of attaining the status of being radical or progressive? Some such question as: is to be 'talented' at painting and drawing to necessarily be 'challenging', 'radical', etc.? As suggested a couple of lines back, attached to questions such as these is the further question of what is a necessary and what is a sufficient condition of attaining the status of being radical, or a question even of whether or not the notion of such conditions can any longer be cogently applied to the AGMOAS. Whatever the answers to questions such as these, it is the case over the last 100,000 years in natural Darwinian evolution in matters of our natural cognitive endowments that there is no movement toward greater natural complexity, no positive movement towards progressive developments in our nature. Gould puts it as follows:

"The most impressive contrast between natural evolution and cultural change lies embedded in the major fact of our history. We have no evidence

that the modal form of human bodies or brains has changed at all in the past 100,000 years -- a standard phenomenon of stasis for successful and widespread species, and not (as popularly conceived) an odd exception to an expectation of continuous and progressive change. The Cro-Magnon people who painted the caves at Lascaux and Altamira some fifteen thousand years ago are us …" [18]

Thus it seems that Titian, Turner, Picasso *et al* achieved whatever they achieved with the same brain-power as an artist (if we agree they are artists) who preceded them by fifteen thousand years or so. Perhaps then it may be that we will have to be content with the repetition of maximal excellence. But the fact that we can conceive of an avant-garde seems to suggest that as a species we are not content with such repetition regardless of whether we can overcome it – to be so content with maintaining our culture seems to suggest something contra our curiosity as a species. The contest between collectivism and individualism, and the confusion it engenders, remains imbedded in the sociopolitical conditions of the AGMOAS. Certain of the cultural mandarins who promoted the American version of the AGMOAS came out firmly against socialist collectivism and were in close liaison, whether they knew it or not, with the CIA. As far as the culture bosses at the CIA were concerned the AGMOAS was a Cold War instrument and had a specific important advantage attached to it, the individuals conforming to the AGMOAS did not have to be cleared for security purposes. Such individuals need not necessarily be, but could be, entirely innocent of their manipulation by the CIA. And those, if any, who were aware of being manipulated by the CIA either did not see it as manipulation and may well have approved of it, or did not care, at least in the sense that they gave, for example, greater priority to the exposure of their work being promoted, than they did of disapproving of being manipulated. Thus, as suggested above, there is a paradoxical sense in which corporate collectivism promoted the corporately collective version of individualism in the service of attempting to gain corporate collective supremacy. A number of the artists who came to prominence as Abstract Expressionists had previously worked on projects set up by Roosevelt's New Deal and some had been members of the American Communist Party. The changing social framework which powered the move from socialist collectivism to corporate collectivism seems to have been hardly noticed since embracing and championing individualism seems to be the name of

both the game of disguising the embracing of corporate collectivism and the game of embracing and allegedly developing the AGMOAS. The latter endeavor being a form of the former one The embrace can easily incorporate individuals developing or holding out the rhetoric of a liberal political outlook. At least as far as the more conscious party in this transaction, the CIA, was concerned, this was a happy coincidence. Many examples of this post WW2 historical condition are now to hand. For that matter they have been on hand for many years, Eva Cockroft's essay showed this. [19] Perhaps one of the most conspicuous ones is that concerning the roles of both Nelson Rockefeller and Clement Greenberg in promoting Abstract Expressionism. During the late forties Abstract Expressionism had been fiercely attacked in the houses of the US government. One particularly vocal attack dog was a Republican Senator from Missouri named George Dondero. Dondero declared "All modern art is communistic, Cubism aims to destroy by designed disorder. Futurism aims to destroy by the machine myth … Dadaism aims to destroy by aping the primitive and insane. Abstractionism aims to destroy by the creation of brainstorms … Surrealism aims to destroy by the denial of reason." [20] Dondero's claims were shared by a cabal of other figures within Congress and were sympathetically and widely reported in the conservative press. Modern artists were proclaimed to be 'ultramodern' and to be unaware of being instruments of the Kremlin. This latter claim emerges as particularly ironic considering what the last thirty years in particular has disclosed about the role of the CIA in using modern art and the AGMOAS as an instrument of their Cold War confrontation. The CIA sidestepped the issue of confronting the likes of Dondero by adopting measures that were clandestine in relation to such philistine conservatism; and because of wishing to avoid being publicly linked to any of the American artists who brandished a liberal leftie rhetoric, which act of avoidance was, anyway, linked to the need to avoid confrontation with the likes of Dondero and the spectre of McCarthyism. Thus they were compelled to act clandestinely in promoting modern artists and especially Abstract Expressionists. For the CIA opposing Stalinist socialist realism was worth a serious pitch. Frances Stonor Saunders interviewed a CIA agent Donald Jameson who was involved in the pitch. He reported the following:

"We recognized that this was the kind of art that did not have anything to do with socialist realism and made socialist realism look even more

stylized and more rigid and confined than it was. And that relationship was exploited in some of the exhibits. Moscow in those days was very vicious in its denunciation of any kind of non-conformity to its own very rigid patterns. So one could quite adequately and accurately reason that anything they criticized that much and that heavy-handedly was worth support one way or another. Of course, for matters of this sort [it] could only have been done through the organizations of the operations of the CIA at two or three removed, so that there wouldn't be any question of having to clear Jackson Pollock, for example, or do anything that would involve these people in the organization – they'd just be added to the end of the line … If you had to use people who considered themselves one way or another closer to Moscow than to Washington, well, so much the better perhaps." [21]

As early as 1939 Clement Greenberg started to attempt to sort out the rationale for what he called enlightened patronage in his article *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* in *Partisan Review*. Whilst the article bears the imprint of Greenberg's salacious '30s Marxism, it also entreats an entry point for enlightened patronage, one in the late '40s to very soon be used by the CIA. One of the most promising openings for the CIA to become 'enlightened patrons' was provided by Moscow's cumbersome reaction to modern art, and these 'enlightened patrons' were not only fronts but often honorary and frequently active agents of the CIA. Both the ones who were aware and the one's who were not aware of being conduits of CIA patronage and governance, constituted, by the late 1940s, a considerable part of Greenberg's 'umbilical cord of gold.' [22] Greenberg could not, apparently, envisage the possibility of the 'umbilical cord of gold' (ROD) regulating and defining the ROP, he saw it as a separate and discriminating but necessarily comfortable (that is non-intrusive upon the ROP) distribution system. Whilst writing as if the 'umbilical cord of gold' follows the production of the artist, there is ample evidence, and there was certainly by the time Greenberg was writing later in, say, the fifties, that artists follow the 'umbilical cord of gold.' Not bad for a person who had once guarded Trotsky. Socialist Realism was one of the specific targets of the reproaches of American art cultural mandarins, a clear CIA imperative – if you think you can beat them then don't join them. Socialist Realism was an easily located target not so much because it was so servile but because it was seen as being self-evidently such a low-grade cognitive practice. In the wider culture game much more elusive to locate by American art cultural mandarins with alleged socialist sympathies was the role of the various CIA cultural fronts. But then

Greenberg himself was in the CIA line of agency, whether or not at first he was aware of it. Certainly it would be hard to believe he was not fully aware of it, at least after the mid-sixties when the magazine *Encounter* was exposed as a CIA culture front in a very public array. But the case for Greenberg knowing earlier rests on the fact that the Museum of Modern Art (hereafter MOMA) in New York was a CIA cultivated institution, not least because of Nelson Rockefeller's strong links to the agency. The Rockefeller Foundation itself was one of a number of funding fronts for the CIA. MOMA was co-founded in 1929 by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Nelson Rockefeller's mother. Stonor Saunders notes the following:

" … (Nelson called it 'Mommy's Museum'). Nelson was a keen supporter of Abstract Expressionism, which he referred to as 'free enterprise painting'. Over the years his private collection swelled to over 2,500 works. Thousands more covered the walls of buildings belonging to the Rockefeller owned Chase Manhattan Bank." [23]

From MOMA a whole network of CIA connections stretched out to embrace, regulate and corporately absorb the AGMOAS throughout the Cold War. This now, viewed from the early part of the twenty first century, is one of glaring concrete outcomes of the transfer of 'art capital' from Paris to New York (both in Marx's sense and in the sense of 'capital city of"). During World War 2 Rockefeller had led an American government intelligence agency titled the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA). In the fifties both Tom Braden and Allen Dulles briefed Rockefeller on the agency's projects and aims. In 1954 Rockefeller was appointed Eisenhower's special adviser on Cold War strategy and he chaired the Planning Coordination Group, the function of which was to oversee all Security Council decisions, including CIA covert operations. [24] John Hay Whitney (known as Jock) was a close friend of Rockefeller and a long-term associate in the CIAA during World War 2. Whitney was also a long-imbedded trustee of MOMA. Whitney had strong links to the CIA. One of those links was William Jackson, one of the agency's deputy directors (1950-51). William Burden was also a close associate of Rockefeller working for the CIAA during the war. He was also president of the Fairfield Foundation, another CIA front. Burden became President of MOMA in 1956. Burden ensured René d'Harnoncourt was given a near autonomous status in deciding what kind of operations the Museum should conduct. D'Harnoncourt remained as a Director at

MOMA until 1967. Frances Stonor Saunders' book seems to prove beyond doubt that MOMA was a CIA culture front from the mid-forties right up to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. But, as already stated earlier in these remarks, Eva Cockroft's article, written in 1974, was an earlier piece of convincing research making a forceful argument that MOMA was a CIA front institution.

In *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* Greenberg argues that the avant-garde had been abandoned by its traditional support system (a sure sign of what was to come in Greenberg's post-WW2 writing), and that this support system can only be supplied by a ruling class, to which, Greenberg argues it had always been attached by the now legendary Greenbergian metaphor 'an umbilical cord of gold.' This has always seemed to me to be not quite right. One of the confirming, founding events of the concept of the avant-garde, and not the least reason that the concept in this founding period came to be associated with social transformation, was the various dispositions of cultural figures such Courbet, Reclus, Rimbaud and Lautréamont in the years before and after the Paris Commune. [25] The Corporate Tyranny's use of such notions as 'challenging' and 'radical' have displaced the notion of revolutionary action – taken in the overall view, the notions of the Corporate Tyranny are logo advertising proxies for equating, say, risk with what is in fact no change at all – the wealthy get wealthier. By the 1960s, in the wider art school world, Greenberg's notion of the umbilical cord was being treated as something along the lines of being a near naturally, rather than socially, endowed factor, in the sense that it constituted a presupposition that significant art practice could not take place without it. In this sense, Greenberg's argument concerning the 'umbilical cord of gold' had been internalized by conventional art-world-think; a significant mark of the acclimatizing of the AGMOAS to its condition of being steadily absorbed by the Corporate Tyranny.

Thus, as early as 1939, Greenberg apparently saw no contradiction in the phenomenon of an avant-garde subsidized by a ruling class 'umbilical cord of gold.' In fact, the logic of Greenberg's argument here is that since only the ruling class can provide the 'umbilical cord of gold' and the 'umbilical cord of gold' is a necessary condition of the achievement of an avant-garde, then no avant-garde can be achieved without the connection of the 'umbilical cord of gold', therefore no avant-garde can be achieved without the ruling class. According to the outcome of the event of Damien Hirst's capitalist jape at Sotheby's in 2008, he not

only demonstrated the efficacy of the 'umbilical cord of gold' to the 'cultural industries' of the Corporate Tyranny, demonstrating it directly as conduit of artist-as-career, he also delivered up the whole Russian Collectors syndrome, of which auction event more further on in these remarks. The next post-Cold War question then seems to be, which class is to be the ruling class? In this scenario there is no question of a differently organized society furnishing a replacement concept of an avant-garde. At the present time Greenberg's view of the avant-garde still has the kudos it did in the nineteen sixties. It is a vintage of seventy years of being treated as kind of holy writ on the matter. There may well be an alternative view of the concept of the historical avant-garde, and in many ways it is contra-Greenberg, in the sense that it ditches altogether the notion of the avant-garde. This is a view that draws on the distinction between career and practice. Once this distinction is drawn it remains to be seen whether a different articulation and evaluation of the historical avant-garde can emerge. A replacement concept of the avant-garde may well be able to function without an umbilical cord of gold, especially when that umbilical cord of gold is a corporate umbilical cord of gold. This issue is dealt with more fully below. It seems then that Greenberg's concept of the avant-garde includes, by definition, the function of being subsidized by a ruling class, the function of which class is to execute an ever-widening wage gap between itself and the constituencies it rules. The CIA funding fronts were all, without exception, institutions and foundations of the ruling class and since ruling class institutions are hardly likely to subsidize contributions to their own destruction or belittlement and since also establishment figures continued to believe that 'leftist' artists were worth supporting, then perhaps one should not so much doubt the commitment of establishment figures to the establishment (since there seems to be little, if any, evidence to the contrary) but more to doubt the 'leftist' artists commitment to the concrete and practical manifestations of a left politics (for which lack of commitment there is ample evidence). [26] In Saunders' book there is a quote from an interview she conducted with Philip Dodd in July 1994. The passage here is quoted in full, and also as an example of vacuous media speak which in a sylvan tongued way is an attempt to justify the role of the CIA, but sort of bespeaking a kind of guilt about it having to be so:

"There is a perverse way of looking at this question which is to say that the

CIA took art very seriously … The great thing about politicians when they get involved in art is it MEANS something to them, whether it's the Fascists or the Soviets or the American CIA. So there may be a really perverse argument that says the CIA were the best art critics in America in the fifties because they saw work that actually should have been antipathetic to them – made by old lefties, coming out of European surrealism - and they saw the potential power in that kind of art and ran with it. You couldn't say that of many of the art critics at the time." [27]

Wrapped up in this media-speak are a number of odd locutions worth a question or two. Is the term 'perverse' a flannelling attempt by Dodd to cover his own back, as if he is afraid of what he seems to be doing – giving credit to an agency that he perhaps views as threatening or transgressing his self-alleged and self-proclaimed liberal outlook? Why is it perverse to say that the CIA took art very seriously? Is it a perverse argument to state that the CIA were, in the fifties, the best art critics in America because we do not associate the CIA with 'professional' art criticism or expect members of the CIA to be the best art critics in America. This because Dodd calculates that we somehow do not expect members of the CIA, then, since or now, to be art critics at all? The wider questions then arise, what is art criticism, what is an art critic? Why should work by old lefties be antipathetic to the CIA, particularly if, when faced by the prospect of a career, that 'old leftism' is reduced to an idealist fantasy rather than a practical commitment? Is it that work by old lefties, according to Dodd, shows signs of their old leftism, and if their work does show signs of old leftism (or new lefties shows signs of new leftism for that matter) then the CIA could not absorb or manipulate these signs? There does seem to be an underlying if confused presumption in Dodd's notion of work done by 'old lefties' that the work might somehow display signs of this old leftism. Is it this that makes this way of looking at the question and this argument perverse? If it is, such a presumption is unwarranted. Even despite that they may protest, so-called old lefties can make art, that is not just not only old leftie, but might well be old rightie. [28] However, if the work may be characterized as work made by old lefties, then the work itself perhaps gave little away in this respect. At any rate if 'old leftism' had been explicitly signaled in the work then would this have made the work impossible for the CIA to use? What would be a sufficient enough sign of old leftism in the work for the CIA to find the work unusable? Socialist Realism? Clearly the work was not old leftie enough for the CIA to refuse to work with it, and the

proof of it is that the CIA did work with it. For purposes here I am assuming that Dodd's notion of 'old leftism' can be made sense of. Even assuming that the CIA could identify signs of old leftism in the work, this obviously, since they used the work, was no impediment to them taking up and promoting Abstract Expressionism. [29] In terms of, say, the paintings, then the paintings themselves apparently did not carry enough signals of old leftism to render impossible that the work would be used by the CIA. But, equally obviously, even if the works did show signs of old leftism (whatever these may be according to Dodd's ascription) then the CIA could work with these signs since they did. The degree of indication of 'old leftism' seems to be what is at issue here. Since the Abstract Expressionist persons (the bodies, perhaps more specifically the output of the brains, of the painters if you like!) did not have to have security clearance, I guess it follows, since the CIA promoted the work, that the work itself did not indicate the artists as producing art work produced by what Dodd calls 'old lefties', assuming that 'old leftism' (whatever it may be) can be sufficiently indicated as such in the work in question. Thus, if there was one, then the work was not the problem, the vehicle of old leftism was not the work itself but the artists themselves, but, as just mentioned, since Pollock and company did not require security clearance then the artists as vehicles of old leftism did not pose much of a problem for the CIA in respect of Dondero and the cultural philistines. If the works had been recognizable as vehicles of old leftism then this would have been much more of a problem in respect of CIA patronage.

The fact is that, in this respect, the works and the persons of the artists could be separated regardless of what the artists claimed and pronounced their political views to be, providing the articulation of these views could be either ignored or sufficiently suppressed, disguised or manipulated to avoid the wrong kind of controversy, media storm, etc. The most likely scenario seems to be one in which the CIA probably was willing to speculate that the artists would prioritize promotion of their career over any political opinions or principles they held. In my experience over the last forty years in the art world the promotion of career amounts to the overriding political principle: a not so curious Cold War mirror reflection of the Soviet Socialist Realist outlook in the face of the Stalinist reflex. Remembering that at that time 'old leftism' (whatever it may be in respect of artists' proclamations concerning their work) was not so much 'old leftism' as plain leftism. In point of fact there is

an argument, I've heard it proclaimed regularly during my fifty or more years within the art milieu, that art work transcends leftism old and new, rightism old and new, ideological commitment and social phenomenon in general. Greenberg, for example, has, from time to time, in a number of highly praised essays, proclaimed the transcendence of what he terms great art over such concerns. [30] The fact that Abstract Expressionist work was used by the CIA in much the same way that the Kremlin apparatchiks used Soviet Socialist Realist work seems to make claims such as Greenberg's view, arguing that the quality of great art transcends social conditions, difficult to uphold. This kind of fact seems to indicate not so much art work as transcendent, as rather that some art work is sufficiently a kind of cultural open book susceptible to given readings that represent specific social formations. Perhaps for a while abstraction, non-figuration, non-representation until it became sufficiently familiar as to be recognized as a figure was easily suborned such that it could be used as a clear example to support the argument that great art transcends all social formations. Perhaps then Dodd's notion of the CIA seeing the 'potential power in that kind of art and running with it' as some kind of critical insight and virtue can be viewed as disingenuous, since it is easy to see that once the CIA grasped it might be construed as anti-Moscow then they ran with it precisely because they saw it as anti-Moscow. There does not seem to be much doubt that because one of the characteristic Soviet reactions to the work was that it could not be seen as even neutral, but was viewed as a manifestation of pro-Western capitalist degenerate art, that the CIA did put a value on it; i.e. able to work with it (perhaps this is what Dodd means by art criticism). It may be that an argument can be made here that the work was not so much pro-Washington but that it was anti-Moscow. But, in any case, any distinction between being pro-Washington and being anti-Moscow tends to disappear if pro-Washington becomes, say throughout the late forties, increasingly defined as anti-Moscow. However, Dodd may be nearer the mark if there was a CIA operative with the kind of critical insight Greenberg claims for himself. How much critical insight someone like Nelson Rockefeller possessed I have no idea, but the fact is he collected a massive amount of American work and he can certainly be counted a CIA cultural operative and Western Cold War warrior of the first rank. [31]

If Greenberg was not a CIA operative, then he seems to be, at a minimum, something of a manipulated front. If he had been aware

of CIA patronage and manipulation then, logically, surely he would maintain that the unknown CIA cultural funds were equivalent to his notion of enlightened patronage, since they possessed and supplied the resources that significantly contributed to the umbilical cord of gold. If it is presumed that Greenberg did know that major patronage of the Abstract Expressionists came from CIA funds then it surely follows that he held the CIA to be an enlightened organization because of these funds, counting the organization as a weighty bestower of 'the umbilical cord of gold.' If they were aware of it, the Abstract Expressionist artists also may as a group, as I have suggested already, have welcomed the patronage and perhaps viewed this not so much as manipulation but more as career advancement, perhaps even not caring to identify career advancement as an act of manipulation – a familiar sophistry with artists, old and new. In a more general sense, this kind of Greenbergian argument can, in the context of the Cold War, be put alternatively in something like the following way. In the Western view, supporting anything that was anti-Moscow could be viewed as enlightened patronage, and then it follows, by definition, that the CIA would see themselves as enlightened patrons and since enlightened patronage was the umbilical cord of gold according to Greenberg, then the CIA funds were a significant part, if not the whole, of the umbilical cord of gold. But there is a point that this quote from Dodd does not raise at all. It rests upon the matter of the kind of art Abstract Expressionism was. As I have mentioned already, conventionally, much of the work was broadly categorized as some such as abstract or non-figurative art. Here I'll stay with the term non-figurative. Non-figuration is perhaps, at that time at any rate, the kind of work most easily perceived as a cultural open book. However, figurative work too was prominently featured in the CIA sponsored shows in the forties and fifties. Saunders, for instance, in her book provides, first, a clear example of how corporate power could often recognize how artists might prioritize career over practice, and, second, a good example of how figurative art might be seen to be more difficult to treat as an open book, and the examples she uses involve first Abby Rockefeller, and, second, no less a CIA operative than Nelson Rockefeller himself, this in respect of his supervising a work he commissioned from the Mexican artist Diego Rivera:

"Supporting left-wing artists was familiar territory for the Rockefellers. When challenged over her decision to promote the Mexican revolutionary

Diego Rivera chanted 'Death to the Gringos' (outside an American embassy) Abby Aldrich Rockefeller had argued that 'Reds would stop being Reds if we could get them artistic recognition'."

Abby certainly had that one right! And maybe non-figurative work, at least in the forties, perhaps provided the most comfortable pathway for this kind of persuasion. Another way of putting it is to say that career is prioritized over practice.

"In 1933, Nelson Rockefeller had supervised Rivera's commission to paint a mural on the newly erected Rockefeller Center. Inspecting Rivera's work one day, Nelson noticed that one figure had taken on the unmistakable features of Vladimir Ilich Lenin. He politely asked Rivera to remove it. Rivera politely refused. At Nelson's instruction, the mural was surrounded by guards whilst Rivera was handed a cheque for his full fee ($21,000), and served notice that his commission was cancelled. In February 1934, the mural, which had been nearly completed, was destroyed with jack-hammers." [32]

Presumably the face of Vladimir Ilich Lenin was a sign of leftism (at that time, 1938, relatively 'new leftism') that could be read as a sign of explicit leftism, and presumably our arch-capitalist, good old Nelson, read it as such. We can speculate that had Lenin's features on the mural had, say, a painted phrase with, say, an arrow pointing to Lenin's face and comprised some such slogan as 'Lenin was a Bolshevik bastard' or 'Lenin was a commie cunt' then the sign of leftism might have been converted into a sign of rightism, and perhaps the mural might have survived. But clearly such vulgar phrases might well, at least at that time, have appeared to American cultural mandarins such as Rockefeller as a too uncultivated rightism, perhaps both phrases, and the second phrase in particular, would have had to run the gauntlet of some such as an American Christian moral crusade and old Nelson may have had to have the mural destroyed in the face of this kind of opposition. [33] This regardless of the fact that Nelson might have agreed that Lenin was both a Bolshevik bastard and a commie cunt. But all this apart, at any rate in Rivera's mural, Lenin's face was sufficiently recognizable for Nelson to be able to count it as unacceptable, presumably because he read it as a sign of leftist sympathy, a sympathy he obviously did not share. The case of a typical non-figurative Pollock painting is perhaps more susceptible to a more open reading. If there is any arrangement of marks that resemble the face of Vladimir Ilich Lenin (I must confess I have not

spent any time searching for such arrangements in looking at either reproductions of Pollock's work or the actual works) then I am presuming they are there by accident taking into account Pollock's characteristic way of working. But I may be wrong. Perhaps Pollock worked images of what he saw as versions of Lenin's face in a sort of drip painting coda – perhaps Dodd has seen and knows something I don't. Whether such arrangements are there or not it can be safely presumed that even if they are there, and the CIA in the forties detected them as being there, then the CIA thought they were sufficiently enough disguised to escape the attentions of Dondero and the conservatives, and sufficiently subtle, ambivalent or obscure to either escape the attentions of Moscow altogether or for Moscow to ignore them. And the bottom line of the CIA cultural insurance policy might be characterized as follows. Such arrangements should they be detected and broadcast by Moscow would, almost certainly, given the Kremlin official line on modern art, be treated as sacrilegious to Soviet doctrine, an insult to the iconic status granted to images of Lenin's face in Soviet culture, and therefore might presumably be useful to CIA anti-Soviet cultural policy. Ironically, the Stalinist line on modern art often uncannily echoed the line of Dondero and the American conservatives, and both camps directed their cultural venom equally at both modernist figurative art (some such as both defacement of the human figure and infantile rubbish were a familiar accusation) and modernist non-figurative art (some such as infantile rubbish was a familiar accusation).

Much of the work that was gathered under the Abstract Expressionist category in the forties and early fifties was figurative, de Kooning's *Woman* paintings for example. But, to reiterate, non-figurative work would perhaps offer more opportunities for 'open' reading. In the case of figurative works by, say, de Kooning and Gorky, then the CIA's anti-Moscow line could be maintained just as vigorously as with the case made for non-figurative work. In both cases the anti-Moscow line could be made identical to the pro-Washington line ('free enterprise painting' as Rockefeller called it). Thus equally a battle over figurative work could be just as fiercely locked into cultural Cold War policy. American cultural mandarins promoted such a battle just as fiercely as they did the confrontation over non-figurative work and these two aspects of the confrontation, non-figurative and figurative, were conducted in a continuity of argument and policy. It is probable that for the CIA the continuity between modernist non-figurative and modernist figurative work

as a culturally iconic instrument was sufficiently provided by Moscow's response to both. [34] As for the MOMA's links to the CIA, Samuel Kootz testifies that "Alfred Barr was an enthusiast for those particular three men (Motherwell, Gottlieb, Baziotes) and conveyed this enthusiasm to people like Burden, Nelson Rockefeller, and others of the Modern group of Trustees." [35] A notion such as 'conveying enthusiasm' here necessarily entails some ideological projection.

Returning to the wider history of the struggle between the post-war corporate and federal power in the US, and to the establishment of the eventual character of the post-war *Pax Americana*. Within the *Pax Americana* the post-war US led notion of the AGMOAS played a considerable role. As a result of the expansion of US corporate dominance, by 1960 the impetus of the widening income inequality pattern in the US had gathered a strong momentum. And by 1960 the operations of New York art dealers, whether they proclaimed liberal credentials or not, were part of this corporate penetration of the US state. All the now famous New York galleries that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s emerged from within a strongly impinging background of the battle for the future character of the US economy. [36] As noted earlier, the battle was between corporate management and organized labour. Below is a passage from Fones-Wolf summarizing the corporate community's agenda throughout the 1940s and 1950s:

"The business community had two primary goals. First it hoped to destroy or discredit the ideological underpinning of New Deal liberalism. Second, it wanted to undermine the legitimacy and power of organized labor. Unions posed a significant challenge not only in the shop but in the political realm as the backbone of the Democratic party coalition. Industrialists would accomplish these goals through campaigns to sell Americans on the virtues of individualism as opposed to collectivism, freedom as opposed to state control, and on the centrality of the free enterprise system to the American way of life." [37]

The corporate community maintains this view today, and until the Enron event in 2001, it maintained a complete hegemony from about the end of Carter's presidency. The Enron event was an early media-covered major blip revealing the corporate structure as not being the honest broker it claimed to be, and later this was endorsed beyond any doubt when the banking system was exposed as fraudulent and had to be funded by the tax payers payout to cover the corporate

debts generated by the corporately devastating sub-prime mortgage crash in 2008. The corporate community first started seriously approaching a near hegemonic position in the closing years of the Eisenhower administrations. Despite the so-called 'swinging sixties' and the valiant character of the anti-Vietnam and Civil Rights campaigns and the strong concrete input of feminist action into the civil structures of US governance during that time, corporate hegemony was more or less untroubled from the seventies until 2008. Few people have chronicled the many injustices and deceits disseminated by that hegemony more incisively and persistently than Noam Chomsky.

As already suggested by Nelson Rockefeller's characterization of Abstract Expressionist painting as 'free enterprise painting', the corporate 'virtues of individualism' claim slides comfortably into the avant-garde model of the artistic subject. In corporate speak the prime form of individualism is entrepreneurship. [38] No Western version of individualism has been more strongly proclaimed as a virtue by Western corporate ideology than artistic individualism. I have indicated above that artistic individualism was a prominent motif of the Western campaign in fighting the Cold War. During that contest the CIA, not least through the instrument of MOMA, lavishly funded the American version of the AGMOAS, a version that has increasingly come to dominate Western art practice and art schools after World War 2. The notion of Western artistic individualist freedom sits strongly linked (and invariably somewhat incongruously in the cases where it is applied to artists pronouncing left sentiments) to the heralds of the free market and globalization; heraldic projects like the Friedman-led Chicago School of Economics. Any notion of famous Western artists, and not a few of the less famous and not famous at all, in the twentieth century signing up to the collectivist clout of a unionized labour organization (relations of production) would plainly be historically and bizarrely inaccurate. [39] This has become a kind of classic contradiction in the case of many artists in twentieth century Western art practice, when such artists had declared both for individualism and for programmes of socialist collectivism. No art practice and art life mirrored this contradiction more clearly than that of Picasso, as both a member of the French Communist Party and an exemplary practitioner of the alleged freedoms of the Western AGMOAS. [40] Whether it was led by a French-speaking culture or, as presently, an English-speaking culture, the AGMOAS always had a contradiction

built into it. Even in the days of the founding figures of the French-centred AGMOAS, individuals such as Courbet and Rimbaud carried this contradictory tension into the events in which they participated, especially their ROP. Courbet steered his anti-salon art practice attitude into the Paris Commune and the destruction of the Vendôme column, but apparently never viewed the business of becoming a bourgeois-declared famous painter as in any way contrary to the aims of Communard collectivism. Rimbaud may well have intuited the problem of a Western art practice being incompatible with collectivist social aspirations, since he apparently packed up on the entire business of his ROP and ROD that produced and distributed the products of his poetic imagination, and anyone else's poetic imagination for that matter. [41]

In a nineteenth century French-speaking culture the AGMOAS perhaps embraced and preserved a greater tension between individualism and collectivism than it did once its distributive centre moved from Paris into the English-speaking corporately ascendant culture of New York in the fifties. There any notion of socialist collectivism was simply dissipated. As I have noted already, in New York in the forties and fifties, American corporate cultural managers frequently designated Abstract Expressionism as some such as 'free enterprise painting'. [42] The attack by the US corporate community after 1945 on the collectivist outlook of US labour organizations explicitly drew upon traditional themes embedded not only in US political culture but in English speaking culture in general, especially since 1950 in the UK for example. But such themes were especially virulently embedded in US business culture, since it was a very much larger and richer corporate community than its Western allies and it explicitly sought to associate the dangers of monopoly with the labour movement and contrasted it with what it alleged were the virtues of its own corporate community's version of individual rights, which were the corporate aspirations for the future of US society. These therefore were its aspirations for Western society and, emphatically since 1990, global society. From the seventies, these aspirations were an undisguised ambition to achieve the Corporate Tyranny as even contradictory sentiments sympathetic to collectivism were rendered and displayed to be increasingly impotent in the US led version of the AGMOAS. From its start in 1946 the attack by the US corporate community upon US labour organizations claimed collectivism to be contrary to such aphorisms as 'the American way of life', 'the American Dream', etc. And

such sentiments claim the AGMOAS as one of their paradigmatic realizations, to which Nelson Rockefeller's homily 'free enterprise painting' testifies. Once the centre of AGMOAS distribution moved to New York, say by 1960, then it became a prominent part of some such ideological projection as 'the American way of life'; a Western clarion call in fighting the Cold War. By the late 1970s, when US corporate business models had come to ideologically dominate not only Western business culture but also Western culture in general, then correspondingly the 'American way of life' version of the AGMOAS had come to dominate teaching throughout Western art schools. By the sixties US art dealers and US art magazines dominated the pictorial reproduction and textual traffic of the Western art world.

From the mid-sixties onwards, British art education especially was increasingly formed by US art magazine spin. US art magazine spin was showing strong signs of a corporate takeover back then. Today the glossies are corporate to their cores. And modeled from this corporate form come many European art magazines issuing one version or another of the transatlantic artspeak. The volume of page space taken up by advertisements vastly increased in the period late 60s into the seventies. Today it is vertiginous in its expanse. For example, in the April 2008 issue of *Artforum*, over 260 pages out 403 (including inside of front cover and both sides of back cover) are completely filled by adverts. It is a visible symptom of the fact that the AGMOAS is now a corporate audit. This is the logical outcome of such fatuous notions as 'art being purely visual' being taken seriously; where the pictorial adverts roll out their minimal but critically important grunting capitalist text: the name and address of the gallery, auction house, project manager, etc. A page-by-page audit of who's got what for sale. Half-reiterating Deleuze and Guattari's remark that Capitalism is not keen on writing, we can say it becomes less and less keen on it the more it seeks to woo its expanding range of consumers. [43] Nowhere is this more clear than in the pictorial/textual exchange of the ROD of art. Today it becomes increasingly dependent on this illiteracy, specializing not least in picture aided one-liners. With 260 out of 400 pages devoted to the ROD, then by *Artforum's* own admission according to the composition of the magazine, it seems then a primary 'read' for student devotees of *Artforum* (and this is quite a large community of scanners) is for the student to make a scan of the business addresses of the ROD. This is a typical symptom of a fine art degree becoming a degree in business

studies. The art world's habitual inflating of 'the visual' (which was always a characteristic twentieth century art school preoccupation) became more and more aligned with corporate modeling, especially in respect of the advertising industry, as the twentieth century entered its last two decades, so advocacy of the 'purely visual' becomes Capitalism's closer and closer ally. Nestling within the corporate embrace of the present day AGMOAS there are quite a number of protagonists who disavow Capitalism in proclamation and writing, but since this is subjugated to the 'art as visual' production it is much more likely to feed and support capitalism rather than censure it often conforming and contributing to a combination of the structure of permitted dissent with the conduit of aspiring to celebrity status. We are back with Philip Dodd's procrastinatory signs of 'old leftism'.

The artist as dissenter is now one of the most homely of Capitalist stereotypes of the artist. The artist as dissenter is now a fully domesticated part of the apparatus of manufacturing consent. The seemingly long road starting with the attack on American social collectivism by American corporate business in 1946 to the steady absorption of the AGMOAS as a corporate cultural instrument throughout the 1960s turns out perhaps to have not been such a long road after all. After 1960 it was not much of a winding road either. Notwithstanding Dodd's statements, which seem really to be more a series of pleas than well wrought arguments, that the CIA may well have been prescient art critics back in the late forties and early fifties, then the 'old lefties', with very few exceptions, were hardly likely to turn down the chance of a corporately funded and promoted one-person show of their work. Within the framework of Capitalism and the Corporate Tyranny then socialist collectivist sympathy and solidarity simply do not sit well on the pathway to artist-career. In such a context, dissent counts for little more than a consumer report – a report on their own consumership of 'leftist' items. As such it amounts to yet another layer of Capitalist bureaucracy - artists as not so much citizen-subjects of the state or crown as servants of the Corporate Tyranny. Such servants are a display of the brand 'Dissenter' – this brand is highly marketable, ask Geldof, Hirst, Emin, or Bono! Once branded AVANT-GARDE, then the AGMOAS becomes a frozen image of the corporate version of the history of the avant-garde, habitually enchained to, and enthralled by, a series of repetitive behaviours. The AGMOAS now is one more item in the business ontology of corporate exchange. [44] In this sense the avant-garde liberals are an important part of the reactionary grip

of the Corporate Tyranny, keeping the AGMOAS socially still and serene. The AGMOAS is now designed and branded very nearly, if not quite completely, as post-literate. In this sense it is a clear reflection of the corporate sound-bite culture, hardly composed for anything else but the production of a predictable procession of neoliberal art-like objects. To the extent that neoliberalism is fixated on the visual and is image-bound and post-literate, then the art schools are one of its most welcoming havens. The art schools have long harboured an historical suspicion of literacy. This is not without its contradictory aspects since it is not directed at every area of art school cultural embrace. Literature and poetry, as distinct from critique, have been granted elevated status but are more firmly anchored in the art school view of what it calls some such as 'the imaginative process' rather than locked into the contest prioritizing 'visual' versus 'literate'. Such a contest has been long imbedded in twentieth art school culture. And the two have been run as kind of cultural parallels but, at the same time, the literary has somehow been made to curtsy to the notion of the supremacy of the visual in art practice as a feed into some such as the alleged 'visual imagination'. Thus, whilst the art schools are especially disposed to neoliberal branding blandishments of the supremacy of the visual, such blandishments are not without their inconsistencies. Such inconsistencies were often prefabricated around the input of the above-mentioned French Theory. Perhaps the main one turning on the incursion of cultural studies into fine art areas in the eighties as it poured out streams of 'literature' mainly centred on what might be succinctly termed abridgements and caricatures of Freud and the above named French Theory. In any case 'Theory', nominally at least a direct legacy of the input of Conceptualism in the late sixties, in fine art departments was frequently viewed as some kind of supplementary adjunct to 'studio work' and often took the form of the production of a statutory essay or series of essays: a sort of writing but a kind of second-class citizen in the court of fine art – and this subjugation invariably showed. This kind of arrangement, contradictorily, produced stacks of literature but plenty of anti-literacy. The 'Theory' was usually there to allegedly buttress the 'proper work' – visual objects produced in the studio. Precisely what this function of 'buttressing' achieves in the sense of cognitive clarity and intellectual accomplishment has always been something of a mystery to me.

Twentieth century Western fine art schools increasingly

upgraded the notion of the privatizing of experience since they were so attached to the notion of the possessive individual and its allegedly private world. It was not unusual for their historians, theorists, critics, storytellers and hand-wavers (of which the latter two categories not only included many of the aforementioned but also many artists) to raise as artistic virtues the alleged outcomes produced by individual pathologies – chemical imbalances, neurological conditions – which in, say, the field of medicine may be viewed more soberly, if problematically. [45] Foucault surveyed the problem of external surveillance, but the use of Romantic/Bohemian stereotypes filtered out for use in the art schools amounted more to a kind of 'policeman in the head' surveillance. [46] The AGMOAS was (and still is, let's not forget) an excellent conditioning instrument, in a precise contradiction of the claim, especially rampant in the sixties, that the art schools were allegedly the great deconditioning environments, the great dissenting constituencies ('the wild man of the art school', 'the break-out joints', 'reservoirs of the Lennon prototype', etc.). Confirming, maintaining and reproducing this anthem of identity was particularly high on the agenda for twentieth century Western art schools throughout the last half of the twentieth century, and remains so today. Interrogating, let alone resolving, the problem of identity was not. There is a very straightforward reason for this, in the art schools the construction of identity is not perceived as a problem. Any problems were to do with constructing/finding an individual's identity according to the avant-garde prescription, the quest of finding your alleged 'authentic' self. But the notion that there might not be such an identity (the self-confirming centre of truth) never entered the debate. The artistic subject was an especially well imbedded subject (in both senses of the word) in Western culture. Not least because wherever it lay on the spectrum of exorbitant 'imaginative' hubris to morbid 'imaginative' introspection, the notion of artistic self-hood was held to be especially high-octane and visionary. This was a concept of a superannuary self – once found/ constructed it amounts to a lifelong 'creative' pension banked by the alleged uncovering of a supposed supercharged vision of artistic interiority. (I do not introduce the analogy with banks and pensions lightly.) Such a concept has a long and over venerated history in twentieth century art practice. In his remarks on Shaftesbury and the virtues of the soulful individual, Roy Porter writes the following:

"The vocation and perfection of the great-souled man lay in aesthetic projects

and cultural accomplishments. Virtue, knowledge and beauty formed a club of the good – the only trinity Shaftesbury ever acknowledged." [47]

Whilst the AGMOAS may appear a corporate aesthetic project simply decorating the virulent surface of the core of the Corporate Tyranny absorbing and holding on to it is now a frontline corporate political project. Certainly, if say, for example, we are to believe Philip Dodd's assessment of the CIA as art critics, it is also a cultural accomplishment, since it appears, again according to Dodd, the relevant CIA agents of the forties and fifties are to be treated as 'prescient' art critics. Presumably the Cold War was fought with each side, East and West, conceiving the characteristics of their respective social systems as virtuous, knowledge sustaining and a propagator of beauty. Overlooking for the present the problematic character of the concept of beauty, the concept of the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth has a resemblance to Shaftesbury's notion of the 'great-souled man', such traditional notions proved very useful to the CIA in pitching against the grim fierceness of Stalinism. Holding out an even older alleged pedigree, the twentieth century AGMOAS can also be viewed as a fulfillment of what Porter calls "Descartes dream of the uniqueness of human interiority". The AGMOAS embraced the idea of the 'interior self' as both a festival of enjoyment and a feat of endurance in the same self (body). The AGMOAS emerged at the same time as the notion of the self was being reconfigured out of its more explicit religious conceptions. In all these views of the authentic great-souled individual, the self was treated, and still is, as authentic and free from outside surveillance, a favourite projection of the CIA, an organization which must rank as all-time winner of the great surveying institutions - it almost certainly outranks even the Stasi. Courbet, if what testimony we have of his view of himself at that time is to be taken at its word, never rid himself of this notion of the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth throughout his participation in the Paris Commune. A self made by the self's own choices – in this there resides a strong suspicion of circularity. Porter, commenting again on the development of the concept of the self, states:

"Received ideas of identity in the West thus presuppose some real and essential 'inner self'. Favoured ways of imagining its realization include the metaphor of a seed maturing into a flower, or the growth-process from birth to adulthood, from dependency to self-sufficiency. These organic metaphors are reflected in popular narratives, or myths, of the historical

evolution of the self through the rise of civilization." [48]

According to the logic of the concept, the concept of the self as a self-confirming centre of truth holds the self to be, by definition, autonomous and is the great dream and illusion represented by what the twentieth century art world called some such as the authentic, autonomous self. It is no coincidence that Rockefeller, for example, probably held the notion of the entrepreneur to be such a self. A self, the founding and construction of which, when achieved, is claimed to be completely clear of any kind of surveillance. I have a number of times over the years listened to and overheard art school conversations in which it is presupposed not only is there little outside influence upon some such notion as 'natural talent', but that 'natural talent' transcends any erstwhile surveillance. This seems to contradict any kind of teaching, rendering it obsolete. Whilst this dogmatically defended concept of the artistic self was perhaps the most ardent remnant of the Romantic nineteenth century fallacy of the autonomous self, it also picked up some significant twentieth century allies, not the least being Freud's work. Although in the art schools Freud's work was exposed, it must be noted, via some typical twentieth century art school caricaturing and abbreviating of the work. Until the deluge of French Theory in the art schools in the eighties, art school reading habits were more tailored to looking rather than, let us call it, heavy reading, more tailored to the coffee table and colour supplements than to concentrated reading. And French Theory itself was soon subject to exposure, not to mention caricature and gloss, through the coffee table and colour supplement convenience processing store of the contemporary art world. By the mid-seventies it was clear that the AGMOAS had pretty well survived intact the incursion of some of the early Conceptualist attempts to 'heavy up' the role of reading within art practice. The view that the concept of the art object had been expanded, which was central to the succeeding flippancy of the practice habits of a wider, later, and still current Conceptualism has formed a legacy that has left the AGMOAS unmolested. The AGMOAS continued, serene as ever, simply absorbing the newly expanded range of objects that can now count as art-making new 'materials'.

Because of it's by now heavily rehearsed constitution, there is presently little if any emancipatory potential in the AGMOAS. The AGMOAS' alleged and much vaunted freedom simply 'frees' the artistic subject into the patterns of thought of the Corporate

Tyranny. As if proof was ever needed by that time, the art practice vertically structured business organizations that the likes of Hirst and Murakami set up, and which emerged full-blown in the noughties, displayed clearly that any faint trace of its emancipatory early roots had been marketed clean out of the AGMOAS. The AGMOAS, even before that time, was furnishing artist careers that were exact corporate ROP facsimiles of ROD corporate outfits such as Christie's and Sotheby's – the current impetus is that the ROP and ROD of art practice and its products are now more or less seamless. At the present stage of the AGMOAS it is simply an ironclad definition of the extremely probable. According to this stage it seems that in respect of the character of the artistic subject being 'challenging' and 'radical' only the AGMOAS can provide it – this is characteristic of a value being treated as a fact. Up to about the beginnings of the eighties the Corporate Tyranny remained in rudimentary form. Up to that time the AGMOAS had been absorbed by the strategies of what might be called old-fashioned corporatism. But what needs to be recognized are the characteristics that distinguish neoliberal governance from old-fashioned corporatism. It is in the embrace of neoliberal governance from the mid-eighties onwards that the AGMOAS has been cast completely in the corporate market form it singularly displays today, and which has fulfilled the dream of old fashioned corporatism. The AGMOAS, like the event of an election, becomes a token to be manipulated by the Corporate Tyranny. The AGMOAS is now fully assimilated into a system that conceives justice as resting solely on maximizing individual wealth and, not least in cosseting the notion of celebrity status, and elevating maximized individual wealth in order to proclaim its alleged virtuous nature through the now typical media events it organizes on behalf of charitable causes. Live Aid is a typical example. There is a close correspondence between Halliburton and Cheney on the one hand, and, say, the likes of Gagosian, White Cube, Sotheby's and Hirst on the other – the latter part of the corresponding pair is the description of both the conduit of the 'umbilical cord of gold' and its role as template of the celebrity artist, the artist who holds most dollars. A telling historical comparison might be sustained here ranging across stages of the AGMOAS concerning the subject of Africa. Rimbaud in Abyssinia, having more or less packed up art, and Hirst and Bono directing the RED auction in New York in February 2008 in aid of aids victim in Africa. Hirst is reported as saying 'We've changed the world a little bit' – is he kidding? It will take a lot more

than $38 million to change it even a fraction more, but then again think of all that celebrity kudos, it is the Corporate Tyranny's *homo oeconomicus* exemplified. Let's talk Wendy Brown:

"It is possible as well that the ostensible tool of emancipation carries its own techniques of subjugation – that it converges with unemancipatory tendencies in contemporary culture, establishes regulatory norms, coincides with disciplinary power of ubiquitous confessional practices; in short it may feed the powers it is meant to starve." [49]

It is perfectly clear whom and what Brown's critique is criticism of. The AGMOAS now chimes in conformity with one dominant message – everything should be run as a corporate business. This is frequently thought of, when not explicitly then tacitly, by those adherents of the neoliberal doctrine who are theoretically unsophisticated, to be a natural state of affairs not an ideological construction. Although the frequent vehemence of the assertion itself maybe reflects a fear that it is not quite the natural state of affairs they claim it to be. Wendy Brown has written some telling observations on this matter. She argues that the *neo* in front of liberal in the term neoliberal should be treated as a signifier of a fundamental difference in the way political representation and governance is executed by the neoliberals, and that the term liberal is a mere shell of nomenclature that allows the neoliberals a lot of deceptive cover and disguise. [50] Later in these remarks, in the context of examining a section of an essay by T. J. Clark, an examination of the prefix *post* in front of the term Modernism will be undertaken. The terms neoliberal and postmodern are happy political bedfellows. Returning to Brown's analysis, she asserts that the planners and constructors, those of them who are more theoretically thorough, of what I call the Corporate Tyranny, know very well that neoliberalism is no natural object but has to be planned and constructed through the exercise of political, military and legislative power. Therefore neoliberalism relies on protection, preferably from the state. Ironic and contradictory since neoliberalism is a rhetorically hysterical champion of the liquidation of any kind of state welfare programmes, except of course those that favour itself, thus the best solution is to have the state become a welfare program for neoliberalism. Brown focuses on the US state apparatus as a particular object of her analysis, this, she argues, since it is the nation that is the centre of capitalist doctrine, and I suppose also not least since she is a citizen

of the USA and lives and works in it. Brown points out that for neoliberalism to succeed as elected government to the extent it has, then a subject (as distinct from a citizen) called *homo oeconomicus* has to be converted from being American citizens who were once agents of a liberal democratic doctrine to American subjects where everything is commanded by economic rationality (the Chicago School of Economists were the high priests of this doctrine – the market rules all!). *Homo oeconomicus* is the key requirement, the necessary populist agent, if the consensus to agree the current *Pax Americanus* is to be maintained and expanded.

In the life of *homo oeconomicus* all aspects of human life are measured and defined by the neoliberal view of market rationality. The agency of all worthwhile human and institutional practice is accordingly defined under the concept of entrepreneur. True morality, correspondingly, is measured by what the neoliberals call market rationality. The neoliberal centre may be the US but the doctrine of market rationality knows no country or boundary. One way of summarizing the outcome of the manic commitment to the concept of entrepreneur is a maxim something like 'an equal chance of inequality for nearly all'. The neoliberal state is not a constitutional state in any sense of that state realized as the universal representative of the people by the French Revolution. Neoliberal doctrine requires that the state, insofar as it can be a state at all, does not operate according to constitutional rules, but rather as a market agent in itself. Since the Thatcher-Reagan era there has been a rapid extension of what the neoliberals call economic rationality into institutions and areas of society that previously were not primarily economic agencies. The 'citizen', according to neoliberal doctrine is an agent of what it terms 'self-care' – the neoliberal entrepreneur. To keep the AGMOAS in focus here, Hirst is the neoliberal entrepreneur *par excellence*. Therefore, as a rational (read 'market led') agent then such an individual takes care of their own every need. Any aspirations or ambitions contrary to this are ruled out as the actions of an irrational agent. For the neoliberals the aspirations of the French Revolutionaries were irrational and therefore the French Revolution was an irrational event. By the time of the era of Clinton and Blair the doctrine had succeeded to a conversion level such that public service institutions, through being persuaded of the alleged virtues of privatizing and outsourcing their services, had become transmitting machines of a contempt for the founding principles of those same public service institutions. Thus many UK city councils

now exhibit an eerie air of embarrassed repressed self-loathing: In the British national political arena none more so than the Liberal Democrats in the present UK Coalition government. Former leader of the UK's Liberal Democrats, Nick Clegg himself, who is both the great neoliberal opportunist and amongst the clearest of delegates of the empty shell of the old liberalism, not least in self-deludingly still using the nomenclature of the old liberalism, was caught with his power hungry snout in the neoliberal trough when the matter over the issues of student fees was brought into neoliberal focus. The whole party is now deservedly rent asunder in a toxic mix of blatant neoliberal temptations, overarching old liberal handwringing and its addiction to sixth-form debating prowess. But the British Liberal Democrats aside, and after this mountebank duplicity with the Tories, even taking into account the vicissitudes of the Western democratic electoral system and its vulnerability to media baron opportunism, their fate will likely be to be swept aside, it is worth keeping in mind that the neoliberals view the public services as services to plenish the private sector.

In the UK one of the by now classic cases of this mindset is the present financial arrangements for university education where a state of long term indenture is beginning to seem to loom as a distinct possibility in the student's post-university life as student fees rocket towards the £10,000 mark, and, at the same time, as the opportunities for 'neo-liberal entrepreneurship' wither and shrivel on the neoliberal vine. The idea, and it is a very basic idea of the Corporate Tyranny, is to get the student to think of education as a consumer item rather than a matter of human rights. In Fine Art education, for example, getting the art student to think in this way is an exact match to and explicit feed into the corporately absorbed AGMOAS – the aspiring artist as neoliberal entrepreneur and the AGMOAS as an agency of neoliberal competition. In the wider political arena, for example in the UK, the UK state itself, the big city councils, and every other institutional social arrangement would, under this manic neoliberal dogmatic projection, become a calculating purely self-interested 'citizen' ranked far above any social collectivist group except the collectivism of neoliberalism, the collectivism of the self-interested and self-absorbed citizen. Thus the paradox is there for anyone with the wherewithal to judge. Neoliberal dogma needs a collectivist will, a definite consensus. Its mission is to persuade through a reordering of the old liberal democratic proxies (e.g. the Clinton-Bush-Blair axis of manipulation), by legislative sleight of hand (the Clinton-

Bush-Blair systems of governance), and, where necessary by pure military force (Iraq and Afghanistan), which invasions, it seems are necessarily marshalled into place and activated by conducting the preceding two mentioned strategies throughout what might be called the home liberal democracies.

If the present art world platitudes are to be believed then it is a sort of natural state that the art world has reached thanks to corporate guidance, since the corporate person, according to corporate ideology (which habitually claims not to be ideology), is a sort of natural person. But it is 'fallen man', since the neoliberals tend to weaken this claim since they played on a very restricted spectrum with at one end 'capitalism is the only game in town' when the neoliberal going is good, to the 'capitalism is the best available arrangement' form when the going gets tougher. [51] Treating a value as a fact, asserting what is ideological to be natural, is the strident call of the Corporate Tyranny. The AGMOAS is now in no position even to challenge, let alone to eliminate, what appears to a convinced if deluded art world, and much of the rest of the corporately dominated world for that matter, to be a natural order. The AGMOAS now runs contrary to Brecht's incisive observation that an emancipatory politics always, without exception, destroys what appears to be a natural order. The AGMOAS is currently a built-in part of the apparatus preserving what is in fact an ideological construct so that it appears to be a natural order. AGMOAS artists are corporate apparatchiks, welcomed as 'dissenters', 'radicals', 'challengers' of the status quo', etc., by not just the corporately besotted Western art world, but keyed in as an ongoing ideological cultural figment of corporate Capitalist political imagination aiming to create a planet-enveloping culture. The AGMOAS at the present historical juncture displays every symptom of global spread.

The post-Fordist configuration of corporatist global work patterns has some content it shares with the AGMOAS. Post-Fordist workers might nearly be called Bohemians, but not quite - Bohemians not infrequently do get sacked from Bohemian 'work', art teachers for example. In art schools the sacking of teaching staff is often on points of ideological difference with their bosses, who not uncommonly in the present situation are converts from the old Bohemian art education system to the new business studies system of art education. Thus sometimes the situation becomes very transparent such that the ideological difference emerges as the old form rank-and-file art teacher not fitting the profile of the new either

imported or converted business entrepreneur manager. During the last decade of my art teaching I occasionally found myself caught fast in meetings silently wishing a plague on both houses. [52] Economic factors impinge on the 'creative industries' as much as anywhere else, although cuts in economic resources often provide a convenient excuse, as does flexibility, to get rid of an ideological opponent or competitor. Workers in Fordist times did not so much have to be flexible as to be durable and repetitive, the compensatory security, and it is not a security to be easily dismissed, was security of tenure. The corporately called for 'flexibility' of the Post-Fordist worker is cover for what is also a call, for both workers and managers, to accept the fact of periods of being out of work. How such hardship, when it is hardship, is endured during such periods, will be a matter of how much wealth the worker or the manager has already accumulated – and we know which way the dice is loaded in most cases. It is a significant condition in providing what Marx calls the reserve army of labour. This is the punctiform condition of post-Fordist employment. 'Flexibility' is the corporate word for pushing people around. If Bohemians cease to be Bohemians they have in some sense, even in cases where what might be called 'force of circumstances' prevails upon them, to volunteer to withdraw from Bohemianism. So far as I know there is no such a thing as an officially and professionally sanctioned pension awarded for having carried out a working lifetime of Bohemian work. [53] Bohemians, in the nineteenth century meaning of the term, in their relations of cultural production in adhering to what they take to be a necessary condition of their outlook, were, it seems, resigned to punctiform divisions of their labour, simply because they saw it as a near necessary condition to achieve some such as 'freedom of expression'. This sentiment carried considerable weight in the twentieth century art world.

The concept of the artist as the paradigmatic possessive individualist is the essence of the AGMOAS both before and after the takeover by the Corporate Tyranny. But it is a sliding historical scale. There are countless examples of a single or a few or a small group of post-Fordist workers losing their jobs all the time. The media tends only to attend to the headline cases where a whole factory or institution workforce is forced to be 'flexible'. Artist-type employment (Bohemianism) is hardly noticeable in the sense that losing a job is generally on a very individualistic basis. In fact most Bohemians who do not endure, in one way or another a significant majority, drift out or give up on the job as forces of circumstance

prevail. Whilst most of those people aspiring to the AGMOAS status balance precariously between 'culture' and wage, they are rewarded by a rhetoric which meshes neatly with the corporate presentation and illusion that post-Fordism is a high-minded adversary of the status quo; it presents itself as valiantly, even heroically, confronting and overcoming the alleged immobility of organized labour and trade union bureaucracy, which it has characterized as the ancient status quo, a hangover remnant of Fordist times. 'Overcoming the inertia of the status quo' might serve as a century long slogan proclaiming the supposed most outstanding virtue of the cultural avant-garde. It is at this point, that of the touching of the self-proclaimed narrative of the alleged corporate virtue that it is 'progressive', 'risk loaded' and 'challenging' (entrepreneur), and the narrative of the avant-garde as 'progressive', 'risk loaded' and 'challenging', that the corporate narrative absorbs the AGMOAS narrative. The AGMOAS is now a paradigm of corporate entrepreneurship, hence the appropriateness of Nelson Rockefeller's proclamation of Abstract Expressionism as 'free-enterprise painting'. And, as is the case with entrepreneurship, many entrepreneurs go bust; but those that don't go bust tend to keep a lot for themselves. 'Risk', like 'flexibility', is another corporate buzzword. This is a significant part of the romance of the idea of a capitalist entrepreneur. It is also surely the character of global capitalism. According to the corporate entrepreneurs this arrangement is a matter of fact. But, in fact, it is a matter of value. Perhaps when the likes of Courbet, Lautréamont and Rimbaud were hauling up the flag of the early avant-garde it was inevitable that, cum the twentieth century, an English-speaking Capitalist culture would market and brand it. Today that is a fact. But the reason it is a fact is that Capitalist culture collectively mistook what is, in fact, a value for a fact.

Although many of its protagonists fall away, according to the concept of the AGMOAS, the AGMOAS is a lifelong process. This fits nicely with the post-Fordist view of work in the sense that an AGMOAS concept of work is precarious to most people who aspire to it. Most people who aspire to it will probably not be able to earn a living wage from it. If they become teachers (part-time teachers on short term contracts are especially vulnerable), say, in Western art schools, they become more or less subject to the standard conditions of education workers throughout the Western part of the global economy. This despite whether or not they subscribe to the view that special pleading on behalf of the concept of the artist is

a necessary condition of teaching art. Art school teachers without tenure may increasingly be the norm in art education. But if would-be successful art careerists are unemployed and dependent on the benefits system then they are subject to the precariousness of that particular condition. People who are successful in achieving an AGMOAS career become celebrated by the Corporate Tyranny in having a successful career within limits of the matters of the social content and political structure of their practice, which limits are governed by the Corporate Tyranny. This since the choice and character of the content of the subject may well decide the degree of their success as career-artists. In contrast with Rivera's position in respect of Nelson Rockefeller in the 1930s, there does not seem much doubt that an artist like Martin Kippenberger had he chosen to use an image of Lenin's face in a work in the nineties would have been free from corporate censure (Rockefeller fashion) and such work is now easily absorbed into the neoliberal corporate art canon. As we have seen, artists who publicly announce their liberal credentials can seemingly be as easily absorbed into the corporate brand as those who are explicitly corporatist in outlook. They conform to the brand of the Corporate Tyranny – this, once more, brings the debate back to the general historical trajectory of some such as Nelson Rockefeller's 'free enterprise painting'. On the one hand, a successful AGMOAS career, on the other hand, this career promoted and fixed by a successful art dealer entrepreneurial agency, are the two sides of the corporatist art world's ideal Capitalist coin. The notion of an AGMOAS entrepreneurship sits comfortably with the exalted corporate notions of 'creativity', 'initiative', 'innovation', 'challenge', 'risk', and 'flexibility', etc. And yet this situation too has its paradoxes and contradictions, because in another sense the AGMOAS is the opposite of the post-Fordist worker. While the post-Fordist worker frequently has no security of tenure, and not infrequently self-esteem for that matter, in his or her work, the AGMOAS rests upon a sometimes explicit, but more often tacit, claim to 'creative' superiority. This, in turn, rests upon the delirium of the condition of the artist having been persuaded, perhaps in the main tacitly, to believe her or himself to be a self-confirming centre of truth: the latter being a concept the Corporate Tyranny did not have to invent but simply take over since the match was so good. This concept of the AGMOAS is imbedded in corporate culture. That such a delirium can be so successfully transmitted is, in no small measure, the outcome of this notion of the artist as a

self-confirming centre of truth being already so well imbedded in Western-type art school education. It has been so for a long time, certainly since the turn of the fifties into the sixties, thus, as a clear representative of the corporate takeover of US culture, then Nelson Rockefeller could claim that, say, Pollock was an excellent example of an entrepreneur, a champion of 'free enterprise painting'. As we have seen, such acclaimed delirious subjects are easily marshalled in the cause of, and by, Corporate driven business idealism. Dogmatic adherents to the AGMOAS, successful or not, are corporate pussies. Aspiring to the status of the corporately absorbed AGMOAS is the necessary condition of that absorption being completed, but this in turn then demands artists as successful corporate figures to act as role models. It is chicken and egg not chicken or egg.

Reflecting further on the foregoing remarks in this essay, the role of the AGMOAS in the implementation of the American corporate version of Empire (the *Pax Americana* – one as imperialistically virulent as any earlier version) can be detected more specifically by placing it against the wider detail of the economic structure of the Corporate Tyranny. It is important to state that the Corporate Tyranny operates the AGMOAS within the framework of the appropriation of capital through what the Italian Marxist economists, Negri, Marazzi, Mattei, *et al* call 'the common'. [54] One of the most obvious symptoms of appropriation is the institutional establishment of financial markets as the managers of public debt. By definition that then entails the applying of the stringent and exploitative, not to mention hysterical (what else are the likes of Fred Goodwin but financial hysterics?), financial logic of the markets to the public sphere. Through this dogmatic privatizing discipline the power of the Corporate Tyranny is enforced and expanded. Until the veil was rent open in 2008, across the entire Western-dominated world, this blind and avaricious dogma of the market mania for privatization allowed the markets to increasingly run the state. And things do not seem to have changed much since 2008. There is no sign of this mania abating, as the continuing financial crisis in Greece so transparently illustrates. Thus the role of the AGMOAS as an instrument of cultural control lies strategically within the financial markets' view of what democracy is, or rather whether democracy matters. It is no accident that when it came in 2008 (what I above called 'the rending of the veil') the crisis manifest itself as a banking crisis. Christian Marazzi succinctly states the market control of democracy as follows:

"Today international financial markets are the ones that with the 'simple' differential of bond revenues, technically determine if a citizen of Greece, Illinois or Michigan has the retirement funds or if he or she has to resort to public assistance to survive." [55]

The AGMOAS is by now bloated cultural hubris, and through its long celebrative procession through the twentieth century, its current administrative institutional cadres, just like its twentieth century predecessors, generate seemingly endless self-congratulation manifest in the rhetorical gush invested in terms like 'radical', 'challenging', etc. This hubris-laden community sits its corporately fed, contented arse in the centre of the culture that determines the fate of the likes of 'citizens of Greece, Illinois or Michigan'. These remarks then are an attempt to appeal to artists to cut the pseudo-liberal crap and to ditch the aspiration to be corporately successful and to attempt to gain a re-articulated history that displaces twentieth century celebrity with a more sober view of the artist's place in the socialist collective. It is a reminder to raise again and return to the substance of Steve Gould's observations quoted on pages 4 and 5. The corporate tyranny celebrates as it absorbs the petrified corpse of the AGMOAS. Because of the heaviness of its investment in the AGMOAS, both socio-culturally and financially, the Corporate Tyranny does not, nor cannot, afford any doubts as to the alleged civilizing and cognitive quality of the AGMOAS it has absorbed. [56] Gould, clear of any sentiment toward and balancing somewhat uneasily on the necessary financial compromise with corporate culture, reminds us of the possibility that the concept of the avant-garde in fine art practice may run into a limit. To reiterate his remarks, reordered a little:

"But I never addressed the principle that some constraint might eventually limit the spread … (of) … expansion away from a left wall of minimal complexity. […] The baseball example speaks of an encroachment upon a right wall of human limitations …" [57]

More specifically:

"The perpetual striving for novelty may grant us joy forever if a limitless array of potential styles awaits discovery and exploitation. But perhaps the world is not so bounteous. Perhaps we have already explored most of what even a highly sophisticated audience can deem accessible." [58]

Gould's is a sobering view in respect of the twenty first century's inheritance from the twentieth century's hysterical build-up of the AGMOAS, and this notwithstanding that Gould, whilst a questioning paleontologist, gives the impression of being something of a cultural conservative. A problem with his analysis, and it does seem to be a telling analysis, is that he does not offer a definition of what constitutes a sophisticated audience. Certainly he appears to take seriously the separation of the function of cultural maintenance from that of cultural development qua cultural progress if his pronouncements of the supremacy of classical music over rock'n'roll are taken seriously. Presumably there is a notion of a sophisticated audience suggested in the case of music in which he seems to suggest that cultural high standards reside only in classical music (the high standards have to be maintained and here cultural maintenance seems to be equated with cultural protection, and this equation itself then further equated with cultural progress) whilst in the case of rock'n'roll he hints strongly at cultural retardation and decay – don't even bother to maintain it, its not worth maintaining. [59] This aside, Gould's concept of a 'right wall' limitation hints at a reassessing of the present value assigned in art school nomenclature to, for example, the rhetorical use of words such as 'radical', 'creative', 'challenging', all daily clichés used in art school conversation. The further more tacit implications to be drawn from contrasting Gould's view of the variable instrumental interpretations of classical music (the maintenance of the standards of interpretation which includes technical skill) with his downgrading of the 'search for the new' in visual arts serve, in my view, further to hammer home the cultural problematic faced by the AGMOAS. It does seem to me to be difficult to figure out whether Gould is arguing that there is no worthwhile cultural 'search for the new' to be had today across all cultural categories, or it is only to be applied to the 'visual arts'. It does not seem to be clear whether his apparent elevating promotion of cultural maintenance as the cultural value in classical music matches or is equivalent to his suggestion that 'the perpetual striving for novelty' in the visual arts may have run into the right wall, and that therefore both, classical music and the visual arts, should be content with cultural maintenance, or whether only the category visual art has more recently run into the right wall, and that classical music ran into a right wall of novelty some time ago, and thus has to value cultural maintenance, and thus now that the visual arts has also met the right wall we have a practice that will have to be content

with interpretations of, say, Titian's achievement. There does seem to be a hint of paradox in Gould's observations, it is perhaps worth further inquiring into how, or even if, Gould assesses the work of the likes of Schoenberg.

But it is perhaps worth approaching the matter of cultural maintenance and cultural development from another direction. From this point an attempt can be made to reposition the AGMOAS in the wider social and political climate of the West's (read US's) crusade to culturally maintain and expand its Empire since 1992 throughout the years up to the present (Clinton – Bush – Obama). Since World War 2 the USA's campaigns to first maintain and then to expand its economic superiority has, as noted throughout these remarks, always been justified by attempting a corresponding campaign proclaiming Capitalism as culturally superior to all other forms of organizing society and then proclaiming Capitalism as equivalent to democracy – not just financially richer, but deservedly financially richer since the ideology it proclaims (Capitalism) is culturally superior - a reminder here perhaps of some such as Greenberg's 'umbilical cord of gold' as the means of supporting the 'superior' and, once again, Rockefeller's 'free enterprise painting' as one of the cultural symptoms of the superiority of Capitalist ideology. Thus the claim proceeds that it is not just a superior financial culture, but also a superior scientific and artistic culture. [60] Since the collapse of the Soviet Union the US has had to shift the emphases around in maintaining and, if possible, expanding its Empire. The continuation of US imperial consciousness made continuous moves from the previous administration of George Bush Senior with the election of Clinton in 1992, only more so, through pressing more intimately the connection between the US dominated global business cycle and the launching of yet more War. From Clinton in the Balkans to Bush in Iraq and Afghanistan, the expansion of the New Economy enrolled War as a leading instrument of the regulatory apparatus of the New Economy. The strategy of using War to expand the New Economy is what Naomi Klein calls Disaster Capitalism. I use capital letters, assigning the status of proper nouns to the terms 'capitalism' and 'war' here, to indicate the singular strategic roles these activities are given in the US policy of expansion of its ideological aims. In respect of which Christian Marazzi marks out four common points of the Clinton-George W. Bush presidencies:

"1) An "autistic" retreat to a nonstrategic, non-interactive consciousness of

the Other, which derives from the annihilation of the global enemy and the disappearance of military bipolarism;
2) American leadership of the West and Western leadership of the world as a fundamental postulate based on the presupposed existence of irreversible inequalities within the global hierarchy;
3) The search for a principle of minimal militarist intervention in the non-bipolar complexity of the world;
4) The definition of a *tyrannical* State as a State in which there is a politico-military dominance over the economic. The economic, especially the information economy, is the top priority for Toffler and Lake, while for Huntingdon economic predominance will be the outcome of the conflict of cultural identities, among which only the Judeo-Christian is non-tyrannical." [61]

Huntingdon claims the alleged non-tyrannical character of Judeo-Christian culture is what makes it superior to other cultures, and it is this that makes it a worthy leader of the world. Although apparently not up for debate by the likes of Huntingdon, this assertion of Huntingdon inevitably invites the question, is Judeo-Christian culture non-tyrannical? Such a theory apparently rules out of court that there is such a thing as corporate tyranny. Lake and Toffler delineate the workings of expansion. Lake was a powerful influence in the Clinton administration, an influential theorist behind the Clinton administration's promoting territorial intervention and expansion as the primary instrument of the New Economy – a kind of resource grabbing *Lebensraum* for the New Economy. Huntingdon concentrated more explicitly on what he claimed to be the ethical supremacy of Judeo-Christian Western culture, and therefore argues because ethically superior deserving of economic supremacy. Both the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations were concerned with the same problem – a global-wide US regulation of the New Economy. In Clinton's presidencies this largely took the form of what Lake called 'enlargement' – a military destruction of nation-state autonomy by means of US technological (IT) supremacy. Imperialist theory is permanently beset at this point by a chicken-egg problem, of which more below. Throughout the events of these presidencies spanning the years 1992 to the inauguration of Obama, regardless of the onset of the financial crisis of the New Economy in 2008, the AGMOAS remained ossified and ever more heavily invested in its twentieth century unmitigated corporate form. A continuation preserved in which the illusion that the AGMOAS is seen as 'cultural', as above politics, is an important function

in projecting the *Pax Americana*. In the wider art school world it remains with little or no serious interrogation in its twentieth century uncontested form. There are no attentive studies of the AGMOAS. Thomas Crow's studies of the vertical structures of the ROP (for example, those of Hirst and Murakami) and Caroline Jones' study of the construction of the Post War American artist are keen observations of outcomes of the ROP and ROD of twentieth century art practice. Whilst Crow's remarks in particular are critical of the ROD he says nothing on how to move out from under the overarching grip of the corporately absorbed AGMOAS. [62] This essay started out by noting a remark from the director of a prominent museum of modern art to the effect that Conceptualism was one of the decisive moves in twentieth century art practice. I qualified this by suggesting that although Conceptualism may have expanded and distended what could count as an art object, it did not, in the end, seriously question the AGMOAS. I further suggested that within a few years of its emergence in the mid-sixties, Conceptualism by the mid-seventies in fact was a prime on-running event in further imbedding the AGMOAS in an unquestioned state in the *Pax Americana*. So it has remained up to the present.

Thus whilst Conceptualism may have been decisive in respect of widening the range of objects that might count as art materials, it did not, decisively or otherwise, amount to a sustained interrogation of the AGMOAS. It was a lost opportunity. And the reason it was lost does not take much seeking out. Conceptualism stayed with the primacy of the visual (the object) and neglected developing its early engagement with the cognitive (language). In plain terms, it plumped for visual objects rather than language. The emphases on language lost out to the continuation, expansion and augmentation of the 'visual object'. There is an historical irony here since the move from Fordist to post-Fordist working (the New Economy) has been a move towards a more language-based mode of production away from the body-based physical routines of Fordist factory production. In this sense the dependence of the AGMQAS on some notion of the superiority of the visual is contra post-Fordism. It is as well though to note here that language of post-Fordist production is the language of the financial transaction, of the transfer of power to liquidity, and the language of liquidity is a language of bodiless self-referentiality. Franco 'Bifo' Berardi writes of the characteristic form of post-Fordist production that:

"Digital technologies open up a completely new perspective on work. First of all, they change the relationship between conception and execution, and therefore the relationship between the intellectual content of work and its material execution. Manual labor tends to be performed by machines commanded automatically, and innovative work, work which effectively produces value, is mental work. The material to be transformed is simulated by digital sequences. Productive work (work that produces value) consists in performing simulations which the computerized automatons then transfer onto the material." [63]

The AGMOAS and corporate funding are never far apart these days. Any number of examples are to hand. Here's one – Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate*, or as many of the Chicagoans call it 'The Bean'; the latter name apparently once being described by Kapoor as stupid, presumably because it perhaps appeared too flippant to Kapoor and offended his sense of himself as being a serious artist. *Cloud Gate*, 2006, stands in the AT&T Plaza in Millennium Park within the Loop community area of Chicago. In the production of *Cloud Gate* the combination of digital technologies and corporate funds were the realizations of Kapoor's 'mental work'. For example, "Although Kapoor does not draw with computers, computer modeling was essential to the process of analyzing the complex form, which created numerous issues." Nestling against, "The cost for the piece was first estimated at $6 million; this had escalated to $11.5 million by the time the park opened in 2004, with the final figure standing at $23 million in 2006. No public funds were involved; all funding came from donations from individuals and corporations." [64] The intimacy of digital technologies/corporate funding alliance with the AGMOAS could scarcely be more transparent. Now consider some aspects of Kapoor's 'mental work', which brings us more explicitly to the cognitive aspect of the process. First off, apparently, even the setting was controversial in respect of Kapoor's original preference for the sculpture to be located in Lurie Park. Apparently Millennium Park officials considered the piece too large for Lurie Park and relocated it to AT&T Plaza, despite Kapoor's objections. Apparently the objections were not of sufficient offence to Kapoor such that he would withdraw from the project. I do not know what his contractual obligations were, whether he was by that time fastened into a contract and context such that it would have been very costly or difficult, or maybe impossible, in other legal respects to pull out, or whether his aesthetic concerns or career commitment overrode his objections to the sculpture being moved from Lurie Park to AT&T Plaza. I remind

readers I am here largely working from Wikipedia's entry on *Cloud Gate*. I am presuming that anything Kapoor sees as substantial error in the claims about his 'mental work' in this entry will have been if not accommodated then recorded in the entry, although obviously, he may not have been able to suppress what other people have said or written about the work, even if he wished to. One part, apparently constructed around quotes from commentaries on the work, states, and is perhaps worth quoting at length:

"The viewer physically enters the art when he walks underneath it into its 'navel'. The omphalos is a 'warped dimension of fluid space'. In this dimension, solid is transformed into fluid in a disorienting multiplicative manner that intensifies the experience. It is emblematic of Kapoor's work to deconstruct empirical space and venture into manifold possibilities of abstract space. The experience is described as a displaced or virtual depth that is composed of multiplied surfaces. According to project manager Lou Cerny, of MTH Industries 'When the light is right, you can't see where the sculpture ends and the sky begins. The sculpture challenges perception by distorting and deforming the surrounding architecture … The sculpture also warps viewers' perception of time by changing the speed and movements such as the passing of clouds'. Although in the conventional sense *Cloud Gate* is not an opening that leads anywhere in the same way that monumental gates do, it frames a view and is celebratory in the way it creates a ceremonial place. The work is credited with achieving a new level of understanding described as a transubstantiation of material, reminiscent of that which the artist experienced during a 1979 trip to India. Kapoor's *1000 Names* evolved immediately after this trip; twenty-five years later he created *Cloud Gate,* an object that emerged from material forms to become immaterial. Kapoor often relies on tenets of Hinduism in his art, and says that 'The experience of opposites allows for the expression of wholeness'. Primal dualities that are one, such as the lingam and yoni, are important to Indian culture, and *Cloud Gate* represents both the male and female in one entity by symbolizing both the vagina and the testicles. Thus, it represents the tension between the masculine and the feminine." [65]

The above is a typical piece of 'devotees-of-the-AGMOAS speak'. Aside from the 'poetic' metaphysics on display, quite a few of the AGMOAS buzzwords are there ('challenges' for example) and the overloaded rhetoric – perception being 'warped'; 'a new level of understanding described as a transubstantiation of material …' the claim that new levels are appearing is a favourite topic of devotees of the AGMOAS (it is required of the AGMOAS, by definition, that it furnish something new); 'an object that emerged

from material forms to become immaterial.' All the above, are from the writings of enthusiasts of *Cloud Gate*. In quotes from Kapoor himself, nowhere does he state that the sculpture is an *attempt* to 'allow' and to 'represent' – there is, to the contrary, the standard AGMOAS categorical assertion that the work accomplishes this with no questions asked. It is a typical manifestation of AGMOAS celebratory rhetoric – the claim is that the work does what the artist claims it does, that is, for example, it 'allows for the expression of wholeness' and that it 'represents both male and female in one entity …' and also consequently 'represents the tension between the masculine and feminine'. Such manifestations do not only not give us reasons how it accomplishes this, more seriously, it does not remotely consider the fact of whether such things are accomplishable. The artist is then granted the status of unquestioned instructor. [66] This is the concept of the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth working at full throttle. All the above is hand-waving - there is no proof, such claims cannot be proven – it is, at best, subjective agreement; there is no such thing as objective confirmation. But the form of assertions characteristically made on behalf of the AGMOAS attempt to persuade us that such confirmation takes place. Here is an assertion – the claims to value the AGMOAS are a matter of convention and propaganda. And in the case of the successful AGMOAS career artist it is big bucks propaganda. $23 million is a tidy sum to stage the matter. [67] In an article titled *Bill is in for Bean,* Chuck Goudie wrote the following:

"It may be Chicago's shining attraction, but Millennium Park officials say it never would have been built had they known how much it would eventually cost. Even though 'the Bean' was privately paid for, comparing its $23 million cost is stunning:

* It is more than the City of Chicago's budget for women's and children's health care.

* It is twice the money the city spends on fire prevention.

* Four times the budget for low-income heating bill help.

*Eight times the amount the city spends on its plan to end homelessness.

It is also interesting to compare 'the Bean' to the Picasso, which used to be Chicago's most famous public sculpture. The Picasso cost a small

fraction of 'the Bean' and there is a distinct difference in the commission paid to the artist, Anish Kapoor who designed 'the Bean' and Pablo Picasso who designed the Picasso. Kapoor was apparently paid $700,000. Picasso apparently did the work for free." [68]

Cloud Gate surely is a clear example of Greenberg's 'umbilical cord of gold'. I'm wary of big-time charity, but the difference between Picasso's gift and Kapoor's remuneration and financial support for his project says a lot about the corporate absorption of the AGMOAS, and this notwithstanding Picasso being a long-time member of the post-WW2 French Communist Party.

The scale of devotion to the AGMOAS presumed by its devotees (artists, unsurprisingly, are some of the most devoted) and aspect blindness to its conventional status (artists are some of the most blinded) indicates that they have now presumed the AGMOAS to be 'radical' for so long that, insofar as the logical status of the content of their presumption ever arises, they treat the model as a natural phenomenon, in the sense of, if 'avant-garde' then necessarily 'radical'. Such treatment rests upon being able to maintain a comfortable division between the 'natural' and the 'cultural'. [69] Such heedless, I'm tempted to say headless, devotion echoes the financial industry's devotion to the stock market. In this kind of equation can be detected the Corporate Tyranny's comfort with and stagey absorption of the AGMOAS. The parallel holding between devotion to the AGMOAS, on the one hand, and devotion to the stock market, on the other, is a precise one in some respects. Like the stock market, during the last twenty or thirty years the AGMOAS has especially enjoyed a tendency to become an item of more popular consumption. Media-drenched events such as the ever proliferating biennales and the Turner Prize, increased coverage in digital and print media, have guaranteed much more public exposure, setting up not only a cultural market for an expanding of communities of buyers/collectors, but more fundamentally an informational supply to generate an audience of 'lookers' and 'readers' who do not collect or buy the work of AGMOAS celebrities (most perhaps because they cannot afford the work) but culturally otherwise consume them. Claims are made, by AGMOAS devotees as much as by corporate cultural mandarins, that this represents a gain in democracy. It is doubtful that any gains in democracy can be achieved where:

1. An item that is a convention is mistakenly taken to be a natural state – that is just ignorance!

2. An item is increasingly consumed in increasingly celebrative mode that further diminishes a necessary critical outlook to the point at which such an outlook is in danger of disappearing altogether.

Often dumb sentiments about challenging elitism start to surface at this point. The widening of the base of consumership of art in general and the AGMOAS in particular conform to an increasingly embraced view, at any rate in the West, that the way to beat elitism is to get more people to join the elite. Such claims presume the so-called elite to be epistemologically sound, that is, presume the elite to be worth joining. Some such slogan as 'culturally enabling', even 'culturally mobilizing', the masses froths out from this kind of sentiment. There are, obviously, different kinds of communities that are called elites. There is, for example, an elite built on inherited privilege, which is more often than not connected to financial privilege. There is an elite built solely on financial privilege (members of an elite of the 'pulling yourself up by your own bootlaces' brigade). Offspring of this latter group then often move toward during the span of the next generation the cultural elite by virtue of inheritance of wealth. Then there are elites (holding both inherited and financial privilege) that seem to be widely admired for that privilege in respect of the society that grants them that privilege – the British Royal Family, for example. There is an elite resting on prowess of some kind. For example, the British SAS and the US Marine Corps are held to be an elite by virtue of their military prowess. Then there is the notion of an elite resting on alleged imaginative prowess – artists who achieve a successful AGMOAS career, for example. Then there is an elite that rests on intellectual and cognitive prowess; a community of scientists, for instance, sharing access to, say, an arcane mathematical performance and/or to experimental ingenuity that expands and deepens our species' understanding of the world. Some elites are often admired, but in a kind of backhanded way, since they are, at the same time, equally often accused of blocking or attempting to impede access to their knowledge. Assyrian scribes are, according to some modern historical documentation at least, accused of shielding and refusing to pass on their faculty of being able (having been taught) to read and write, in order that they could process and manipulate information to prolong their own power in the society. Scientists, similarly, these

days, are often accused of pursuing knowledge that their opponents claim to be ethically objectionable (attempts to block stem cell research by various self-proclaimed ethical groups, for example). The 'mad scientist' accusation too is often strongly tinged with this kind of accusation. The scientist as popular stereotype seems to generate something like a bipolar condition in Western populations, sometimes rocking wildly in public perception between being admired for intellectual achievement, particularly in the field of medicine, and being denigrated for attempting to direct knowledge into an area which it is claimed by their opponents is some such as 'against nature', particularly in the field of biological research. The media play a primary role in forming popular opinions on such matters. [70]

Just as the media was the fundamental mechanism driving the popular consumption ('herd behaviour') of the financial bubble of the New Economy, as part of this, they promoted what might be called a more explicit traditional cultural front, being also the fundamental mechanism in widening the base of the consumership of art, and, more especially, consumership of the AGMOAS. Not least by extensive coverage of the prices of works of contemporary art. The media's exaltation of the AGMOAS was a cultural counterpart and reflection of their 'exaltation of the irrational exuberance' of global markets and finance. Such exaltation feeds herd behaviour. In the West the media's exaltation of the AGMOAS continues apace. But equally the media's exaltation of stock markets, the financial industry and especially the banks has suffered a major setback since 2007. It does then seem appropriate at this stage to ask some such question as: the herd behaviour in consuming the stock markets amounted to what? Here is another passage from Christian Marazzi, again citing Federico Rampini:

"The media were the fundamental mechanism in the financial bubble of the New Economy. They exalted the 'irrational exuberance' of the markets, feeding the herd behaviour that, at a certain point, came to be theorized as a sophisticated financial technique: *momentum financing*. What does that mean? That to make money on the stock market you didn't need to waste time analyzing the listed companies; you had to make a timely guess as to what stocks the herd would be rushing to, ride the wave, cash in on the inevitable rise. For *momentum investing* the role of information was fundamental. And this naturally damaged the image of the transparent market, all of those informed and independent investors, so dear to the neoclassical economists." [71]

It is obvious that conventions in certain historical eras recur and persist such that their conventional character is overlooked and people embrace the illusion of believing them to be natural phenomena. I have mentioned two current cases of this above - belief in and consumership of the AGMOAS and belief and participation in the stock market. The two cases are not hitched together by accident. Art collectors who are masters of hedge funds, financial operations of one sort or another, manufacturing corporations, etc., are one of the clearest examples of this increasingly strong relation between corporate finance moguls and consumership of the AGMOAS, such relations are also a symptom of the income-widening gap character of Western societies. But very rich collectors who proclaim liberal sentiments and demonstrate corporate power through acts of donation and sponsorship are equally clear examples of the income-widening gap character of Western societies in the thrall of the New Economy. It is hard to see a gain in democracy in a form of corporate behaviour typified by a strong relation between the New Economy and the purchasing of contemporary art.

In terms of popular investment in the stock market in the UK, following the pattern being set by Wall Street, Margaret Thatcher's administration encouraged popular participation in the stock market. The precedent for such participation had been set in the US before Thatcher had even begun her first term of office as Prime Minister. In late 1975 New York was saved from bankruptcy when the holders of $150 million of New York's teachers' pension funds were persuaded to have the money used to buy Municipal Corporation Bonds, consequently pension funds became investors. This was an early and considerable step in the start of the replacing of the idea of the informed and independent investors, key functionaries in the old neoclassical economics, by the phenomenon of 'the herd instinct'. It was also a substantial move in the shift towards privatization of the public debt, a significant step in the management of public debt by financial markets. It was an early indication of the new configuration of global capitalism, the capacity to mobilize a mass of investors, many of them through institutional investment – pension funds and mutual funds, for example. It became evident in the 1990s that the global dimension of this policy pans out in a way that makes it difficult for this Western worker-investor, whether he or she cares or not, to do anything about this pattern of investment reducing Asian, Russian, Mexican or Argentinian workers to wretchedness. Whether such a worker-investor cares or not, within such financial

frameworks he or she can do little about the effect of the content of their investments upon the living conditions of local populations, not least it seems, ironically, through the effects of the demise of the New Economy on their own communities; the classic case of the latter being the bailing out of a significant number of major Western banks. It is worth picking out some of the cultural determinants of the New Economy. The bursting of the Dot-Com bubble in the early noughties notwithstanding, the new electronic technologies do seem to have had a strong input into the collective imagination. In fact the collapse of the Dot-Com bubble as well as its earlier massive success can be seen as a symptom of this input. For better or worse, not just throughout the West, but globally, the restructuring of modes of work and production through new technology has been a persistent and durable effect from its founding start in the Californian rim.

In the earlier stages there was a whole symphony of rhetoric extolling the alleged virtues of this new restructuring concerned with the equally alleged value of decentralization, voluntary modes claiming to be characteristic of more sharing and equitable distribution of wealth, 'solidarity among peers', and freedom of thought. This early form of rhetoric now can be shown to be inflated and downright self-deluding and, when the heads are counted, entire-society-deluding. The later phase of this restructuring is known as the Cash Cow phase. This led to a transparent show of a wage-gap widening social structure. There is no hiding that the restructuring led to the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. The internet companies/ new technology entrepreneurs and their capitalist banking generals 'hippying' their way, via the new technologies, into the promised land of purported everlasting wealth creation. Now, 2011, many of the overstuffed-crop chickens have come home to roost. *Capital, The Communist Manifesto* and *Grundrisse* have become resonant again. [72] Currently, the new technologies, the giant insurance outfits, the lascivious investment banks, the once proclaimed sacred financial markets *et al*, all now appear to summarize the salient characteristics of the failure of the New Economy. Marazzi again:

"The PC and internet companies became *cash cows*, money machines when the stock exchanges succeeded in capitalizing the individualization of work, job insecurity, desire of liberation of/from work, counter culture, the desire to change the world. In order to make the New Economy a convention, as Keynes defined it, risk capital had to be freed from the processes of disinflation and banking disintermediation." [73]

The quote above could be a hymn, an anthem, to the corporatized AGMOAS. It approaches closely a description of the aspiration of those reaching out for the AGMOAS. In September 2008, an auction, organized by Damien Hirst and the agents of Hirst's own work, was reported in the New York Times under the heading *Bull Market for Hirst in Sotheby's 2-Day Sale*. The auction fetched $200.7 million. It upset, if various reports are to be believed, a number of individuals and sectors of the ROD of contemporary art, including, apparently Hirst's American dealer, Gagosian, and White Cube, Hirst's London gallery. On the 17th September, Oliver Barker, Head of Contemporary Art at Sotheby's in London is reported to have stated, "The Russian collectors at the turn of the century loved the avant-garde," referring to the 1890s. "It's coming full circle." [74] Not so much counter-revolution then as restoration. More Charles II than redistributed wealth: The deserving rich as much as, if not more than, the deserving poor. In the Economist, November 17, 2011 under the heading *Hands up for Hirst: How the bad boy of Brit-Art grew rich at the expense of his investors*, it is reported that "By 2009 Mr. Hirst's annual auction sale had shrunk by 93% – to $19 m – and the 2010 total is likely to be even lower." The report further on states concerning the 2008 auction at Sotheby's:

"Several billionaires from the former Soviet Union also took part. Alexander Machkevitch, a Kazakh mining magnate with a taste for metallurgical themes, bought six lots in the evening sale (in the 2008 auction): a large stainless steel cabinet filled with manufactured diamonds, a pair of gold-plated cabinets containing more lab gems, three butterfly canvases and a spot painting with a gleaming gold background for a total of $11.7 million. Other buyers from the region included Maria Balbakova, Vladislav Dorodnin, Victor Pinchuk and Gary Tatintsian." [75]

In the person of the likes of Hirst the AGMOAS has realized its complete risk capitalist condition, beloved of the risk culture of aiming to be rich, a bull marketeer embracing the AGMOAS as a 'challenging' inquisitor of the ROD. Sotheby's, the arch capitalist outfit, squaring the perfected circle of permitted dissent through manufactured consent. In this case the corporately consented paradigmatic permitted dissenter. If further reports are to be believed then Hirst is a capitalist in-fighter too – hence the term 'bad boy'. This characterization of Hirst as 'bad boy' indicates the classic symptom of the corporate absorption of the AGMOAS, the corporate notion of 'radical' as challenging the system is a notion of augmenting the

system according to the system's own rules, quite, again, the circle of permitted dissent as part of manufacturing consent – hardly, say, a dissenter in the sense of Leon Trotsky. Not that I imagine that Trotsky would rank very high in any pantheon of influences upon Hirst. Later in the article the following is reported of Hirst:

"In 2008 and 2009, Mr. Hirst repeatedly made statements like 'The first time you sell something is when it should cost the most' and 'I've definitely had the goal to make the primary market more expensive.' The artist was frustrated by the speculators who were buying from his galleries then quickly reselling the work at auction. Moreover, the acquisition of a package of 12 of his own works from Charles Saatchi for £6m in 2003, far more than what Saatchi had originally paid, may have led to an Oedipal determination to overthrow all the high-rolling dealers and collectors who thought they might lord it over the little artist." [76]

Freudian hyperbole notwithstanding, an ultimate token of the thoroughgoing absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny is the suggestion of the corporately sustained son having an Oedipal urge to 'overthrow' the corporately driven father. If any of the above is to be believed then it turns out, at the most, that the 'radical' artist is 'challenging' the corporate structure by asking for a bigger share of it. What price here then for Rimbaud on the train from Charleville to the Gare du Nord in 1871? Perhaps the price is the shrinkage from $200.7 million to $19 million. Hardly redistributed wealth! More capitalist accumulation! Momentum financing of the AGMOAS is the name of the game. Hirst's $200 million dollar wheeze in setting up the Sotheby's auction worked because of the 'herd behaviour' of New Economy oligarchs, Russian or otherwise. In the entire Economist report, predictably, there is no evaluation of the cognitive quality of the work. The report is a blandly transparent case of some such presumed aphorism as 'it must be good art work since so much money is paid for it', or even, 'it must be significant art since so much money is paid for it'.

Issuing out of this current state of the AGMOAS the paradoxes proliferate. Many artists, perhaps a vast majority, execute their own work in the sense that they technically make it. [77] This stands in some contrast with the strong trend in the restructuring characteristics of the New Economy (the post-Fordist pattern of working). In the work patterns generated in the New Economy priority has been given to linguistic-communicative labour. This is its main difference from the Fordist pattern of working, where

the priority was machine-commanded labour, where the machine was separated from the worker – the worker produced the artifact by working on the machine. In many ways, the painter working on the painting, the stone carver sculptor working on the stone is in, or nearer to, a Fordist pattern of work. But in Fordist times the vocation and commitment of an artist to his/her work was held out in superior contradistinction to the routine of factory work; something approaching the line of the capitalist dream ticket of 'being your own boss', but often with a kind of cultural supercharge. For artists like Hirst, there are different modes of working. He sometimes paints as a painter. He sometimes directs and manages in a more linguistic-communicative mode. But the boundaries between Fordist and post-Fordist modes are far from clearly demarcated in AGMOAS practices of work. Donald Judd forty years ago made much of his work as a kind of design team-leader. There is a sense in which Art & Language in its early days granted a high priority to inter-subjective exchange and intra-discipline communication, and, in this sense, can be seen to be nearer to practicing a post-Fordist pattern of working. But to my knowledge, three members of the early British Art & Language groups are implacably opposed to the New Economy, to Corporate Tyranny. And I will be very surprised if those other members, with whom these days, sadly, I have no contact, of the early British Art & Language groups are at all happily disposed toward the New Economy too. Whatever! All artists opposed to the New Economy and doing OK financially are easily discerned conduits of the corporate 'umbilical cord of gold'. There is another strong tendency of the post-Fordist pattern of working to which many artists producing their work stands in contrast – the reduction of time dedicated to the execution of manual actions in the production of objects. The 'labour of love' syndrome affectionately connected to some such notion as 'perfection of the craft' is still a widely promoted alleged virtue in art commentaries. A lot of all this turns upon the notion of this kind of individual labour being talked about as if it is something separated from inter-subjective exchange. Certainly at the time of the emergence of Art & Language, in the late sixties, art practice was widely held to be something different, something separate, from cognitive work. It was an illusion. Art is always cognitive work, if perhaps much of it is of not very great cognitive effort or, for that matter, value. Art schools trained people to be cognitively lazy, but they did teach them to be cognitive, even where, and in the late sixties this was commonplace, they proclaimed

to be teaching their students to be doing something separate from cognitive work. Lazy cognition was the order of the teaching day in sixties art schools.

The position remains much the same today, give or take the often ludicrous cognitive trimmings that Conceptualism and cultural studies has added to the mix. In the late sixties the position of art practice in relation to the wider Fordist patterns of work was in a different relation to the position of art practice in relation to the wider patterns of work in post-Fordist production today, in relation to the New Economy. This shift in position turns on the following. In the West, in particular in the New Economy, there has been a considerable shift away from machine-commanded time separate from the worker's body to an immense increase in the 'linguistic-communicative-time of living labour, the time that in the New Economy involves inter-subjective communication of value-creating cooperation'. [78] These latter phrases 'linguistic-communicative-time of living labour' furnishing 'inter-subjective communication of value-creating cooperation' strikes a resonant note in respect of the ongoing intrusion, from the sixties onwards, of so-called Conceptualism into art practice. The notion of the 'expanded object' and 'new materials' characteristic of the now historical blah around the emergence of the so-called Conceptualist contribution to art practice in the last half of the sixties, might serve as a kind of fondly remembered, but misaligned, pioneer corps hymn to the likes of both Kapoor's 'Bean' in Chicago and Hirst's auction at Sotheby's in London in 2008. [79] One aspect of Kapoor's project was the use of extremely high-tech expertise (the welds on the 'Bean', for example) and the architectural scale to typify the expansion (the familiar 'new materials' and 'new financial boundaries/territories') verse of the hymn; Hirst's auction project used the ROD as ROP (not so much new materials, although there is plenty of this kind of bravado in Hirst's work – preserved animals, etc.), but also the expansion of the range of the word 'material' itself, a more abstract expansion if you will, the use of the relations of distribution (ROD) to display and articulate work as a finance-producer (the spectacle of the auction as distinct from a regular exhibition context and especially the auction's money producing functions as part of the display). Both these projects are typical of today's notion of art practice not least in the sense that neither of these projects contributed anything to a wider redistribution of wealth – to the contrary. Nor did they contribute anything to the cognitive depth of the AGMOAS – again, to the

contrary. That is the trouble with selling work *per se*, it just becomes especially visible in the context of a spectacular auction. Picasso's Chicago sculpture notwithstanding, giving work away is not much of an answer either. Ostensibly at least, the worker working for no remuneration at all is the Capitalist accumulator's dream worker. Would art work given away for free have made it easier still for the Corporate Tyranny to absorb the AGMOAS? Under such a condition a motto might have been 'Being Advanced for Free' – sounds a bit like some of the Haight-Ashbury delusions in the sixties! It was on the Californian Rim that the Dot-Com industry started, and much of the babble around it delivered giant capitalist projects relatively quickly and very little, if anything, was 'advanced for free'.

It is nevertheless an interesting conjecture to consider a situation where the artist produced and delivered up his/her work for free to the Corporate Tyranny. An example in plain monetary figures is to imagine the $26 million that 'the Bean' cost minus Kapoor's reputed fee of $700,000 - thus $25,300,000. Consider, for example, Kapoor, imitating Picasso's alleged earlier gesture, working for free. What would have been in it for Kapoor? Perhaps a sufficient enough status payback (since the project 'the Bean' is of such status in a major Western city at a city centre site, etc.) disclosing the quality of his work and then serving as a representation to obtain further commissions later. The definition of 'commissioned' here being that the person so commissioned does get paid a fee. Another question hovering in this conjecture is: Could the alleged quality of Kapoor's work be sustained if he worked for free? Does the value of the work have anything necessarily to do with monetary value agreed for the commission of the work as distinct from, what shall we call it, the alleged 'aesthetic/spiritual' value of the work (to use Kapoor-like terms)? In the light of this kind of question it is perhaps worth noting again the rhetoric generated around the emergence of the Dot-Com industry (itself a main influence on the technical resources and the financial character of the New Economy, from which economy many of the collectors and buyers of Twentieth century and contemporary art emerged and derived their wealth) mentioned above on p. 29 of these remarks – 'decentralization', 'equitable distribution of wealth', 'solidarity among peers', 'freedom of thought'. 'Decentralization' of work was characteristic of the New Economy, maybe too, to some extent 'solidarity among peers', with the emphasis on peers, but both these contradicted 'equitable distribution of wealth'. It is worth noting that 'decentralization' of work usually means deregulation of the

boss. [80] In fact, wealth became more centralized and concentrated upon not only within the emergent corporate Dot-Com mandarins, but equally in other areas of finance capital; spectacularly, for example, upon hedge fund bosses, and even more spectacularly and infamously, as Western societies have discovered to their cost, banks - at least until the Dot-Com bubble burst. 'Freedom of thought' is, in this context of the Dot-Com culture, very thoroughly connected to 'solidarity among peers', which, in turn, is intimately connected to centralization of wealth.

Collecting art is, in turn, connected to the exchange transmission between money as a value of the importance given to artistic artefacts/events and the alleged 'aesthetic/spiritual' value; claims concerning art work which are used to justify the monetary value. But in the era of the AGMOAS the chicken/egg conundrum of how alleged 'aesthetic/spiritual' value interacts with and is gauged by monetary value (which conundrum was always there, certainly from the Renaissance onwards, in the exchange arena of what Greenberg termed the 'umbilical cord of gold' conduit) became ever more transparent. Not least because the amounts of money exchanging hands in the selling of twentieth century and contemporary art vastly increased from the eighties onwards. The puzzle is such that it is hard to figure out which 'value' influences which 'value' – i.e., does the monetary value amplify, augment, expand, etc., or, in some way, guarantee the 'aesthetic/spiritual' value? Monetary value it seems is a hard quality; it is worth what it says it is worth, say, $26 million. It is a convention, and relatively easy to discern as such.

'Aesthetic/spiritual' value is, it seems, also matter of consensus, a convention, but a convention which is invariably taken, when addressed by most of those considered intra-art world experts on such matters, to be a natural phenomenon – to be thoroughly based in our psychological-neurological nature. And such experts seem to have been very successful in persuading others that such matters as 'aesthetic/spiritual' value are a natural phenomenon in this sense. That is, in the sense of getting these others to agree that there is such a thing as a set of objective criteria through which such matters of 'aesthetic/spiritual' value can be settled. But those being persuaded are hardly the mass of what can be called the general public, multitudes of which remain skeptical of claims, but rather what can be called the chattering classes. Slotted in to this apparent consensus the concept of beauty is beset with a thousand years of argumentative metaphysics. The basis of this consensus may be, at

its distant origin, a fairly straightforward matter of one individual's 'eyes of beholder' view building up a pattern of persuading, over many decades or many centuries, many other sets of 'eyes of beholders' to embrace the same view. A question arises referring to a time of unrecorded human interaction – does this original group form around one alpha individual's persuasive power? Is there perhaps deep in the evolutionary past of Homo Sapiens a hard-wired function rendering the individual susceptible to being persuaded? Laying somewhere on this troublesome, argumentative and ongoing metaphysical long-range historical scale may be the explanation of the motive driving the likes of David Geffen in 2006 to have sold a de Kooning work to the likes of Stephen Cohen for £137.5 million (this price may not include the dealer Larry Gagosian's commission) and driving the likes of Stephen Cohen to pay the price. In this particular case what are the criteria used to persuade, first, Geffen, that *Woman III* (1952-53) is worth $137.5 million, also to persuade Cohen that *Woman III* is worth $137.5 million, and, presumably, also to persuade Gagosian that the work is worth $137.5 million. Is there an art world 'herd behaviour' behind this? Perhaps Geffen *et al* subscribe to a standard corporate response, some such as 'the market decides'. Then is 'the market' simply a name for process of the manufacture of a herd behaviour? Is this also a function of momentum financing? $26 million for a public work of art in Chicago, $137.5 million in a private sale for a de Kooning painting!

Such capital sums indicate the inflated 'spiritual' status of the AGMOAS as being one of the ideological cultural bases of its corporate absorption. Is all this art world financial traffic simply an indication that the big increase in selling and buying of art works, both the overall amount of art works bought and sold and the increasingly higher prices paid for individual works, simply, as suggested above, a matter of the manufacture of a herd behaviour, led in significant measure by increased media exposure? Is the state of economic activity in respect of the buying and selling of art works now something similar to, or perhaps a part of, the phenomenon of the herd behaviour that increasingly became characteristic of the workings of the stock market in the New Economy, which characteristic was led by the intrusion of the investment of pension funds and mutual funds into the stock market and further branded and marketed by the media? Is the buying and selling of art works at present a reflection of, or is it a part of, the gradual shift of the pension system from the principle of distribution (which was the primary bedrock of post-WW2 social

security) to the principle of capitalization in the New Economy? Herd behaviour is the characteristic psychological condition of the shift from the principle of distribution to the principle of capitalization. It is hard to see how the art market could not be a part of this shift? It does seem that the absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny must be some kind of a reflection of, must have some kind of explicit connection to, the shift to the principle of capitalization which typifies the New Economy with its post-Fordist patterns of work. It seems the AGMOAS is now corporately promoted as a frontal output ideological item of art culture promotion, and as such is an integral part of the use of the resources of capitalized pension and mutual funds, not least through such financial devices as hedge funds.

Marx predicted that capital's greatest task would be to establish the world market. It perhaps today seems an obvious point to predict, but in the mid-nineteenth century the game had a long way to run. Until 2007 globalization seemed to be achieving this. The AGMOAS, completely absorbed by the Corporate Tyranny at least twenty years before, was an instrument in achieving this apparent global project. The wealth of people, like Geffen's, began accumulating as the Fordist pattern of production was clearly failing – not least indicated, for example, when Motown moved from Detroit to Los Angeles – and continues into the post-Fordist era. Cohen's wealth accumulation blossomed under the post-Fordist pattern of production. Both these accumulators' investments in art works are the concrete manifestations of their more abstract investment in the AGMOAS – that is, they believe in the twentieth century version of the AGMOAS, and their purchases provide impetus to what is now an applied-across-the-planet-financial-instrument insofar as it is a part of the attempt to establish a world market. There are now art fairs and biennales all over the planet, for example, beside the long established art fairs and biennales such as Venice, Sao Paulo, Basel, Chicago, there are now fairs and/or biennales for example in Istanbul, Sharjah, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Moscow, Johannesburg, Melbourne, Mexico City, Singapore, Havana and Dakar, to name but a few. The latter two are listed as 'showcasing' mainly contemporary non-western Latin American and Caribbean art (Havana) and contemporary African art (Dakar). Whether the work in these last two venues is more resistant to the Corporate Tyranny and absorption of the AGMOAS I do not know, although in the case of Havana I can make an educated guess, admitting that Cuba may need the dollars. One of the listings

displaying a more transparent view of the extent of the absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny is, unsurprisingly, that of Dubai:

"It is not hard to believe that Dubai is the latest go-to destination for art collectors; after all this is the 'city built for tourism' as a 'playpen for the rich'." [81]

The above is authoritarian servile idiot-consumerist artspeak at its most transparent. The phrase 'playpen for the rich' speaks volumes, the word 'playpen' especially loaded – echoing as it does the idea of both the rich corralled in and the rest corralled out. Reiterating the phrase above about Paris in 1871 concerning Rimbaud on his journey - Charleville – Gare du Nord – what price now in Dubai of Élisée Reclus' geography of the city and social space in the Paris Commune in 1871? [82] Dubai indeed! The road from Courbet's class of 1871 to Goldsmith's class of 1988 is the long and increasingly straight road from art as prospective collective socialist instrument to, the always paradoxical, art as collective individualist corporate instrument. Thus for an increasingly wide section of Western culture the task of the AGMOAS is not to outrun the old world, despite all the propaganda about it being radical and challenging. To the contrary, this majority of the art world has not so much tenaciously clung to the old world, but, via the embrace of and participation in financial capitalization (increasingly implemented throughout the administrations of Thatcher, Reagan, Clinton, Blair and Bush) and thus, through cleaving to the enticements of the resultant Corporate Tyranny, the post-conceptualist AGMOAS, contrary to many of the claims about the cultural gains of the sixties, has played its role in attempting to constitute what old world Capitalism would have deemed a Capitalist idyll – a servile work force. The AGMOAS, within the new markets of capitalization, is now an ossuary of career auditing way past the aspirations invested in the social hierarchical structure of a nineteenth century industrial baron.

The current state of the AGMOAS determinedly misses the point of the original one – if the original had a *raison d'être* it was to abolish bourgeois culture. Instead, especially from 1970 onwards, the twentieth century AGMOAS increasingly tittivated it and became its willing servant. In the UK, from the turn of the twentieth century into the twenty first, New Labour crystallized the alliance that characterizes the Corporate Tyranny; property

development exploitation, service industry fetishism, financial industry banditry, culture industry which more and more approaches a form of celebrity despotism, etc. [83] And the application of the Corporate Tyranny version of the AGMOAS is not restricted to 'artistic' individuals and art school communities. Whole inner-city environments have emerged, particularly in the last twenty years, in which one kind or another of a representation of the AGMOAS has been realized in civic spaces. Frequently, one of the centre-pieces of this 'regenerated' environment has been the construction of or conversion of disused buildings into contemporary art galleries. In the UK, the early big daddy of such projects was Tate Modern followed by its satellites out in the orbits of Liverpool and St Ives. Alongside, over the following decades, emerged new, converted and refurbished Museums of Contemporary Art (hereafter MCA) at, for example, Tyneside, Middlesbrough, Glasgow, Walsall, Salford, Nottingham and, most recently, the Turner Contemporary in Margate. These MCA are perhaps the most convincing evidence that the AGMOAS has largely become not only a plaything of the affluent but, equally importantly, one of the cultural instruments by which the affluent gain the approval of the less affluent by persuading the less affluent to conform to the aspiration to be affluent, by taking on the cultural manners and enthusiasms of the affluent. I suspect large parts of the working class are still resistant to this, but in the UK we are only too familiar with the rhetoric associated with big city (and not so big city) regeneration. We heard it *ad infinitum* from the Blairite civic planners and property developers. [84] These MCA cairns of the corporate culture industries often fronted the 'capital of culture' projects, which projects were held out as a tale of triumphant service industry consumption replacing weary manufacturing industrial production. In short, these are the projects allegedly supplanting the loss of an economy that produced industrially engineered things with a combo finance-cum-service industry economy with cultural knobs on it.

The MCA, and therefore the AGMOAS, are a couple of the most prominent cultural knobs and, it should be said, a couple of none too subtle ones. This, since the AGMOAS, circulates through the chain of MCA, like a trophy from a twentieth century procession dedicated to the alleged cultural virtues of the bourgeois culture. The MCA is the built environment that furnished us with an AGMOAS that was, all at the same time, brand, logo and monument. This state of affairs persisted until the collapse of the up to that time

Capitalist crowing Matt Ridley's Northern Rock imperium kicked off the falling domino process of exposing the self-delusion (where in this case there is a fragile separation drawn between self-delusion and fraud) of the financial systems behind the 'capitals of culture' mantra and all that hype about regenerated cities. The collapse of the global financial system has perhaps lessened the exuberance of the projection of the corporate AGMOAS as a vehicle of 'radicalism' and 'challenge', but in this case I suspect old habits will die very hard indeed. It is in the art schools where the matter will be decided. Nevertheless it is worth interjecting: what price now Courbet's demolition of the Vendôme Column? And, sticking with 1871, it is worth reminding ourselves of Marx's admonition that one of the Paris Commune's principle failures was to leave the Bank of France untouched. [85]

Sitting in what have now turned out to be these brittle cultural bourgeois citadels the MCA are truly occasions of the building as sign. Thus the MCA are a frame on which to hang the AGMOAS as a logo advertising 'radicalism' and 'challenge' and corporate style. The MCA entire project, nation wide, is apparently now as finance starved and debt ridden as it has always been sign ridden. At present, ironically, one of its most distinctive signs is a culture of complaint and debt. The MCA sit in zones the history of which is a pattern of emerging service industry jobs with very little, if any, security of tenure, replacing unionized production jobs. The MCA are cultural spearheads of the move clearing out working class 'slums' into which, via the property developers, move the middle class hob-knobbers who are, in the main, unknowing and/or uncaring live-in apparatchiks of the Thatcher-Blair aspiration to fill the country with well-heeled 'cultivated' native tourists. If you want a really blatant Blairite sign look at the name given to one of Manchester's 'regenerated' areas, New Islington – I wonder who dreamed up such a sign? No surer sign of cultural servility to the chattering bourgeois of the Great Wen. The demise of Modernism might now be charted as the journey from Arthur Rimbaud to Cherie Blair. It is in this context that the Blairite 'cultural industries' apparatchiks covet the likes of Urban Splash as a post Joy Division version of Baron Haussmann. [86] This was the city slicker cover-up of what has happened throughout the last five or six decades. Economically, the period was marked by persistently recurring crises of capitalist finance, where each crisis realized an increasing control of the management of public debt by the financial markets.

Thus, the logic of the financial markets comes to be more and more applied to the public sector. Throughout the last two of these decades the magazine *Frieze,* inevitably and tiresomely characterized on its website as 'forward-looking' (a cosy chattering class bedfellow to 'radical' and 'challenging') is a good indicator of the sector serving AGMOAS goodies to the Blairite and post-Blairite well-heeled chatterer and, for that matter, those less well-heeled but nevertheless aspiring to Blairite cultural chatter; the culturatti sitting out, weather permitting, on the culture-consuming decks alongside the Thames, Manchester Ship Canal, Tees, and Tyne, or, weather not permitting, then in the 'Ace café'. I don't suppose that those champions of the Call to Referendum in the UK, the Lib Dems, would for one minute contemplate calling for a referendum by the working class and of the working class, to see whether the City of London should continue to call the shots on what kind of culture ought to be imposed, top-down, on the working class (what would the central question be?) and that the working class would avow such a culture. Referendum and class seem to sit not very comfortably together in either the vocabulary or the planning of our political masters (or should that be class?). The democratic system is a structure such that top-down ordering is built into it and now, in 2012, it has perhaps in the post World War 2 era never been demonstrated more transparently. Both media bosses and bankers, perhaps the two most powerful communities in Western Neoliberal Capitalist society, have been shown to inhabit a structural financial environment that is corrupt and self-deluded. Top down ordering in some measure would be a feature of any elected system of governance, but a Socialist collective system, anything near worthy of its name, would place justice, both financial and political, as a higher priority than anything the neoliberals could dream up, and have a stronger regulatory system of control over communities such as banking and the property development-cum-cultural industries racketeers.

Alongside and enjoying an even more vehement consumption, the AGMOAS has an extended musical version that apparently remains fairly intimately linked to art school culture if the myths of, for example, Lennonism at Liverpool College of Art in the early nineteen sixties are to be believed. Let us call it something like 'advanced pop music' for those of us who are perhaps academically pernickety. [87] In more widely used terms, this popular musical phenomenon, both advanced and less advanced, has rifled through a whole list of names since the fifties - rock'n'roll (which carried some

kind of catch-all currency right into the seventies), punk, post-punk, acid house, hip-hop, garage, *et al* at various if far from constant points. All, before their absorption into the Corporate Tyranny, have thrown up activities here and there that come closer, in my view, to the quality of the Paris Commune-haunted original avant-garde than the great majority of fine art practices in the West since the fifties, or, for that matter, in the post 1989 East. But the outburst of such activities has been very brief and increasingly diluted, since it has soon been reduced to a matter of rhetorical flourish. Staying in the UK and its cultural environment, these musical practices have invariably been sooner or later, and in one way or another, absorbed or manipulated into believing in the concept and culture of finance capital-cum-property development. In the late nineties and into the noughties they were all more or less either penetrated (now there's a word - fucked might be better) or surrounded, as they are driven into an ever-diminishing tighter wagon circle, by wanton Blairite neoliberal aspiration to extend middle-class culture via what it called the 'cultural industries'. Clearly and predictably, there has been little, if any, maneouvre by our erstwhile cultural worthies to retain any aspects of the idealist realization of socialist experiment in the face of the corporate juggernaut. But this is hardly surprising; most of them do not claim to be socialists, just 'radicals'. [88] If music-freak street-scum gals and guys off the streets of the neglected arenas of the likes of Stratford, Nechells, Ancoats, Toxteth, Beeston, Byker, Brightside, and Gorbals could not in some way or other find the end run around the AGMOAS, what chance would any prospective art student (from whatever class, whether hailing from the likes of Swiss Cottage or Brixton, Sutton Coldfield or Aston, Chorlton or Gorton, Bebington or Everton, Cookridge or Hunslet, Jesmond or Walker, Eccleshall or Park Hill, Kelvingrove or Govan, etc.) have of working out an alternative to the neo-liberal suffused AGMOAS as pumped out in current British art schools? [89]

Such 'radicalism' flourishes not least in those public cultural retail outlets, the MCA. It is an operetta-like guise of being 'radical' and 'challenging'. What a present day UK art student is up against is, to slightly adapt Owen Hatherley's apt phrase, 'a wanton adoption of a radical history used to sell old corruption all over again'. [90] If you want to gain some idea of the corporate outcroppings of the AGMOAS on a UK scale look no further than at public sculpture in 'regenerated' Birmingham or Liverpool. If you want to comprehend it on a more global scale look at it in 'regenerated' Chicago or in

'conjured out of the sand' Dubai. In venues like these the notion of 'public art' seems to proliferate as a global corporate flagging-up of 'regeneration' projects. It is plain to see that the AGMOAS through the instruments of the MCA is now a corporate dedication to reconstruct a fantasy 'radical' past. And if you want to comprehend it in an event rather than an artifact, then, as argued earlier, Hirst's finance capitalist caper at Sotheby's demonstrated it pretty clearly and will, I think, take some beating for sheer capitalist chutzpah. Thus, I argue here that the most publicly visible realization of the effects of the present condition of the AGMOAS in the 'regeneration' projects and which is, at the same time, a reinforcement of that condition, are the MCA and the ubiquitous public art that straddles the piazzas, entrances, exits and atriums of the projects. But, as I have suggested above, it is in the art schools, almost all of which are now incorporated into university organizations (themselves increasingly dependent on corporate funding and the finance drawn from ever-increasing student indenture) where the torch for the corporately infected and consumed AGMOAS is also carried on a wide art student base. It would be refreshing to think that the twisted and perverse twentieth century corporate takeover of the 1871 AGMOAS is being contested in the art schools. Whilst the corporate takeover of the AGMOAS has been imposed top-down, for the art schools to present a challenge to the present corporately dominated state of affairs, it will have to be instigated bottom-up. At present there is no sign of this, the AGMOAS is prostrate in front of corporate sponsorship and floating upon the resultant corporately installed fine art honours system.

There is a clear and conclusive final point to be argued here. Those neoliberal gainsayers of durable socialist militancy proclaiming liberal sentiments and endlessly procrastinating on behalf of the AGMOAS, and there is a multitude of them, seemingly the whole of the art world, ignore a stark fact: that the corporate command of the AGMOAS increased exponentially, as did correspondingly the media promotion of the AGMOAS, from the point of the intrusion of Thatcher-Reagan neoliberalism into Western society. This super-promotion of the AGMOAS was, and remains, a direct outcome of the Thatcherite priority accorded to the City of London's and Wall Street's finance capital. And this rests on the Thatcherite distaste of making profit from material industrial production. Making money out of money was far preferable to making profit from, for example, Birmingham's and Coventry's car and engineering industries, from Glasgow's, Belfast's, Newcastle's

and Sunderland's shipbuilding skills, from South Wales' and South Yorkshire's coal; not least, of course because the City of London and Wall Street are citadels exuding hostility to organized labour. It was not even primarily the physical muck and mess of the likes of engineering, mining and shipbuilding, rather it was what the Thatcherites saw as the ideological muck and mess of organized labour that sent them with arms wide open to the City of London and Wall Street. At this point I should state I use the term Thatcherite in a wide sense. For example, I count New Labour as ultra-Thatcherites. To cite just three examples of the mega-capitalist connection to the AGMOAS: the already mentioned US-based David Geffen and Steve Cohen, and one of more recent vintage and notoriety, the London-based Bob Diamond collecting, through his London dealers, his Alan Davie works. Despite all the neoliberal guff about 'challenge' and 'radicalism' the AGMOAS now is without any critical power, it is simply a certificate for making money out of money itself. In the UK in particular (and the West in general, not least the new Russia) the AGMOAS now is part of the corporate audit for, to repeat, making money out of money itself, literally an ideological umbilical cord of gold. This is an audit that ignores the UK's industrial and urban reality. Looking back at the likes of Courbet, Reclus, Rimbaud, and Brecht, the AGMOAS now resides comfortably in what these forerunners would have regarded as a very strange and repulsive bed. The situation comes about, paradoxically, through the weird event of current capitalism's rejection of capitalism. The AGMOAS is part of the cultural efflorescence of this rather strange state of affairs. For Thatcherism-cum-Reaganism the material muck and mess was distasteful (compare the demise of both Sheffield and Detroit for instance), but the real 'troublesome priest' was organized labour. For Thatcher, through the prism of her notion of a property-owning democracy set in old Albionesque Granthamite fantasies of town and country, the muck and mess of capitalism reduced to the ideological vector. Up to the point of the intrusion of Thatcher-Reagan neoliberalism the Keynesian post-war settlement in Britain implied voting Labour entailed support for organized labour. Trade Unions were most strongly imbedded in the big industrial conurbations – the Great Wen itself, the ports of the South Coast, and the once great industrial sprawls of the Midlands, Wales, the North, and Scotland. My art school teaching sojourn 1964-2005 consisted of appointments in three of these cities.

III - THREE CITIES

In the years 1964-2005 I taught in higher educational fine art departments in three UK cities – Birmingham, Coventry, and Leeds. All three cities underwent development ('regeneration' as all the Blairite administrations after 1997 called it) during this period. In the case of Birmingham and Coventry the 'cultural industries' (as all the Blairite administrations after 1997 called them) have played a prominent part in these 'regeneration' programmes. In Birmingham, more especially, throughout the nineties, public art projects were very visible aspects of 'regeneration' programmes. Coventry, starting with the 'Phoenix rising from the Ashes' ventures in the fifties in response to the destruction wrought upon the city by the visits of the Luftwaffe in 1940, has seemed to be carrying out something like an ongoing 'regeneration' programme for over fifty years. Again, especially in the nineties and noughties, the 'cultural industries' have enjoyed an increasingly prominent presence in Coventry. In Leeds throughout the nineties and into the noughties then the financial industries and knowledge industries were the leading instrument of 'regeneration'.

1. Birmingham:

(a) Head-banging against avant-garde conservatism

My first teaching job was at Birmingham College of Art in 1964 in a then recently founded and relatively undetermined area called the Research Workshops. I was teaching two days a week, in the role of what at that time was classified, as the then day-to-day art school vocabulary characterized it, as a part-time appointment. [1] There was no tenure attached to such appointments, such teachers could be dismissed more or less overnight. A structural feature of art school employment rules which was to become important for Robin Plummer in his plan to demolish the Art Theory course in Coventry in 1971 (of which more in section 2, titled *Coventry*, below). It is perhaps worth noting here that during the entire period of my teaching

in Birmingham I was living in London, and the break with Fine-Artz in May-June 1966 coincided with another personal problem bearing upon the issue of loyalty. [2] The function of the Research Workshops was not so much defined as suspended somewhere between Fine Art and something else – at that time, 1964-65, it was hard to specify what this something else was except to say that some people, supposedly in the know, categorized it as something like 'not quite fine art'. It struck me then as a difficult position, but with hindsight a few years later it was then clear to me that it was problematic because the brief, insofar as there was one, for the Research Workshop was unnecessarily specious and timid. By the late sixties, the surge in confidence I gained through the collectivist exchange in forming Art & Language with three other people at Coventry provided me with this view. The lead up to and foundation of Art & Language furnished our determination to contribute to the installation of an expansion of what kind of material and cognitive resources could and should be permitted to be called the objects, artifacts and events of fine art practice, of which more below. But it was the question of what kind of cognitive resources should be called up, transmitted and marshalled in which Art & Language was most invested. With Art & Language up and running at Coventry in 1969, I was pretty certain looking back at the Research Workshops project in Birmingham that it should have been classified as fine art – straight up, no fancy 'experimental' frilliness but plain old fine art. But, had the Research Workshops been incorporated into the Fine art area, I do not think that my emergent and clumsily articulated view at that time of fine art practice, or the view of one of my colleagues, David Wise, would have enjoyed a very comfortable relationship with the kind of teaching which seemed to be characteristic in Birmingham Fine Art department at that time. [3] But this 1964-65 indeterminacy was, I think, viewing it now from over forty years further on, symptomatic of the kind of interregnum that fine art practice was beginning to enter in the middle years of the sixties. The general issue of the interregnum and how it panned out in the later years of the sixties will be raised again a little further on. Suffice it to write at this point that 'Conceptualism' emerged as a characteristic response to being in this kind of space, the interregnum, but 'Conceptualism' did not fulfill its promissory note to the likes of Brecht and Marcuse, nor to Russell and Wittgenstein for that matter, to abolish bourgeois culture. To the contrary, 'Conceptualism' quickly became a primary supplier to bourgeois exchange.

Returning to the matter of the teaching situation in Birmingham, a little more about the position in which I found myself teaching in the Research Workshops. [4] In 1965, when I had been teaching there about seven or eight months or so, a first head of the Research Workshops was appointed to start the following October. His name was Eric Rimmington. He had previously been teaching at a college of art in Bradford. He was, at that time at least, a Marcel Duchamp enthusiast. Accordingly, he was also enthusiastic about a project to remake The Large Glass, then being directed by Richard Hamilton through a number of his students at the University of Newcastle Fine Art department. As a consequence of this enthusiasm for Hamilton's project, Rimmington first employed David Wise from Newcastle on a part-time basis, and immediately sought to employ one more of Hamilton's students apparently instrumental in realizing The Large Glass project at Newcastle. In short order Rimmington accomplished this. Roger Westwood was appointed. Rimmington, Wise and Westwood started at the Research Workshops fairly close together. Westwood and I, as far as I recall, had a fairly innocuous and friendly exchange during those few months we taught together in the Research Workshops, although I do not think this exchange was especially productive for either him or me. Wise and I had a much closer exchange, and I was much more sympathetic toward his general outlook, his political views as much as his views on art, which were closely tied and not, at least in my view, easily separated. Rimmington and I grew more and more uncomfortable with each other throughout 1965 and into 1966. Not the least of my differences with him was my view of what I took to be Rimmington's too enthusiastic embrace of art in general and of Duchamp's work in particular. I've always had an uneasy relationship with Duchamp's reputation, and, at that time, throughout the sixties, I blew hot and cold towards his work, sometimes losing a critical hold on my judgements and succumbing to the tremendous esteem considerable sections of the art world were beginning to grant Duchamp's work throughout the first half of the sixties. At other times I suspected that the judgements rating Duchamp highly were inflated past the possibility of any worthwhile critique. At any rate, Duchamp's erstwhile emergent reputation became one of number of bones of contention between Rimmington and myself. To keep the story brief, Rimmington sacked me, along with David Wise, who, incidentally, whilst, as I recall, he rated Duchamp, proclaimed a much more critical view of the current state of fine art practice at

that time in the summer of 1966. Rimmington dismissed both of us telling us that he intended to develop the Research Workshops around Westwood and himself, and we did not fit in with his plan – too right! [5] Despite the proclamations and homilies that he either delivered to me or to others that I overheard, I never had a clue what Rimmington's plan was, and heard very little more about the Research Workshops in the years afterwards. As I understand it from other sources, as the sixties proceeded and turned into the seventies, the Research Workshops, unsurprisingly, never seemed to take shape as a coherent and determined plan and seemed to kind of fade away. I suppose eventually the project was run down and/or maybe absorbed into the Fine Art area in Margaret Street. At any rate, at some point, Roger Westwood moved to the Fine Art area in Margaret Street where he taught for many years, I think retiring from there in the late nineties or early noughties.

Returning more specifically to the subject of the wider city centre redevelopment context and milieu in Birmingham in which the Research Workshops was physically sited in 1964-66. The Research Workshops were not located in the main art school building in Margaret Street but in an annexe in a now long ago demolished building in a now long ago demolished row – an old two-storey building, which I think had been a small factory or workshop sometime earlier. The row was called Summer Row. It was on the other side of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery from Margaret Street, in which the Fine Art and Graphic Design Departments were situated. Both Margaret Street and Summer Row were situated right in the middle of the city in very close proximity to New Street and Victoria Square, one of the main city centre areas undergoing massive redevelopment at that time. The Rotunda, for example, was completed in 1965, about half way through my two-year teaching term in Birmingham. The present New Street Station (currently again to be redeveloped) was not completed until 1967, thus for the earlier part of my two year stint it was a very large hole filled with (what seemed to me at least) the giant paraphernalia of a major construction project, and still not finished until well after I had moved to Coventry College of Art in 1966. Perhaps it should be noted that my time teaching in Birmingham was only twenty years after the end of WW2, and like many other British cities, there were still some marks, maybe the last ones, of the Luftwaffe's visits to the city during the war. At any rate, the mid-sixties did have an air of optimism centering upon Western European societies regenerating

themselves after the apocalypse, and, as part of this continental project, many big Western European cities were undergoing redevelopment. This development was not as corporately driven then as it would be now (the present Birmingham redevelopment being a good example of a corporately driven project). The milieu was at that time more centred on a sentiment of civic collectivism, in which signs of a militant socialist outlook sometimes appeared; symptoms, I guess, of a left wing trade union presence. Birmingham had this kind of ambience then and was striking out in respect of developing the city centre. Overarching all this redevelopment it should be noted was the fact that the city was still then a major manufacturing centre. The Minis, one of the hits of the sixties, were rolling off the track at Longbridge, countless firms supplying the motor industry were busy all over the city, Lucas had a big presence, Birmingham Small Arms was a famous manufacturer situated near to New Street Station, Cadburys too (now owned by Kraft in Chicago), at Bournville, was a famous factory. [6]

Thus, the city then still retained a massive manufacturing base. Working in what I took to be an industrial solid working city meant something ideologically comforting to me at that time. I was conscious of the fact of being situated in a city in which one prominent feature was that in some of the big factories decent unionized labour seemed to offer not only secure employment but also acted as a strong social armature supporting an active and sometimes militant working class *esprit de corps*. [7] The massive funding required by this redevelopment at the city centre appeared to me then as appropriate to this extensive industrial infrastructure that webbed out all over the city – and it was a big city. In my own case this juxtaposition of a perception, as much intuited and taken for granted as particularly well articulated at that time, of a questing interregnum in Fine Art practice in general and the Birmingham city redevelopment buzz appeared to me to be some kind of a fit (in both senses of the word) with and of an egalitarian optimism, although I was not under any illusion that the incumbent Wilson administration was filled with ardent socialist militants. By 1964 I had studied the period 1945-51 sufficiently to know enough about Clement Attlee's administration of those years not to harbour such illusions (Nye Bevan excepted). [8] Nevertheless, Birmingham's city centre redevelopment did at that time seem to me to be in some kind of alignment with Benn's 'white heat of technology claims' and the other Wilson administration claims that Britain was not just

attempting to kick out what was left of its Edwardian class reflexes but also aimed to achieve some of the egalitarian aims that the last Labour administration, the Attlee government of 1945-51, had either not been able to or refused to achieve. But a little over a decade later Beelzebubble and her City of London fallen angels in the persons of Margaret Thatcher and her manic privatizing gauleiters were to implement the restoration culture; this time with council-house-selling knobs on it and a Prince Charles-like dread that the potent, and in many ways typical, sixties mix of rugged concrete and streets in the sky would breed a militant, discontented and articulate working class. It was no accident that Thatcher befriended Pinochet.

By 2008 the cover of the Tory/New Labour continuum of the previous thirty years had been blown, revealing that all the guff about having got rid of 'boom and bust' rested on unrestricted greed, financial spivvery and 'sophisticated' charlatan mathematical models. No sections of this financial imperium were more exposed as 'on the take' than the long-favoured Thatcherite-Blairite bankers and the political class itself. The Greater London Council, The Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire centred especially on the NUM leadership cadres in that area of the UK and linking Sheffield, with the demise of Park Hill and the demonization of Arthur Scargill perhaps the most iconic early events of this thirty year long programme of Tory/New Labour victimization, equaled by the Kinnockite hunt of the Militant Tendency administration in Liverpool. These councils and organizations were maybe the most prominent targets of Thatcherite Tory spleen and its ally the Kinnockite New Labour accommodation. [9] Followed by the less explicitly vicious but equally devastating conservative-like blanking of anything remotely suggestive of socialism, this act of blanking remained characteristic of and fundamental to the later New Labour 'regeneration' crusade. All the big UK industrial cities were continuous targets of venomous civic demolition-cum-replacement under some such Tory/New Labour megaphone slogans as the 'infernal architectural sixties' and the 'satanic social housing seventies'. Birmingham has been no exception, its present city centre development is testimony to especially New Labour advocacy of the 'culture industries' as a primary instrument of 'regeneration' - the city centre is littered with public art, a prime trophy brand of the 'culture industries'.

Returning to the subject of working in Birmingham College of Art in the sixties, at the Research Workshops I was slated to teach both fine art and design students. As mentioned already, if there was

an idea behind the setting up of the Research Workshops it was, at best, vague and without a clear agenda. I suspect that somewhere up the art academy chain someone had the notion that some such as 'fine art as experiment' was not only good for fine art students but was also good for design students. Such notions were becoming fairly widespread throughout fine art practice/teaching at that time. Eminent twentieth century predecessors such as the Bauhaus and the Vitebsk experiments had resonantly imprinted on British art school culture, and by the 1960s were a not inconsiderable, if misaligned and often maladjusted, input into the romance of the 'experimental'. I was not immune to such careless blandishments at that time. Alongside the general buzz in the West towards a more Left politics such sentiments were typical and symptomatic of the place that some aspects of Fine Art were at in the mid-sixties. [10] This view, favouring the 'experimental', also owed something to the steadily increasing input of American art magazines into European fine art culture throughout the first half of the sixties. Despite, and maybe partly because of, this uncritical embrace of some such as the 'experimental', by the time I got to Birmingham in 1964 I had a view, again in many ways not very well formed, that the wider practice of Fine Art was still constricted by an outlook more or less viewing its past as pretty much like its future and I thought the practice should and maybe could become more than what, it seemed to me, it in the main collectively characterized itself as being at that time. Thus, naively, I anticipated that the Research Workshops might provide me with an opportunity to test this not very well articulated view. It did not. The results of my teaching in Birmingham were far from satisfactory. [11] This view, with which I arrived at the Research Workshops, had been a steadily building idea going back to my early years at the Slade School and had formed as a result of a steadily mounting unease with the Slade School authorities. Nevertheless the question of how to accommodate and modify changes in the teacher's view of the practice rests on the teacher being able to offer rational reasons for such modifications and changes.

This is a permanent teaching problem in fine art practice. I attended the Slade School for four years. I had a good time at the Slade since I had a good time being in London; as much through the opportunities to continue to invest in the idealist fantasy that rock'n'roll was an instrument of future militant socialist commitment to social change, as through the commitment to practice fine art. I worked hard at the latter whilst at the Slade. But exchange at the

boundary between two events, one, an emergent pop culture and, two, a quickening desire to develop an altered model of the artistic subject, became more interactive as I proceeded through the Slade. The first two years at the Slade was, as far as I was capable of it, a steady concentrated period in which I attempted to become better as a painter. In this period too I had started reading seriously some philosophy - in fact just one book, Bertrand Russell's *Mysticism and Logic*. By the end of my second year at the Slade I had started to form an exchange with a student in my year, Bernard Jennings. Our conversations were especially exchanges concerning the impact of Pop Art and rock'n'roll, areas that were not at that time set into any part of the Slade curriculum. The Slade, at that time, say 1961, seemed to have three main streams of influence operating within the school – firstly, a kind of quasi-Coldstream measuring-type practice, apparently led by Patrick George and Ewan Uglow, secondly, an Auerbach-like practice seemingly led by Andrew Forge, Dennis Creffield and occasionally Frank Auerbach himself, and, thirdly, what some of us outside it called a Norwich practice, the practitioners of which coalesced around Jeffrey Camp and Michael Andrews. [12] At the beginning of the third year, October 1962, two students started at the Slade from Coventry College of Art, John Bowstead and Roger Jeffs. All four of us, they then still at Coventry, Jennings and myself already at the Slade, had had work earlier in the year in the 1962 Young Contemporaries where, presumably, Bowstead and Jeffs first came across Jennings and my work, and certainly where Jennings and I first came across Bowstead's and Jeffs' work. [13] During the summer term of 1962 I had heard they were to start at the Slade in the following October, and was interested to meet them when they duly arrived at the Slade. The association grew and Jennings and I became close friends with Bowstead and Jeffs. By the early months of 1963 Jennings and I had formed a something of a regular discursive exchange with Bowstead and Jeffs. [14]

This exchange grew into a series of common practice commitments centred especially on ideas, as we saw it, to develop the field of practice from which Pop Art drew its iconography and some of its cognitive resources, insofar as they were cognitive, as we judged them at that time, and then to develop resources that might supersede Pop Art. The exchange developed and rested on a growing friendship and an emerging loyalty to each other as artists. [15] In a fairly rapid series of moves during the last months of 1963, Bowstead, Jeffs, Jennings and myself decided to work as a

group. We named the group Fine-Artz. Fine-Artz made a first public representation at the 1964 Young Contemporaries.

Looking back with hindsight, in my case, I think Fine-Artz was an attempt to realize a synthesis of two kinds of hope, two kinds of cultural and social aspiration. One was pretty obvious, an aspiration to become the kind of artist who would not only develop but would also progress the practice. In respect of the concept of progress, things got more complicated as I got older, worked in and left Art & Language, and by the turn of the seventies into the eighties I was beginning to get something like an adequate grasp of the complicated and troublesome status of the concept of progress used in the wider art world, and used more or less without any critical insight and largely presumed to be the case that the AGMOAS was a position which was necessarily progressive. The complexity of the presumption turned on a failure to make appropriate distinctions. One of the primary judgements the AGMOAS fails to make is that of questioning the concept of a self-determining subject and the matter of behaving as if you are a self-confirming centre of truth. The AGMOAS presumes the latter to be the former. Not simply because the first may be possible and the second a vainglorious myth, but equally because the notion of a self-determining subject may be more troublesome than it is frequently taken to be. In the West it has been argued that seventeenth century secular rationality has served as the foundation of the self-determining individual. The intrusion of Romanticism in the first decades of the nineteenth century was an early cultural act that led, by the late nineteenth century, and then successively throughout the twentieth, to there being no more a vehement proclaimer of the alleged authentic uniqueness of human interiority than is the community committed to the AGMOAS. The possessive individualism which is the characteristic subjective formation of both capitalism and Romanticism, in the case of capitalism the risk taking entrepreneur and in the case of Romanticism the solitary artist and poet allegedly standing above the clichés of populist ideology through the melding together of these two cultural formations, places the AGMOAS, as it congeals in the first two decades of the twentieth century, in a far from consistent position. The inner individualist psyche became a central structural investment for the AGMOAS. But it brought with it a range of paradoxa if not contradictions.

As the AGMOAS incorporated Freudian theory, and more especially caricatures of Freudian theory, into its structural

characteristics, even the notion of the self-determining subject comes under pressure. In this respect the impact upon the AGMOAS of clichés derived from Freudian theory was considerable. The wider field of Freudian psychoanalysis and talk therapy signaled that, in Freud's words 'the ego of each one of us is not even master in its own house'. This kind of view of the self has been embraced and converted into a prominent twentieth century version of the AGMOAS. The Surrealists are perhaps the most well known protagonists of this kind of version, but the view of the artist as helpless transmitter has been fairly widely claimed by artists who, whilst they may have links to Surrealism, their practice is counted as outside the established Surrealist canon. See the comparison made in these remarks on p. 101 below, between the particular AGMOAS adaptations of Paul Klee and Robert Smithson. Klee is probably seen as nearer to the traditional surrealist position, but Smithson equally describes himself, albeit inadvertently, as a helpless transmitter. There is a marked sense in which this prioritizing of unique interiority stands in contradiction to any aspiration toward a collective practice, although one way of defining a collective practice is as an accumulation of 'unique interiorities'. The AGMOAS presumes to pursue change, diversity and, in the twentieth century at least, progress. [16]

The other hope, less intellectually complicated, which disappeared much earlier and is perhaps not so obvious, was a conviction that rock'n'roll, which then, in 1964, at the time Fine-Artz was formed, was less than ten years old, as an intrusive cultural presence in the UK, might be an instrument not only advocating new socialist cultural forms – this soon turned out to be a ridiculous hope – what emerged by the mid-sixties were newish conservative cultural forms – literally providing a group of *nouveau riche* celebrities. But in, say, 1964 my ill-placed historical bet was that these forms themselves would articulate a contribution toward the development of a more just society, a more equitable distribution of wealth. Since its first impact on my cultural outlook in the mid-fifties, my hope had been that the impact and contribution of rock'n'roll would not only challenge the cultural power of the traditional ruling class in British society, but would help to attain a society which would also significantly reduce the established wage-gap character of Western society. [17] I suspect that at this time, in the mid-fifties, there were also other teenagers with similar hopes invested in the impact and input of rock'n'roll. Obviously, to significantly reduce the wage-gap character of British society would itself mean a serious challenge to

the cultural power of the ruling class. From my view today Fine-Artz appears to me now as caught then on a reef of contradictions, which the resources that it developed had no hope of surmounting, not least because a militant socialist aspiration butted up against an admiration for the strategies of persuasion and consumership developed in the advertising industry plainly contradicted each other. By 1967, with the benefit of a year's hindsight, I was convinced that Fine-Artz had been working with insurmountable contradictions. [18]

Some comment giving a little more detail on the general UK political climate at that time is appropriate here. Harold Wilson won the general election of February 1964, with a majority of only four seats. I am not sure exactly when it was decided by the four protagonists that we should work as a group, but as the Young Contemporaries, at which Fine-Artz first showed work as a group, was held in January-February 1964, I calculate we formed the Fine-Artz, on as an official a basis as we ever formed it, several months before. My guess is around October 1963. Thus, the lead-up to the 1964 election coincided with the period in which Fine-Artz was formed. The election took place in the same month, February, in which Fine-Artz showed the *Kandilac Kustomised Asteroid Action Seat* at the 1964 Young Contemporaries. The work was formed from resources that were influenced by a kind of amalgam of advertising methods-cum-iconography and surfing and custom car culture. [19] My view, a quaint one as it turned out, was that at that time, Fine-Artz was justifiably optimistic and that the future development of the resources of such industries and cultures would transform Western society for the better, anticipating that they would lead to a more socialist and democratic society. Perhaps the other members of the group were under no such illusion and this was simply a too idealistic projection on to the group by myself. Whatever, as I have stated above, my view was to change in 1966, and from May-June of that year, to change very rapidly. But whether or not my idea of the group was a too idealistic one, Fine-Artz tended to view Wilson's newly elected administration as evidence confirming and chiming to some extent with our optimism. Now, in 2011, Fine-Artz optimism in 1964 looks absurd and many of its then outcomes seem puerile to me, but, and obviously I can only speak in the final analysis for myself and for the time I worked in the group, and anything retrospective in any case invites the suspicion of being reconstructed in the narrator's favour. Nevertheless, I think we did work together in Fine-Artz in good faith. Be this as it may now appear, Fine-Artz

was the practice framework in which I was working when I took up my first teaching job in the Research Workshops at Birmingham College of Art. Regardless of how I see Fine-Artz now, the two years 1964-66 I view as a period in which I reinforced and augmented the scope of a couple of useful ideas concerning the development of my ongoing practice. The first, a pretty obvious one, was the view that developing practice was as much a matter of exchange with other people as it was with individual internalized ambition. The second, clearly resting on the first, was a desire that amounted to keeping an option open to, at sometime in the future, again work in a group, in a collective, once again of which more in the next section. The useful contributions rested as much on what I came to reject, including much of the Fine-Artz outlook outlined above, linked, as it necessarily was, to what I retained from Fine-Artz practice and tried to develop. Again it is a pretty obvious point to make, but development and rejection are frequently connected, since the process of rejecting one idea may be the result of starting to form another.

Whether or not I was the most confused member of Fine-Artz, the optimistic outlook I enjoyed in working in the group rested upon the group activity confirming and extending a can-do view, a view that work could be different from the established pattern; a view arrived at through the study of the notion of practice which I had earlier slowly built up throughout my earlier time in art schools. But, despite this aspiration, it is clear in retrospect, at least in my case, that in the longer run the model of the artistic subject still remained too much the same. I retained significant parts of this view until well into the nineties, much of it driven at the level of reflex. In my own case, throughout both the periods I worked in a group, the notion of the artist as a kind of progressive heroic figure was transferred from the individual (the self) to the group. [20] My concept of the group did not transcend the established avant-garde model of the artistic subject. Although perhaps reduced in scope over the next decades the rump of this idea took a long time to anything near dispose of it from my outlook. At Coventry at that time I think both Michael Baldwin and David Bainbridge had a clearer conception of these problems than I did in the very early seventies. The necessary critique that is required to work past this model of the artistic subject I do not think can take place until there is a clear understanding that there can be a difference between having a practice and having a career. I do not think I had the requisite cognitive boldness to

drive the required practical courage to mount a serious attempt to achieve this separation until 1995. In any case I guess I still retain a residual reflex triggered by all that art school propaganda in favour of career pumped out to me as a student. Such long-term exposure to this insistent and prolonged propaganda requires a long-term alert permanent negotiation in subjugating the notion of career to the notion of practice, if not dispelling altogether the notion of career. To summarize: At the time I started teaching at Birmingham in late 1964 I was committed to the group exchange way of working we had developed in Fine-Artz, by the time I left Birmingham in June 1966 I had left Fine-Artz. But one of the things I retained and had had confirmed in Fine-Artz was, as I have suggested already in these remarks, was the desire to work within a collective exchange of a group – the idea stayed with me, but I can't help thinking it is something of an idealist fantasy, it is getting a bit late in the day, as I'm well over seventy years old now. [21]

I have disclosed little detail of my first exchanges with students at the Research Workshops for whilst there are certain encounters and events I remember, much of it I don't remember in any sense of being able to provide an itemized account. But I can recount clearly that I attempted to form my exchange with students around the following notions. One idea that informed my teaching, before I had started to teach in 1964, was that I wanted to transmit a view to students that a practice that prioritized critique of the general category art over the celebration of it, I held to be by far the most engaging option. Whilst I could not articulate the matter then as clearly as I could a few years later, I did undergo an early reaction to what I took to be the general attitude of celebrating art throughout the Slade. I did judge this vocational devotion to the category at the Slade as producing an aspect blindness. This growing wariness of enthusiasm for art started relatively early. At Barnsley School of Art, which I attended 1958-60, David Bainbridge, (whom I first met there and with whom I continued a life-long friendship) and myself both had to negotiate a kind of running, sometimes farcical, confrontation with a tutor called George Little, who embraced what we thought was an often ridiculous, because critique-less, enthusiasm for the work of the likes of Georges Braque, Constant Permeke, and Joseph Herman. Returning to what I saw as the institutional aspect blindness at the Slade, if it did not explicitly forbid the student from producing what I regarded as the necessary critical skills required to fulfill the questing character of the kind of practice that allowed and

was constituted of a critique of art practice *per se*, then it impeded the acquisition of such skills.

Another idea I held on to quite strongly by my third year at the Slade was a hunch that there would in teaching situations very likely be some students I would come across that were more interesting than the teachers; this latter idea was based on my experience up to then, 1964, of spending the last six years in art school. [22] I had thought quite a bit about the matter of teaching during my last couple of years at the Slade and working in the exchange of a collective in Fine-Artz had raised some questions for me about the kind of exchange that took place in teaching. At the Slade, in painting at least, there were no mandatory formal courses prescribed after the second term of the first year. Teaching exchange was relatively informal. But the model of the artistic subject processed throughout the entire Slade milieu was that which at that time was widely embraced throughout Western art practice, and for that matter still is. The model transmitted in this kind of exchange rested upon the romantically established Western view of individualism. [23] The Fine-Artz collective way of working, for me at least, did provide a glimpse of the possibility of a modified collective artistic subject. I think some kind of a conception of a modified collective artistic subject was a motive for the founding of the group shared by all four founders. Perhaps the downside of this was that the egos of all the group members were probably too conditioned by the traditional Western individualist model, in the sense that maybe we all still thought too much in terms of the familiar art school ideology-items of 'the visual', 'the creative' and 'the imaginative', etc. But it was the constructing and initial experience of working collectively that provided a prospect for the future development of a practice that assimilated teaching at its centre, which I was becoming increasingly interested in. There was a kind of dualism in place then, still significantly in place today, in the wider art school culture claiming some such as that producing art work was one thing, teaching another; and that the latter was primarily undertaken to service and support the former. Whilst part-time teaching was especially regarded in this way, there were many full-time art school teachers who held this view, explicitly separating practice from teaching. In contrast to this dualism, my experience of working collectively in Fine-Artz during the year 1963-64 had focused on the matter of inter-subjective exchange as practice, and this fed into my view of teaching. In short, I had the first inklings that

teaching should be treated as practice, that the separation between practice and teaching seemed to be an artificial one.

This attitude also had a kind of tension within it, and it too stemmed from the kind of practice I was involved in being a member of Fine-Artz. Fine-Artz held a critical attitude towards much contemporary art practice at that time, including, by late 1963, Pop Art, the intrusion of which into more traditional forms of modernist work, some people in the art world in those days in the early sixties dismissed or objected to, or were at least uneasy about. This Fine-Artz critique of Pop Art engendered a kind of irony. It turned on the fact that Pop Art had been a resource that prior to the forming of Fine-Artz the members had used (maybe the phrase 'selectively ransacked' would better give an idea of how we viewed our use of Pop Art resources post having formed Fine-Artz) to some considerable extent in the years 1961-63. Moreover, our respective practices had to a significant extent been derived, developed and had flourished within the Pop Art milieu. From our take on Pop Art, as suggested above using the phrase 'selectively ransacked', would give a better idea of how we perceived our use of Pop art resources once we had started to focus on the idea of forming a group practice. Many years later I was to view this 1963 stance as a first ill-formed attempt to separate the development of a career from what I saw as the development of a practice. [24] It would take me thirty years more or less, two groups and a number of other moves and ventures in developing my practice, to really be able to seriously attempt to treat separating career from practice as a coherent part of practice, the attempt is serious but this is not to say I have achieved it – far from it! Fine-Artz's practice did rest upon a critique, if not a rejection, of the founding individuals' own 'careers' up to that time, especially the members 'careers' at the Slade, as much as it did, so to write, upon a positive future programme. [25] By 1964 there seemed to be in Fine-Artz a rejection not just of Pop Art in the sense of Pop Artists being 'high' artists, that is of 'high' artists claiming the resources of 'low' art and culture to process back into 'high' art, but of art in a more general sense. The Fine-Artz resources were by that time much more focused on sources from, for example, advertising imagery, and custom car culture. Tom Wolfe's book *The Kandy-Koloured Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*, following on from the likes of Marshall McLuhan's book *Understanding Media*, had become a kind of source book for Fine-Artz. Both books were, successively, significant influences upon what might be called the

Fine-Artz outlook. [26]

But in hindsight, ten years later, having by then undergone the educational input of Art & Language exchange and practice, I could see that Fine-Artz had not rejected the standard avant-garde model of the artistic subject (AGMOAS), but transferred this standard model resting upon the aberrant equation of heroic romanticism = resistance, into the concept of 'Romantic' group holding 'resistance' = 'radical', and where such a state is realized in concrete terms by in some sense surpassing Pop Art. Throughout 1964 I had embraced this view as enthusiastically as did the other three members. By late 1965/early 1966 I was not perhaps as persuaded by this view as I had been through 1963-65, and as it still seemed were the other three. Insofar as I had increasing nagging doubts about Fine-Artz practice I guess such doubts amounted to a requirement for a kind of practice driven by an aspiration that it would be cognitively different and, to my mind at least, cognitively better. In retrospect, I guess my suspicion was that as a practice Fine-Artz practice was cognitive-lite. By 1970, after the first three or four years of Art & Language exchange and comparing Fine-Artz practice with Art & Language practice, I certainly viewed Fine-Artz practice as being cognitively-lite, not least because I judged it to have been too welcoming of advertising industry techniques of manipulation and iconographic persuasion that had highly dubious political ramifications. By the spring of 1966 I had a definite suspicion that the Fine–Artz stance, and therefore my stance, was cognitively evasive and therefore, in respect of the group's practice, self-deceiving. By late 1966 it seemed to me that the kind of Fine-Artz practice I had been involved in the years 1963-66 was far too close to the corporate culture of advertising. At the time, in spring 1966, I would have used some such term as 'advertising culture' – the term 'corporate' would not get attached to the term until I had been reading the works of Noam Chomsky at the turn of the sixties into the seventies.

However, in my first year of teaching, these two above-mentioned books, particularly Wolfe's book, influenced the content of my exchanges with students in the Research Workshops. But by the last three or four months of 1965 into early 1966, I had returned to reading Bertrand Russell's *Mysticism and Logic*, which I had not seriously considered since the turn of 1962-63. At the time of my return to it, I was far from clear why Russell's work became a primary interest again, but it was obviously linked in some way to an emergent increasing and not very well articulated dissatisfaction

with Fine-Artz. It was one of those kinds of period of synthesis where it was hard to detect, and thinking of it today I still find it hard to detect, whether the dissatisfaction generated the return to studying Russell again, or whether the return to Russell helped cause the dissatisfaction – but if the latter why the return to Russell in the first place? I guess, looking back at that time, the most I can state still is that re-reading Russell and the increasing dissatisfaction with Fine-Artz were kind of joined at the thought. In other words, there were some choices and also some confusion entering my view of how to develop my practice and teaching, just as I was also beginning to conceive the notion of counting teaching as practice. I did not articulate it very clearly then, but I was starting to chip away at the dualist separation of practice and teaching. This moving of teaching to the centre of practice did not become clear and therefore fully practically operational until the founding of the Art Theory course at Coventry in October 1969. As with all the ideas I had concerning Art & Language at that time, my exchange with Michael Baldwin was a critical input into the forming and articulation of this view of teaching as practice. Michael's exchange and input was a big influence. But in the framework of working in Fine-Artz, in the spring of 1966, what at least seemed to emerge was that the attempt to sort out teaching priorities was also the attempt to sort out practice priorities. Such a situation, by early 1966, was getting personally complicated in respect of my position within Fine-Artz. This was particularly emphasized in respect of seeking a venue in Birmingham as the site of a future Fine-Artz project. The unease I was starting to experience because of my growing reservations concerning Fine-Artz practice was exacerbated by the commitments I had made in the role of negotiating what eventually transpired as the venue for the next Fine-Artz project. In Fine-Artz, after the completion of the *Kandilac Customised Asteroid Action Seat* at the 1964 Young Contemporaries exhibition, the group eventually came to a consensus during later 1964 and into 1965 that the next project we should attempt was a big event-show using a lot of projected image technology – a large indoor installation constituting what turned out to be the use of big screens, some of them transparent or semi-transparent, upon which projectors projected images in a synchronized programme. Accordingly, each member of the group set about looking for a venue for the project.

After some months in which various members of the group attempted to find a suitable venue in a number of places, I managed

to negotiate a venue in central Birmingham. The venue was called, if I remember rightly, some such as the 'Great Hall' at what was, at the time the initial negotiations took place, the College of Advanced Technology (known as the CAT) in Aston in Birmingham. By the time the Fine-Artz event took place, the CAT had become Aston University, the Royal Charter being granted in April 1966. [27] These negotiations to stage the Fine-Artz project took place over the period from March into April 1966, and the event took place in either May or June. The event was called *Miss Misty and the Tri-Cool Data*. By the time the event took place I already knew I was being sacked from the Research Workshops and I had been assured of a teaching post, again part-time, in the Fine Art department at Coventry College of Art, at which I duly started the following October. [28] Thus, by the time the project took place, May-June 1966, I viewed *Miss Misty and the Tri-Cool Data* as a kind of swansong for my time in Birmingham. As it turned out it was also to be a swansong for my time with Fine-Artz. Thus, the experience of actually collectively constructing the show was bitter-sweet since by that time, May or June 1966, as I have noted above, I was becoming less convinced of what I took to be the Fine-Artz view of practice. Unsurprisingly over the succeeding summer months after leaving Fine-Artz, the departure having occurred concurrently with my leaving Birmingham, I recognized that my move to Coventry, in the coming October itself, warranted a further examination of the content of what I had been teaching during the last nearly two years. I was appointed to teaching in the sculpture department at Coventry, but such divisions as between painting and sculpture were purely academic and abstract *vis*-à-*vis* my view of practice in Fine-Artz, and equally so in respect of my emerging view that teaching was practice. At Coventry the boundary between painting and sculpture was not recognized except in respect of curriculum nomenclature and convenience. [29] The fact that the boundary was purely nominal was important in respect of my emergent view that practice could be much more expansive than the codified status it was at that time granted in many British art schools, where in some schools sculpture and painting were often noticeably, and sometimes dogmatically, separated.

Such sealed boundaries ran counter to the interregnum condition in which wider fine art practice found itself in the mid-sixties. In some schools such dogmatic demarcation was a defensive response to the growing influence of American art magazines, which

at that time were the photographic reproduction/textual vanguard messengers of the new expansiveness. Even the most institutional liberal outlook in, say, 1967, at that time often found the work of the likes of, say, Warhol, Judd, Smithson and Kienholz, let alone the then emerging practices that were to come to be called Conceptualism, too expansive for their traditionally categorized curricula to be able to acknowledge let alone accommodate. But the move to Coventry, as it turned out, had a couple of supplementary bonuses for the further development of my own outlook. The first bonus was one I have mentioned already - the meeting with Michael Baldwin. The second was the meeting with Don Foster. [30] And for the development of my ideas in respect of practice then in my particular case they were important bonuses. In June 1966, during one of the last weeks teaching at Birmingham, I had been invited to an interview at Coventry concerning being appointed to a part-time post at the College of Art there. My first visit to Coventry had been largely brokered by Ivor Abrahams, and was proposed as a visit to give me some idea of the layout and complexion of the department. During my visit there, aside from this general introduction, Abrahams suggested I meet a couple of second year students, Ronnie Rees and Michael Baldwin. Rees, from Coventry, I already knew, he was an acquaintance of two Fine-Artz members, John Bowstead and Roger Jeffs, and I had first met him on a visit to Coventry during a visit to Bowstead's home in Coventry in the summer of 1963, when Bowstead and I were students at the end of Bowstead's first year, and my third year, at the Slade. I had then met him two or three time more when he had visited Bowstead and Jeffs in London during the period 1963-65. Baldwin and I had not met before. The first bonus, if I ever needed confirmation of my general view that the students might well be more interesting than the teaching staff, was meeting Michael Baldwin, in June 1966; the meeting with whom was to turn out to be the strongest possible candidate in affirming this view. The meeting, and the beginning of what was to turn out to be a relatively short association (five years), with Don Foster happened as follows. Coincidentally, Don Foster and I started together at Coventry in October 1966; he as the new head of the Department of Fine Art, myself as a part-time teacher in the department. [31] We became good friends over the next few months, and over the next twelve months he became interested in the ideas I had concerning teaching. He encouraged me a lot and, at my suggestion, was happy to appoint both David Bainbridge and Michael Baldwin as part-

time teachers in the department. Foster's sympathetic outlook and encouragement, not to mention his sardonic sense of humour and sometimes outrageous behaviour, were very important in forming both the physical and cognitive space in the Department of Fine Art in which Bainbridge, Baldwin and myself set up the Art Theory course, which started in October 1969. Foster's contribution, that of making the administrative space and the conditions of exchange in which the Art Theory course was allowed to develop and to consequently be implemented, was critical for the existence of the course. I will write further on my association with both Michael Baldwin and Don Foster in the remarks to follow in the section titled Coventry.

(b) Modern Brummy Toryism - A Tale of Two Libraries

Before making some remarks on my teaching period in Coventry (1966-73), and some observations on the city of Coventry itself, some further remarks comparing the cultural outlook represented by the state of Birmingham city centre development in 1966, when I left teaching in the city, and the ensuing years of the programme until 1974, when the Birmingham Central Library opened. It has since I first started teaching in Birmingham been an aspect of my thought concerning teaching to use as one of its indexes the wider environment in which that teaching took place. At Birmingham in 1964 it was, anyway, pretty hard to avoid this wider setting, since the city was undergoing such a massive and intrusive development. Whatever this kind of view represents I've carried it to both Coventry and Leeds the other two UK city settings in which I taught after leaving Birmingham. The remarks at this point range across some aspects of the present Birmingham city centre 'regeneration' cultural outlook, 2011, represented by what is called the Big City Plan. The remarks comprise a comparison, focusing mainly on one so-called flagship project of the Big City Plan, the Library of Birmingham, opened in April 2013, in contrast to the Birmingham Central Library completed in January 1974, which was demolished. I choose this comparison because I judge the replacement of the latter library by the former to be a typical symptom of the success of the smugly premature adverse judgement against twentieth century architectural Modernism. And, in turn, I take this judgement of architectural Modernism to represent an architectural conservatism

to be a pretty exact equivalent to the steady conservative repetition in art practice of the conventionalizing of the doctrinaire claim that the alleged avant-garde is unconventional. My view is that the sixties modernist built environment ('Brutalism', as it is called) was one that represented a social vision that the future could be different from and better than the past. The built environment under the successive administration of Thatcher, Major and New Labour has turned out differently, large tracts of which conform *in toto* to a return to 'a country cottage' sentimental fantasy rejecting the British as a manufacturing nation, and sits (I emphasize here the verb 'sits') the adherents to this fantasy in the centre of something like a populist view of a Constable painting. [32] Suffice it to start by quoting how Charles Windsor, that renowned visionary critic of twentieth century modernist architecture, described Birmingham Central Library as "looking more like a place for burning books than keeping them." A remark marked by extremely dubious twentieth century precedents, a remark of singularly bad taste and a remark surely worth the awarding of the Royal Order of Charlatanism!

Thus a counter-argument is required against the Central Library being splenetically, and typically, condemned along with many other modernist projects throughout the UK. Accordingly, as a corollary to its replacement by the 'look back with nostalgia' architecture of the project of corporate culture over the last forty-five years, something needs to be argued in favour of the general outlook that drove the wider modernist project. Birmingham in the sixties was no exception to this wider movement. In 1966 Birmingham city centre was looking to a future where, first, it did not, as a compensatory sop, have to be sentimentally constituting its future by architecturally decoratively drooling over its past. We can but hope that the services the new library is claimed to realize on completion will in fact be realized. If they are that will be a plus for the project. Whilst in the sixties the City Council endorsed civic and social programmes and invested in strengthening a public sector outlook rather than the current servile, and often manifestly self-interested, outlook typified in the roles of many elected representatives in city and local government in their relations with private corporations, the sixties regeneration programmes were far from clear from what we might call civic 'insider dealing'. [33] Such events foreshadowed the passing of power to corporate interests in the matter of regeneration projects. But in the case of the latter, matters were legally endorsed in the process of civic affairs being largely sold off to the private

sector. Many of the elected representatives, once installed, act as representatives and lobbyists of private sector corporate power. [34] The encroaching and all-consuming emplacement of corporate interest as the driver of cultural agency, promoted through penetration and replacement of the public sector, not least as providers of the built environment, is the general target of the critique comprising the oppositional character of the argument here. In terms of a specific case it is worth looking a bit more closely at the case of the two Birmingham libraries cited above. On the 30th August, 2011, the Birmingham Press published an article by Alan Crawley entitled, *The Birmingham Myth Machine.* The article opens:

"Here's how the Council operates. First it decides what it wants to do. Then it fits the facts around its decision. The story of Paradise Circus shows how the system works …"

Further on Crawley writes the following:

"To get away with demolishing the Central Library the council began a long campaign of negative propaganda to prepare the public for its destruction. Typical of modern spin, it spoke in easy sound-bites to establish the many myths that fitted the Council's case. The unpopularity of '60s architecture, aided by Prince Charles, gave the Council a head start …"

A number of charges were laid by the Council against the Central Library, some of which were to prove false, and the one's that were not could have been remedied for a fraction of the £193 million cost of building the new Library of Birmingham. At the point where a case-by-case argument was mounted against the Council, and the charges either exposed as myths or pointedly analysed as relatively easily remedied, the Council retreated to the ultimate fallback position of a familiar late noughties one-liner. The particular one-liner, originally used by John Reid, the one-time Blairite Home Secretary (2006-7) in respect of the condition in which he claimed to find the Home Office, was taken up by the City Council in declaring that the Birmingham Central Library was 'unfit for purpose'. Such a one-liner is not only a memorable and convenient mimic of Blairite-Campbellesque spin (which may have been appropriate when used in the context of the shortcomings of the Home Office) but in the case of Birmingham City Council the phrase simply served as a cover for their version of the nation-wide prejudice against the socialist militancy of much of sixties/seventies modernist architecture. And the underlying

conservative fear driving the vilification of the modernist project is a fear of any kind of socialist presence, aspiration and development. Such sentiment was always spiteful prejudice and the events of 2007 and 2008 exposed it having the character that many people thought it had – it was dumb. And, in having to face these latter characteristics in the modernist architectural concrete form (Charles Windsor's favourite *bête noir*) of the Central Library as a representation of an architectural realization of socialist presence, then, paradoxically, the Council found itself to some extent pitted against a markedly conservative institution – English Heritage.

The paradox emerges at the point where English Heritage judgements calling for the preservation of particular buildings and sites run contrary to corporate interest. The granting or plea for preservation by English Heritage may be a backhanded complement since assigning a status worth preserving may consign it as having the status of a historical movement now terminated. Which brings this line of argument to Birmingham City Council's consuming interest, an interest that aligns it with the form that practically every other big city council in the UK, which august bodies have morphed under Thatcherite and New Labour tutelage into franchising outlets - the Birmingham City Council's record since the seventies of selling off city community owned land to corporate developers is a pretty standard one. [35] Paradise Circus is the area in which the Central Library is situated. Paradise Circus is now a corporate mess – a typical *ad hoc* development, the singular motive of which seems to have been a quest to raise money, at any price, by selling off the city centre bit by bit to what turns out to be a corporately consumed-cum-franchised landlord. The monstrous Copthorne Hotel – a black shiny corporate miserablist tank - in Millennium Square being a case in point, hosting the entrance to the square as you walk (or run) from the Central Library through an atrium-enclosed avenue housing the likes of McDonalds – a world-wide corporation, for example, not noted for raising architecturally memorable premises, let alone architecturally progressive ones. Obviously, the built environment is an important contributor to the ethical and cognitive character of the population that uses and lives in it. Birmingham Central Library is the main Birmingham City Council focus and symptom of the nation-wide corporately dominated venomous dystopian civic campaign against sixties/seventies Modernism. Infected in good measure by Charles Windsor and the general pervasive sentiment accusing Modernism of generating a Kubrickesque violence,

Birmingham City Council's sentimental campaign to make a future of the past is nowhere more clearly proclaimed than in the character of the series of excuses the Council have spun in maintaining their determined attempt to demolish the Birmingham Central Library. Underlying the whole Birmingham City Council campaign, a form of which is manifest in almost every city council in the UK, is a fear of aiding any kind of rehabilitation of socialist aspiration. This fear constituted the driving motive of the Kinnock-Mandelson inauguration of the New Labour project and is the ideological base of their Tory continuity. Commenting on the paranoid fear manifest by corporate culture of even the tiniest sign of socialist fulfillment in modernist projects of the sixties/seventies, Owen Hatherley in a discerning comparison makes a decisive analysis of this attitude via the examples of Thamesmead in South East London and Portmeirion in West Wales. The passage is worth quoting extensively:

"Of course this vast estate is most famous as one of Kubrick's locations in the 1972 film of *A Clockwork Orange.* A signifier of Modernism become perverse and violent, brutalism in the material sense transliterated into physical brutality. The buildings- white-grey concrete point blocks linked by walkways and lakes and futuristic low-rise maisonettes – seem as cold, stylish and psychotic as Alex and his Droogs …

The lakes and canals, which the brief suggested could mean 'one of the pleasures in store for future residents may be Saturday shopping by boat', are full of rare birds, patiently waiting for their eventual reclamation of the site. Thamesmead is ringed by private developments, built in the historical pick & mix of the Thatcherite/Blairite era, which try and abolish history in their determined traditionalism. When one of the central areas was demolished in 2006, a local press headline declared 'NO MORE CLOCKWORK ORANGE', reminding that the place is still defined by its fictionalization. Imagine the same happening to Clough Williams-Ellis' Portmeirion, chosen by Patrick McGoohan as set for *The Prisoner*, a nightmarish vision of middle class English politesse and tweeness running a surveilled mini-state. This collage of Lewis Carroll Italianate structures is the setting for something every bit as terrifying as Kubrick's dystopia, yet for North Wales press to cry 'NO MORE PRISONER' upon its mutilation would be inconceivable. This isn't just because the inhabitants of one live there out of choice and those of the other out of necessity. Portmeirion, rather than Thamesmead, accords with how the British like to see themselves: eccentric, individualist, nostalgic. *The Prisoner* prefigured postmodern urbanism, in that its pretty cottages mask an ultra-modern interior of advanced information technologies, while its cul-de-sacs are littered with surveillance cameras. Portmeirion is a tourist destination,

while Thamesmead is a notorious estate. Yet both settlements are weird, obsessive and beautiful." [36]

We are back in the terrain of the populist view of the Constable painting. Hatherley's comparison of the vilified Thamesmead and the picaresque-cum-picturesque Portmeirion can be revealingly applied to the Birmingham City Council comparison using, on the one hand, a deprecation of the Birmingham Central Library as a signifier of a rough and impolite Modernism, in turn a signifier of socialist aspiration (the Council's real *bête noir) and*, on the other, their acclamation of the new nostalgically historically encased Birmingham Library as a signifier of the alleged corporate virtues of neo-liberal possessive individualism and on-the-take entrepreneurship. The project of the Birmingham Library embodies an aspect of postmodernist urbanism, this time abolishing history to the extent of reducing it to tittivating remnants and this time too, right at the centre of a major UK city. The Birmingham Library is a 'regeneration' project held in much the same position by Birmingham City Council as the now Urban Splashed Parkhill estate occupies for the current Sheffield City Council, where the latter is being 'Splashed' whilst the former is a 'from-the-ground-up' project. Indeed, *vis*-à-*vis* Urban Splash, Birmingham city centre has already been 'Splashed' – the Rotunda was given this treatment as an alternative to its once proclaimed demolition. Fort Dunlop too is another Birmingham architectural monument, situated alongside the M6, a little way out from the city centre, also undergoing urban splashing. [37] Like the Parkhill 'regeneration' project the Birmingham Library is another Thatcherite-Blairite pick & mix solution to both satisfy and nurture middle-class aspiration to consume as a replacement for and elimination of socialist aspiration – the ideology that fills the Corporate ideology with dread, in the main because it is seen as threatening its mania for profit. By definition socialist aspiration is opposed to the process required by the absorption of surplus capital in which capital looks for opportunities to invest its surplus to make more surplus. In fact in the case of the emergent Birmingham Library the aesthetic of its much-heralded encasing envelope figures a typical nostalgic pattern commemorating the Birmingham City Council's version of the city's history; which envelope not so much masks as coyly disguises any virtues the new library's advanced technologies innards may come to have in sustaining an emergent set of social arrangements in which there a more equitable distribution of wealth.

[38] A point worth pressing here is that the concept of a Thatcherite-Blairite pick & mix solution matches pretty closely the current state of the AGMOAS. And in the specific context of the AGMOAS it is also worth pointing out that the Birmingham Library will face out onto an environment furnished with a considerable number of public art works, many of them contemporary works. [39]

I have lived in the Birmingham/Coventry area the entire period since 1967, except for a nine-month stint living in Leeds 1977-78, and have worked in the area for a sustained period 1964-77. Over such a period of time change is to be expected and, in principle, should happen. But if I was teaching in Birmingham now, say in the department of Fine Art in Birmingham City University, I would find myself not with some kind of matching aspiration with what I take to be the aspiration of city centre developments, as I did in 1966-74, but with a deep suspicion of and unease with current city centre developments, the Big City Plan. And this unease is not recently acquired; it is an unease I have had at least since I first started to see Victoria and Millennium Squares increasingly strewn with works of public art in the nineties. These works are placed there as insignia of the corporately absorbed AGMOAS, which in turn are insignia of the transfer of civic authority into the hands of corporate sponsorship, as it increasingly insinuates its logos and brands through the medium of the built environment. This suspicion and unease exactly matches my criticism of the corporately absorbed AGMOAS. The Big City Plan abolishes socialist history in just the same way as does the AGMOAS. In more specific terms, the Birmingham Library will generate a celebrated cosmetic of access to information, but this will be an access itself accessible to and convenient for increasing surveillance and manipulation by a corporately dominated managerial city-governing senate. This since the entire Big City Plan is at the beck-and-call of an ever-increasing corporate sponsorship. And it then follows it will also be an access more and more vulnerable to the call for the supplying of information as a generator of profit – there will be a mounting pressure to levy a financial charge for access to the supply. Murdoch has been a prominent forerunner of such a takeover of the public mind. As for the content of that supply itself, with or without a charge, it will be enveloped in the blandishments of corporate self-regard; which means the abolition of not only socialist history but the abolition of accurate history, since the promotion of the compound-growth-3%-profit-at-all-costs motive and a continuation

of an increasing wage-gap society is the *raison d'être* of corporate culture. Correspondingly, art teaching as a significant part of art practice is both a willing participator and an increasingly dependent pedagogy upon its alliance with corporate sponsorship. Art teaching in art school is a *prima facie* case of being bribed by the promise of career. It then follows that accepting such a bribe means producing a practice without accurate historical reflection - the aim of such a bribed notion of the avant-garde is to liquidate the aspiration whilst capturing superficially the forms of the early avant-garde. Thus, the liquidation of this aspiration is an important cultural factor in eliminating socialist aspiration.

This nearly fifty year familiarity with Birmingham City Centre developments affords me both a relatively long view and provides an asymptotic case of the fact that civic authorities and their appointed planning quangos over the past 40 years have more and more become converted into public sector carriers and transmitters of the private sector contempt for the public sector. In this kind of situation it is not unusual too to see local government elected representatives displaying a repressed self-loathing. This latter characteristic was especially evident in the so-called 'left' of New Labour. John Madin, the architect of the Birmingham Central Library, points out that in 1946, most of Birmingham city centre environment was owned by the City Council. Since the late sixties the City Council has sold off most of even the sidewalks. Such transformation of city governments show clearly how far the 'new labourites' (read New Labour tories) have internalized the values of corporate ideology, and at no point in the last forty or so years did such internalising go further and faster than under New Labour administrations. The Birmingham Library project, pet cultural trophy of the Tory/Lib-Dem dominated Birmingham City Council of the time, and therefore, give or take some rhetorical flourishes, comfortably imbedded within New Labour urban 'regeneration' policies, exemplifies this internalizing process.

2. Coventry:

Art & Language first and foremost - from confrontation with a dumb set of harbinger–forerunners of Thatcherite/New Labour managerial mandarins to current Coventry public art 'Conceptualism'

In October 1966 I started teaching (once again part-time) in Coventry in the Fine Art Department of Coventry College of Art. At that time the College of Art was situated in Cope Street, opposite the then post-war built 'Phoenix from the Ashes' international swimming pool. Close too, but on another side of the Art College was the tourist icon of Coventry Cathedral. In 1969 the department became the School of Art & Design of the Lanchester Polytechnic, and moved into a brand new purpose-built building across the road, on the corner of Cox Street and Gosford Street. [40] In 1966, when I started teaching, Coventry was still a major manufacturing city, particularly of autos and machine tools, the latter skill exemplified not least through the planet-wide famous company of Alfred Herbert. In the next forty years much of the manufacturing skill of the city was to be cast aside. It was also at that time still enjoying the kudos of its 'Phoenix from the Ashes' rebuilding project, the planning of which had started in the later forties and enjoyed a nationwide media following throughout the fifties into the early sixties. The new Coventry Cathedral had opened in 1962, the building, completion and ceremonial opening of which had itself been widely reported by the media. The 'Phoenix from the Ashes' project has itself been retrieved and continued since the nineties and has been historically absorbed by the current 'regeneration' project. That is to say, the Phoenix Project, the current project, has itself been regenerated, becoming part of the regeneration project. Returning, for the moment, to the early sixties, apart from Coventry Cathedral being perceived as a symbol of the civic and cultural recovery from the Luftwaffe attacks of November 1940, the cathedral was the site, and still is, in the popular media-cum-tourist view of Coventry, of four major cultural events (three major cultural artifacts and one major cultural performance). The artifacts are *Christ in Glory*, a tapestry by Graham Sutherland, *St Michael's Victory over the Angels*, a sculpture by Jacob Epstein, and John Piper's stained glass windows,

the latter, obviously, built into the fabric of the cathedral. The performance was the initial presentation of *War Requiem*, composed by Benjamin Britten for the opening of the cathedral. This entire panoply of cultural objects and events was a kind of precursor to the corporate public art programmes so characteristic of 'regeneration' projects since the nineties. But in the sixties at Coventry Cathedral, the tourist output was, as it still is today, to some extent masked as religious ideology.

The national education system, through which all the four founders of Art & Language had passed and emerged from prior to founding the group in 1969, was a state-funded public system which had itself built into it a respect and ambition for the public services, including substantial state-owned manufacturing and transport industries, the social composition of much of which was significantly influenced by trade union organization and representation and organized labour political muscle. Such a culture did not undergo serious explicit assault and degradation from the private sector until the entrance of Thatcher's administrations in the early eighties. Coventry, like all the UK industrial cities that had developed throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the late sixties still represented this kind social-political organization of culture. Consequently, when the Art Theory course was founded by Art & Language in 1969, it was still within this kind of urban milieu and national culture. Business schools and financial institutions were held in appropriate place and proportion by this kind of culture. To anyone invested in the socialist militant aspirations of the fifties and sixties, there was something historically comforting about being in a city culture of large working industrial collectives with a loyalty to manufacturing and, not insignificantly, a propensity for unionized labour. In such city working cultures there was always a glimmer of militant socialism. [41] During the time I was teaching at the School of Art & Design, 1966-73, the population of the city peaked. The following reports give some idea of the then and since population figures. In 1971 the population was 336,136, in 2001 it was 300,844, and in 2010 it was 310,500. However, the rise in population of nearly 10,000 between 2001 and 2010 does not mean that what is produced, the patterns of work, in the city are what they were in, say 1970 (roughly the mid-point of my teaching period in the School of Fine Art & Design). There is, as yet, no real sign of the city recovering its reputation as the major manufacturing centre it was in, say, 1966. Nor is there any sign of a determined

civic ambition to do so. Using the three categories of agriculture, manufacturing industries, service industries, then the patterns of work in the city since 1995 emerge as something like the following if the index of regional Gross Value Added (GVA) is used. [42]

	Agriculture:	*Manufacturing:*	*Services:*
1995	0	1,530	1,874
2000	0	1,873	2,714
2005	0	1,529	3,572

If the above figures are right then Coventry is now more a service industry city than a manufacturing industry city. A significantly different city to the city it was in 1969 when David Bainbridge, Michael Baldwin, Harold Hurrell and myself founded Art & Language, and when Bainbridge, Baldwin and myself started the Art Theory Course in the department of fine art in the School of Art & Design in the Lanchester Polytechnic. It seems to me likely that whether the founders of Art & Language had come together in a 'true blue' city art school, say Canterbury (*) or Winchester, or a Fordist labour-organized system manufacturing city, such as Coventry or Birmingham, they would have attempted to construct the same practice around the same kind of art theory course, but I do think there was something resonant in the Art Theory course being centred in the state education system of an industrial city. The Lanchester Polytechnic itself was then in the late sixties, largely claimed to be a specialist educational institution transmitting manufacturing and engineering skills. The patterns and configuration of work in the city were those typically established in industrial conurbations since 1945 and with which all the founders of Art & Language were familiar since we had, so to speak grown up and grown into them as members of the generations born into World War 2 and its immediate aftermath. The founding group of Art & Language had considerable ideological sympathy for the mixture of social welfarism and Keynesian economics, which characterized this period. We wished for more state control of capitalism, not less. In Coventry all three of the Art & Language members who were already teaching at Coventry since at least 1968 were teaching on the Art Theory course from its start in October 1969. I will return to the subject of Art & Language at the Lanchester Polytechnic 1969-71 a bit further on in

these remarks, but first I want to attempt to give some idea of the social formation of Coventry currently and how the social pattern of the city has changed since 1969. In July 2011, the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant-count amongst Coventry residents was 10,742, a claimant rate at 5.1% of the working age population. This Coventry rate was higher both than the West Midlands regional average of 4.8% and the national average of 3.9 %. After falling from a peak at 5.6% in October 2009 we saw that the Coventry JSA unemployment rate again kept rising well past December 2011. As the government spending cuts really started to bite it was certain that Coventry would, like Birmingham, see rising unemployment and less secure employment. Somewhat ironically, Coventry, again like Birmingham, in the last decade has seen quite a lot of redevelopment - 'regeneration' as the New Labour administrations called it. Not the least of these has been a development of cultural projects and some knowledge-based industry projects, although how secure the latter are is anyone's guess, and Coventry's universities' populations (both Coventry and Warwick) boomed relentlessly under New Labour until at least 2007.

Coventry city-centre 'regeneration' is based on a plan called the Phoenix Project. [43] The project is frequently explicitly claimed to be 'culture-led' and has embraced most, if not all, of the characteristics marking the absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny. Public art works, it is claimed, lead the project. [44] Rising unemployment or not, in the global capitalist scheme of things, such micro-projects exemplify the optimistic capitalist view that capital surplus is an infinite resource – that it can always be located and used; a practical reflection of the implicit outlook of Capitalism that the planet cannot be used-up and worked out. Behind this optimism lies 'The fetish belief … that there is either a technological or spatio-temporal fix for every problem capital encounters.' [45] Quality of urban life became a central issue in Britain throughout the Blair administrations. It is an important component of 'regeneration' policies. It is important because it is not only aimed at that part of the population that has the money to consume it, but also because capital was then intent on supplying the credit to a significant proportion of those who, without this credit, could not afford to consume it. Demolishing Gordon Brown's not infrequent boast that New Labour had got rid of the 'boom and bust' economic cycle, the sub-prime crash in 2007-8 is a prime illustration of the fact that capital surplus is neither an infinite natural or cultural

resource. It is a prominent corporatist ideological commodity not an infinite resource, and the supplying of this commodity exposed its limit. [46] Since the era of Reagan and Thatcher, the promotion of urban petty bourgeois life (for example, Thatcher's haughtily pronounced aim to achieve 'a property-owning democracy' – sell the council houses and fuck public housing) has been a prominent site of commodity fetishism. It is part, not least using the city centres themselves, of the corporate heraldic promotion of consumerism. Gordon Brown's now proven extremely idle boast was part of the same Thatcherite fantasia. Urban life is corporately fixed in to a world, where, again as David Harvey reports, "… consumerism, tourism, niche marketing, cultural and knowledge-based industries, as well as perpetual resort to the economy of the spectacle, have become major aspects of urban political economy." [47] In relation to its budget, Coventry City Council has indulged heavily in what Harvey calls the 'economy of spectacle', not least through commissioning works of so-called 'conceptual art'. The eliding of 'spectacle' and 'conceptual art' is not without a certain historical irony in Coventry.

The development of Priory Place in Coventry city centre is a small but kind of classic example of the national corporate strategy promoting a 'boutique living' style that, between 1980 and 2008, was constantly corporately broadcast as an infinitely sustainable lifestyle. This entire corporate capitalist project, practiced globally, was the then current form of the age-old strategy to absorb surplus capital in order to make more, to maintain the necessary 3% compound growth required to keep Capitalism going. The Phoenix Initiative is a small Coventry detail of the planet-wide strategy. But one of the downsides of this capitalist necessity, this urban transformation in the service of sopping up capital surplus to make more, is that it entails periodic spells (often running automatically according to the boom parts of the typical capitalist boom and bust timetable) of urban restructuring carried out through what has been called 'creative destruction'. Those living in the residential quarters of the Priory Place development will, obviously, be those who can either afford to buy outright, obtain mortgages, or afford the rents. This, inevitably, gives such developments a class dimension, and it is through corporately driven regeneration of this kind that the Corporate Tyranny imposes its own version of fiscal discipline on urban local government structures. When Corporate Tyranny rules then capital absorption through urban redevelopment is one of the

corporate orders of the day. It is an absolute corporate imperative. It does not matter whether it's a Gormley public art work in Birmingham or a Gerz public art work in Coventry (even so-called 'anti-monuments' and 'hidden ones'), all public art programmes are part of the built-in fabric of promoting the urban lifestyle, the 'boutique living'. Public art spectacles, whether cruciform figures, giant beans, hidden monuments, etc., conform to many of the aspects of the corporate fix of the urban political economy that David Harvey lists above.

The public art works in Coventry, whether claiming to represent liberal sentiments or not, are an integrated part of this corporate strategy. There can be little doubt that artists who undertake public art projects, whether or not they proclaim liberal sentiments and claim their work represents such sentiments, are, knowingly or not, the allies of the corporate fiscal disciplinarians of local government structures whose main strategy is the outsourcing to private firms of public services and the public commonwealth. In this framework public art work programmes are 'aesthetic' (read Brand) instruments of Corporate Tyranny. [48] Both 'private' and public art are both primary instruments of the corporate cultural industries. Whole city centres have been redesigned according to this corporate menu. One of the most plenary schemes attempting to redesign a complete city centre, unashamedly displaying the alliance between property development, the culture industries and boutique lifestyle, is that being executed by the City Council in Sheffield. This programme was particularly and increasingly propelled under the umbrella of Blairite New Labour/Liberal Democrat munificence. This is an attempt to hunt out socialist form and aspiration root and branch, worthy of the Kinnock and Mandelson version of Tory rule. [49]

One thing Coventry's cathedral-led architectural long-term post-war redevelopment probably suffers from is just that – the city's most acclaimed and iconic post-war building is a cathedral. Any cathedral, by definition, is what Owen Hatherley describes, in writing of other UK building projects, 'a genuflection to the past'. [50] If there is a claim that such architecture embodies the aspiration for a rational future then there does seem to be an element of architectural camouflage and subterfuge at work here. It is hard to see how such a building designed to house a religious function, and one not least celebrating itself as a modern version of its continuity with and longevity stretching back to mediaeval Christian rituals,

can operate in any inquisitive secular sense, let alone allow the ideological space for the militant socialist aspiration characteristic of some modernist practices in the sixties and seventies. After all, any request that a cathedral be secular does itself seem a perverse request. [51] Contrast the serene and untroubled continuity of Coventry Cathedral with the demolition of the Central Library in Birmingham. Charles Windsor, no doubt, approves of Coventry Cathedral because it is a cathedral where ritualized ceremony sits more comfortably on his architectural palette, not to mention his inherited wealth. He is, after all, a pastiche genuflector of the past, not surprisingly I suppose, since he is himself, culturally, necessarily it seems for the monarchist British, a figure who attracts a great deal of genuflection. By the 2000s public art in Coventry, as in many other parts of the UK, typically inherited and currently inhabits a Thatcherite-Blairite pick n' mix architectural environment.

I have met Jochen Gerz intermittently over many years. As far as I can ascertain we have maintained reasonably if very intermittent and distant friendly relations over that time. The last time we met was at some early preliminary public meeting held at the Herbert Art Gallery in Coventry concerning Gerz's appointment to work on the Phoenix Project. I was prompted to go to this meeting by a note from Pavel Büchler, who, it turned out, was very much in favour of the proposal to commission Jochen Gerz. For better or worse, and predictably I suppose, I was far from impressed by what I heard at that meeting. Proceeding from and subsequent to that meeting, Jochen Gerz led and directed the construction of what is described as major public art works within the Phoenix Project. He is described variously in the literature and supplementary commentary around the Phoenix Project as, "one of the leading conceptual and public art artists," and an artist "whose work on anti-monuments and the notion of national reconciliation fitted well with the aims of the project and the particular history of Coventry City". [52] This latter presumably referring to the city itself not the football team, which of late has seen a precipitous fall in its fortunes and status; which state of affairs is in no small measure due to the financial machinations centred around the corporate manipulation of the Ricoh Arena, another monument of the Phoenix Project. More curiously, Gerz is characterized as having, "laughed and joked with the lofty and most ordinary townspeople". [53] I have heard Jochen Gerz also declared to be a 'radical' and 'challenging' artist - the very buzzwords that the cultural industries, instrument themselves of the Corporate Tyranny,

are so fond of proclaiming on behalf the AGMOAS, which the Corporate Tyranny now has so thoroughly absorbed. [54]

All practicing artists, in one way or another, have to deal with this problem. The main response of most artists, when they are aware of it, is to either not see it as a problem and perhaps many approve of it, or if there are artists who are aware of it and are uneasy with the situation, they invariably equate matters of career with matters of practice. As has been repeatedly stated earlier in these remarks, the issue turns on the problem of being able to, or whether it is even possible to, negotiate a worthwhile distinction between having a practice and having a career. Staying with the implied differentiation that the use of the term 'public art' can be used to imply, then let us divide art practice into the two categories 'public art' and 'private art'. Any boundary between these two categories, since it is so amorphous, has to be provisional. Consequently there are a number of ways such a separation might be articulated. Here I use the terms as follows. A 'public art' work is made through a practice in which the artifact produced is significantly generated by a commission for a specific civic architectural setting – apparently these days a prominent setting in which corporate funding can penetrate the cultural industries. A 'private art' work is one more specifically generated by the artist's own impulses ('imagination', 'creative urges', all the other vague hand-waving terms so comfortably used in art world vocabulary) usually in her/his studio space - perhaps this latter is the setting more associated with the traditional populist idea of the artist, along the whole spectrum of variations from the 'starving artist in the garret' nineteenth century throwback prototype to the successful wealthy 'imaginative creator' – the Turner Prize rich 'radicals' for example. The nineteenth century prototype remains a persistent variation in some populist quarters. Both these kinds of practices, 'public art' and 'private art' are equally belaboured by the practice/career distinction, and the concept of 'private art' is equally a useful instrument by which corporate honchos collect more wealth. [55] Both, again equally are carriers today of the Corporate Tyranny-absorbed AGMOAS. The immediate outlet for a public art work being, say, a city centre piazza. The immediate outlet for the private art work being, say, a gallery or an auction house or some other kind of, shall we call it, collector retail outlet.

All these outlets are equally in the service of promoting a career with nothing to stop a work made in the environment of 'private art' entering a public urban environment (for example some Henry

Moore sculptures have undergone this kind of passage) and, for that matter, in the historically longer run, work made under the auspices of a kind of public commission being directed back into the private sphere (for example, there are many altarpieces now historically displaced into public art galleries, and a public art gallery today is a very different space to the altar in a church or cathedral circa, say, 1540). As I have noted already, the border between 'public art' and 'private art' is nothing if not extremely provisional, and it would be impossible, and foolish to maintain a too strict boundary between them. But the public art work in the city centre has a particularly intimate relation to the built urban environment; in this sense it occupies the same kind of historical architectural space as many of the art gallery buildings themselves. Currently, public art works, like new and renewed art galleries, enjoy a prominent role in remodeling the urban environment and artists who undertake such projects are active participants in what David Harvey calls the process of capital absorption through urban redevelopment. Consider another incisive piece of analysis from Owen Hatherley, this time directing his attention at the architecture in the City of London and one of the really 'big daddy' European projects of the cultural industries in the last couple of decades; all this in the service of the all consuming capital absorption which is absolutely necessary to the maintenance of the Corporate Tyranny – Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao:

"While it's possible that the original Gherkin received its nickname spontaneously, there's little doubt that the other towers, all announced around the same time, had a ready-made little moniker designed to immediately endear them to the general public, in order to present them as something other than the aesthetic tuning of stacked trading floors. Accordingly by being instantly recognizable for their kinship with a household object, they would aim to become both logo and icon. Perhaps they might eventually become what Jencks describes as 'failed icons', more Millennium Dome than Frank Gehry's Bilbao Guggenheim; although always trying for the status of the latter, whose success in bringing well-heeled tourism to the Basque port has made it into a boosterist cliché, whereby the 'Bilbao effect' transforms a mundane city into a cultural capital, replacing unionized factory work or unemployment with insecure service industry jobs." [56]

In respect of becoming both logo and icon, the Angel of the North has certainly attained this kind of status. I may be wrong, but I doubt either Anthony Gormley or many other artists who have produced

public art works have seen themselves as contributing to the cultural component of the corporate process that replaces 'secure unionized factory work or unemployment with insecure service jobs'. But even something as sniffily decorative as so-called 'aesthetic' tuning has a range far wider than simply prettifying trading floors. It can also be used, and repeatedly is, to aesthetically tune social issues. Here, echoes of Theodor Adorno's warnings start to sound out. Despite Adorno's now seemingly forlorn hope that the formal inventions of Modernism would be in themselves sufficiently radical to contribute toward the formation of a more egalitarian society, he nevertheless kept some sort of compass on the matter of aestheticising the recall and commemoration of horrendous events. The Holocaust, obviously, is a heavily used track in this area of public art as remembrance. In the zone of what I have called 'private art' it is a problem in my own practice that has made me uneasy, a problem that I have had to consider and had to attempt to negotiate for a long time: Not very successfully I think. This unease seems to be a permanent condition of my practice. Whilst Adorno's warnings may have resonance *vis*-à-*vis* such examples as Gerz's co-operation with the Corporate Tyranny at work in Coventry, it should also be mentioned that there is an argument Adorno makes which counters, or perhaps defuses, his above-mentioned warning. I have already noted Adorno's now forlorn prediction that Modernism would progress necessarily by virtue of its formal inventiveness. The counter argument, and one that seems to me much more convincing, is made by Fredric Jameson, who argues that it is expressly the formal inventions of Modernism that have been so easily parodied, assimilated, and absorbed by postmodernist practice. Postmodernist practice is the characteristic cultural process of the Corporate Tyranny. My sympathy for Jameson's analysis is on a line of continuity with the fact that I have never been altogether convinced that subjects I have focused on in my own practice such as World War 1, British imperialism in Ireland, Hiroshima, or pictures using imagery culled from a visit to the Natzwiller-Struthof Concentration Camp preserved in the Vosges, sit in any ethically superior, or even just comfortable, zone in the alleged terms of the alleged culturally 'decisive' intervention that Fine Art practice is supposed to be according to the Fine Art rhetoric that insists on characterizing artists as 'radical' and 'challenging'.

In fact, if I read Adorno right, he seems to be arguing that in the face of apocalyptic events, such as WW2, there is no such thing as an ethically comfortable zone. Gerz's public art work at

Coventry represent precisely the kind of commodification processing of the 'radical' at which the Corporate Tyranny is now so adept. Postmodernist practice is the logical payoff of being indentured to the Corporate Tyranny. There is no confrontation, or for that matter, any call for change, radical or otherwise, in the kind of project Gerz implemented in Coventry. It is exactly the opposite process of that which in the twentieth century the likes of Brecht and Marcuse called for – the abolition of bourgeois culture. 'Conceptualism' as Modernism, by the mid-seventies, returned only as a corporately contained 'aesthetic' brand. And in the sixties Marcuse forecast this absorption would happen. This containment is part of the process by which Capitalism flags-up such notions as that of difference and multiculturalism, and advertises it as 'radical' and 'challenging'. According to his commentators, Gerz's works in Coventry fit exactly the Corporate Tyranny's prescription of 'radical' and 'challenging'. Nevertheless, regardless of the qualifications set out above concerning what I consider to be Adorno's absurd faith in the inherent progressiveness of the formal inventiveness of Modernism, in the civic forum of public art in the urban environment, it is bordering on the incredulous to think that any views approaching Adorno's original warnings were consulted, or even held at all in mind, when the consultative committees of Coventry's Phoenix Project were meeting to appoint the successful 'public art' candidates. It goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway) that any such arguments as those of Brecht and Marcuse calling for a cultural practice that moves toward the abolition of bourgeois culture, would, of necessity, be anathema to the Corporate Tyranny and these city councils, which are held in the grip of the Corporate Tyranny. Unsurprisingly in the era of Corporate Tyranny, in the negotiations in Coventry Adorno's warnings were never allowed to intrude upon, let alone be acted upon in a practical way, in the processes after the artists were appointed, or in any exchange that subsequently took place at Coventry. It would be very surprising if Adorno's name was ever mentioned in the course of the negotiations and, for that matter, during the installation and building of Gerz's works. Since they accepted the commissions, it is probably reasonably safe to assume that the 'public' artists themselves had little critique to offer in respect of their positioning by the Corporate Tyranny. In any case in such situations career invariably outranks practice, not least because most artists do not seem to acknowledge any kind of distinction between them.

In the case of events such as Gerz's two works in Coventry where, it is claimed, remembrance and reconciliation were high on the agenda, there is plenty of hand wringing at such events as Luftwaffe visits, the likes of the vicious outcroppings of Nazism and Soviet dictatorial atrocities, and the necessity for remembrance and reconciliation, and, in a more general way, memory itself; but, predictably, not a sign of any awareness of the Corporate Tyranny's ever tightening grip on the AGMOAS as part of its tightening grip on the wider culture – this might turn out to be career threatening. For all the claims made on behalf of Gerz's conscience, in the writings with which I am familiar mostly made by others rather than Gerz himself, I doubt anything coming near to Hatherley's above analysis was ever raised. Certainly throughout the three sets of remarks mentioned above, Joanna Morland, *Public Art Online*, Sarah Wilson's, *Jochen Gerz: Future Monument, Public Bench,* and Jill Journeaux's, *Live Collaboration and the Visual Arts Curriculum: Jochen Gerz at Coventry School of Art & Design,* there is no sign whatsoever of such a critique. Again unsurprisingly, all this writing appears to be heedless of Adorno's warnings. Such writings indicate that their writers, who for all I know, may well claim to be liberal in outlook, ignore the basic fact of the cultural structure they are imbedded in. The primary lesson to learn is an obvious one, but one such writers either choose or wish to avoid, or they neither choose nor wish but are simply not aware of this framework since they do not think of public art projects in the context of the regeneration of the urban environment as a strategy to absorb, maintain and, if possible, expand capitalist surplus value. The lesson is that the character of capitalism, always without exception, contradicts any aspiration to reach out for, let alone accomplish, a non-exploitative and socially just society. Of necessity, not least because it requires somewhere in its realm (which these days is global) what Marx calls the reserve army of labour, capitalism must have (how shall we grade them?) the poor as it must have the poorer, the less poor, the richer and the very rich. Coventry's 'regeneration' programme, just like those of Birmingham's and Leeds', is a small detail in but one of the thousands and thousands of very necessary contributions to Capitalism's global effort to appear other than it is – it is after all a system of outright exploitation. It should come as no surprise then that the term 'work experience' is often a cover for 'unpaid labour'. [57]

That a 'conceptual' artist can be harnessed so heraldically to

the Coventry Phoenix project speaks volumes as to the absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny. In respect of the claim that I quoted at the very beginning of this essay, that 'Conceptual Art of the sixties "was one of the decisive movements of the twentieth century"' the term 'decisive' may itself be decisive over and above what its speaker intended by the remark. Conceptual art was certainly decisive in one respect; it has been a decisive contributor to, ally of, and participant in the quest by the Corporate Tyranny to absorb and claim the alleged 'radical' credentials of the AGMOAS. Conceptual art has been a decisive contributor in forming postmodernist practice. In this light the context of Gerz's two works at Coventry are polar opposites to the aspirations, in 1969 –71, of Art & Language and the brutally terminated Art Theory course that the group set up in the School of Art & Design in the Lanchester Polytechnic at Coventry for that short period. But the more general point is that despite the high sounding claims about reconciliation, the absorption of Gerz by the Phoenix Project is a clear denial of the Brechtian and Marcusian notion that bourgeois culture should be abolished before anything approaching a non-exploitative and socially just society can be achieved. If there is a reconciliation involved in the Coventry Phoenix Project it is a reconciliation with the Corporate Tyranny; a reconciliation with the ongoing corporate attempt to maintain the 3% compound growth. All the handwringing and breast-beating, *viz.* Sarah Wilson, about memory and reconciliation, is the characteristic guise that the Corporate Tyranny adopts having accomplished the absorption of the AGMOAS. This is a not insignificant part of the corralling of so-called 'radicalism' within the corporatist halters of cultural choice - projected in such old Thatcherite/New Labour/Coalition continuity buzzwords as 'multiculturalism', 'faith schools', 'academy status', 'rational choice political theory', 'The Big Society', etc., used continuously throughout the 1990s-2000s. A leading cultural effect of all this is that the Corporate Tyranny has spawned, for more than a decade and a half, a university culture dominated by the expansion of so-called business schools. One effect of which has been a fine art degree that has been significantly moved into a hardly if at all noticed business degree. A degree formulated much more around the imitation of a celebrity template of a successful business career rather than the critical power of an inquisitive and secular practice.

Since 2008, when capitalism, yet again, was shown to be greedy, corrupt, incorrigibly boastful and incurably delusional, the

response to the general business bias throughout the Western higher education system representing this culture has been to supplement the system, with largely symbolic peremptory courses on so-called business ethics, adding these to the business schools curricula. It is worth remembering that 3% compound growth is the business ethic of capitalism, whether it embraces Indian sweatshops, derelict steelworkers in Pittsburgh, near full-employment in Malaysia or wherever, or would-be avant-garde artists in the Western higher education system. It doesn't matter – the bottom ethical line has always been 3%, 3%, 3%! Capitalism treats nature as an infinite resource for the achievement of this 3%. It cannot treat the world as finite. I believe even 2% would not satisfy it, if only because at 2% it would not be capitalism. How on earth (I do not use the planet's name lightly here) could capitalism ever be satisfied with not being capitalism? It must have that reserve army of labour. The problem is a very basic one, and, looking at modern capitalism's three-century-long life, a very difficult one to uncover, and an even harder one to change. It is a hard task because it is a matter of exposing what the Corporate Tyranny (read political power) always wishes to conceal. The absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny is a small part, but an important cultural part, of this general permanent dissembling action of capitalism. Consider again, another commentary by David Harvey:

"Many alienated intellectuals and cultural workers likewise protest the deadening weight of power relations in the media and in institutions of learning and cultural production that debase the languages of civil discourse, convert knowledge into ceaseless propaganda, politics into nothing more than competing big lies, discourses into special pleading and vehicles for peddling prejudice and hate, and social institutions that should protect people into cesspools of corruption. These conditions cannot change without the professional intellectuals getting their own house in order. The great betrayal of the intellectuals who became so complicitous with neoliberal politics from the 1980s onwards has first to be reversed before meaningful alliances can be constructed with the deprived and the dispossessed." [58]

Could we describe the likes of Jochen Gerz as an alienated intellectual? Or, more poignantly, can he be regarded as an intellectual 'who became complicitous with neo-liberal politics'? All artists, with very few, if any, exceptions are, to a greater or lesser degree, complicitous with neoliberal politics – living in the

global economy guarantees this. The measure that might be used to assess the level of complicity is alienation. But there does seem to be something logically bizarre wraithed around the phenomenon of the alienated extremely rich artist. Is it an uncomprehended alienation, for example, that drives Gerz's art production? In Gerz's case, as with any artist, we had better try and make clear whether his work constitutes knowledge or propaganda. Like practice and career, this is another distinction hardly raised at all in evaluating art practice. Public Art is a strategy that claims to supply a demonstration of an uplifting environment. That is, people (including presumably, if the claims for art as a transcendental universal message are to be believed, the alienated and the dispossessed) know that this part of the environment (the public art work) uplifts them. And the notion of being uplifted presumably touches, at some point, the notion of becoming more aware, which, in turn, touches the notion of gaining knowledge. The verbs used habitually in evaluating art works and art practice are verbs such as 'intuiting', 'sensing', 'experiencing', and 'feeling'. 'Knowing', if it is used at all, is quite a bit lower on the agenda. But there is one context where 'knowing' is used conspicuously, it is in the context of the expression of the opinions of the 'tastemakers' (artists, consultants, critics, etc.) addressing the notion of the audience. Something like: 'If the audience does not know that public art uplifts them, then they ought to!' Are then denials of the alleged virtues of public art (whether these alleged virtues are explicitly stated or allowed and maintained through simply being ignored) counted as the mark of, say, a philistine?

It is in this cognitive area that such questions begin to suggest and provide a glimpse, if only perhaps a dim one, of the emergence of some kind of view of the intellectual as a ceaseless propaganda merchant (to adopt Harvey's term) rather than an agent engaged in reliable knowledge production. Noam Chomsky long ago wrote an incisive critique of the role of intellectuals within the higher education institutions and knowledge producing agencies of Western capitalism. Chomsky's critique is just as relevant when applied to what neoliberalism calls the 'cultural industries'. Certainly, looking at the abject mercantilist accommodation that Western artists, and these days not just Western ones, grant the Corporate Tyranny, Chomsky's essay has had little, if any, effect counseling art school teachers and art students that they should be cautious in their quest for a career at any cost. This may be through lack of exposure and opportunity of access to this kind of essay as much as anything.

It is pretty certain that in many British art schools Chomsky's essay is on no reading list. But apparently Michel Foucault on the subject of power and propaganda is a much more user-friendly output to the current postmodernist neoliberal sheen of artist-cum-cultural commentator careerism. But the art school rendering of Foucault is frequently little more than an opportunist caricature. [59] Many of the writings of French Theory of the last half of the twentieth century have been near obligatory items on art school/ cultural studies reading lists. Why is this? Entirely predictably, the capitalists, the party of Wall Street, the City of London, and all the other aggregates making up the Corporate Tyranny, unsurprisingly, view Chomsky's work as propaganda, straight-up, no-nonsense anti-capitalist propaganda. Again, predictably, they may claim it is not knowledge-based at all. But privately they may know, even fear, that Chomsky's observations and analyses are not easily disproved.

Since Chomsky has himself addressed this accusation with trenchant clarity over many years I do not consider I have any obligation here to argue the point, apart from recommending reading Chomsky's work. Except to say, not only do I regard Chomsky's more overtly political writings as solid knowledge-gathering critiques of capitalism but also his work on language acquisition amongst the most solidly scientific knowledge-based critiques of behaviourist authoritarianism. Much of his work is especially a critique of US capitalism, not unexpectedly, since Chomsky is from Philadelphia and emerged from an erudite American Jewish culture and works at MIT. Perhaps the vast proportion, if not all, of Western art works enjoy an intimate and entangled link to the mediating instruments of Western capitalism - the institutional arrangements of private property and the market. If any one had any doubts about this then Damien Hirst's auction caper at Sotheby's in London in 2008 should dispel them - that is, if the propaganda arguing that art transcends such issues was not so effective. Both Minimalist and so-called conceptual art have been as accommodating to the Corporate Tyranny as any other sector of art practice. [60] So a next question to steer the remarks back to a sixties historical situation of Art & Language teaching in Coventry, which is the intended fulcrum of this section of remarks on Coventry; how accommodating to corporate overtures into avant-garde practice were Art & Language in their founding sojourn at Coventry in 1966-71?

In UK art education in the period 1966-71, explicit corporate sponsorship of the alleged avant-garde was much less

than it is today. So perhaps the above question should be reframed as a hypothesis, something like the following. If there had been in 1966-71 something approaching the extent of corporate sponsorship absorbing and controlling the transmission in art schools of the AGMOAS that there is now, then how accommodating to such a situation would Art & Language have been during their founding sojourn in Coventry? First, some historical distinctions have to be drawn. During most of this time Art & Language remained centred in the British art education system. In America by this time, the late sixties, corporate sponsorship and control of the AGMOAS was traditionally established and already in a dominating position; although the AGMOAS model being most widely corporately transmitted was something like a 1912 Duchamp type model. Working within UK art education the position past the AGMOAS model that Art & Language were attempting to articulate was one critical of what I am calling the 1912 model. This meant that Art & Language faced not only opposition in art schools still wedded to more traditional models of the artistic subject, but also those art schools attached to the then modernist models of the avant-garde; and this attachment to such versions of the avant-garde model was achieved not least via the impact of American art magazines on British art school culture. As I have mentioned already, in the UK at least the influence of a solid rump of a state public sector and civic systems was still active in the ROP and ROD of art practice. One of the main conduits of this system was the education system, not least of which, was the higher education system, a part of which was, obviously, the art education system.

As I have noted earlier, the basis upon which the entire UK state education system was based at that time was a compound of social welfarism and Keynesian economics. The art school education, and for that matter their entire school education, of all four of the founders of Art & Language took place in this state system. As I have just stated, the rump of this system was still intact in 1966-71. Corporate intrusion into and formulation of cultural patterns was certainly less visible then, presumably, not least, because there was less of it. There was more resistance in art practice itself to corporate intrusion, since the wider culture was still primarily formed by the mixture of social welfarism and Keynesian economics and art production was less dependent on corporate aid. Consequently, the Art Theory course at Coventry took place within this wider national system. That the course should be liquidated

by apparatchiks of this state system is not without its ironies, of which more below. Through 1970-71, Art & Language became less UK education centred and more dualist divided between the UK education system and the New York art world. But I should not argue here that the UK was a kind of completely corporate-free zone, far from it. Mandarins in the City of London have been and are as enthusiastic promoters of the privatization of public services, including the AGMOAS, as is the Party of Wall Street. However, Art & Language in 1969, in respect of public exposure of their work, still had few UK connections and outlets but growing New York connections. These connections, which I think did not help the UK education centred practice to stay thus centred, were largely initially instigated by myself and Michael Baldwin. Whether the widening of the focus away from the Coventry centre was a good or not so good thing, I leave here as a moot point. I had made trips to New York in 1967 and again in 1969. Of the four founding members of Art & Language, Michael and myself were the more pushy in respect of wishing to gain exposure for the work in the art market. And connection with New York seemed desirable to Michael and myself, not only since, in 1967, we could not gain much, if any, exposure in the UK for the work, but just as importantly, because the artists who interested us were, almost without exception, American. These were artists who seemed, in one way or another, to challenge the standard 1912 avant-garde model. [61] It should be noted here that David Bainbridge was never entirely comfortable with exposing the work in this way, especially the growing connection to the New York art market. The web of exposure and consumption that emerged and developed fairly quickly for Art & Language work throughout Western Europe, including the UK, in 1969-72, emanated from connections we had made in New York since 1967. [62] During the period 1970-71, Art & Language had quite a few shows in Europe and participated in some group shows in New York. We could never persuade David Bainbridge to attend any of them. Had my trips to New York in 1967 and 1969 not taken place I do not know whether Art & Language work would have developed any differently, or even, I suppose, if Art & Language would have been formed at all. What *is* the case is that the gallery in London that we came to be associated with, Lisson, first contacted Art & Language after hearing about us either in New York or through New York contacts visiting Europe. I remember pretty clearly the initial phone call to me from Nicholas Logsdail. For example, one of the contacts Logsdail stated

having recommended he contact Art & Language was Sol LeWitt. [63]

Over the next year or so a number of European galleries then contacted us, quite a number of these, directly or indirectly, via our growing friendship with Joseph Kosuth. Alongside all this Western 'international' activity, the Art Theory course in Coventry endured and was actively pursued, not least by the three Art & Language members who taught on it: Bainbridge, Baldwin and myself. Michael Baldwin conducted a concentrated seminar programme as one of the main focus points of the course. He was a powerful and impressive teacher. I judge this sustained effort by Baldwin to be the best and most articulate teaching I have come across in my forty years of teaching practice in art schools. David Bainbridge led another of the main focus points of the course. This section was called *Technos*. Bainbridge too was an impressive and powerful teacher. Both Baldwin and Bainbridge, despite, perhaps 'in spite of' would be a better way of putting it, the attractions and distractions of our ventures into the art market, maintained a determined concentration on the course. Correspondingly, and equally, they held a big commitment to its future continuation. The main external output of the Art & Language teaching effort at Coventry in 1969-71 was the magazine *Art-Language*. Whilst the ventures into the international art market were to prove an increasing source of alienation within the group, it was, ironically, as I have noted above, from much nearer the Coventry home that the main immediate enemies of Art & Language and the Art Theory course were to emerge. They worked, ideologically transfixed, within what I have above called the 'rump of a state public sector and civic system'.

These enemies were apparatchiks of both the UK higher education system and the art education system. All were based, sooner or later, in Coventry. Art & Language's Art Theory course had always been protected by Don Foster, the above-mentioned head of Department of Fine Art, and then later jointly with Foster, the more recently appointed Dean of Art & Design, Ernest Hoch. Practically from the start of the Art Theory course in 1969 there had been rumours that the high echelons of the Lanchester Polytechnic into which the art school had been seconded rather than assimilated – the difference between secondment and assimilation was a world – were uneasy with the content of the course. The absorption of the old Coventry School of Art into the Lanchester Polytechnic exactly coincided with the inception of the Art Theory course. Hoch

resigned in 1971. His treatment at the Lanchester Polytechnic was a disgraceful piece of bullying and intimidation by the then director, Alan Richmond and his supine acolytes. One of the most abject and self-serving of whom was Maurice Fosse, after whom I now see a building at Coventry University is named – yet another ironic detail, an architectural one this time. The irony strikes home to me since I had the nauseating experience of witnessing Fosse's fawning behaviour in quite a number of meetings I had the misfortune to have to attend – several times the assembled personnel summoned to these meetings had to listen to the then Director (Sir Alan Richmond) broadcast to the gathered company that he was not a graduate of the academy but a graduate of 'the university of life'. Fosse, as I recall, appeared to be a particularly sycophantic and enthusiastic fan of Richmond's stock of world-shattering one-liners and one of the leading advocates for the dismantling of the Art Theory course. I bet no one in the Project or University could put together this ironic piece of 'conceptual art' history, either through ignorance of it or would not through not wishing to have the subject aired, let alone informing Jochen Gerz of this piece of 'honorary' gerrymandering. Or, consequently, that in lending his name and work to the Coventry Phoenix Project he was aligning himself to a history of bigotry against one of the early efforts to construct so-called conceptual art! Whether or not, if Gerz had been informed of such historical details, it would have made any difference to his acceptance of the commissions is a moot point.

Days before he left Coventry in 1971 Ernest Hoch called me personally into his office and told me that his health had deteriorated as a result of his treatment at Coventry. I did not doubt it, he sounded and looked in poor shape at that point. He moved to Reading University, where, happily, I hear, he had much more productive and rewarding time, staying until he retired. Thus, having removed Hoch, the next move was to replace him with a Dean who would liquidate the Art Theory course and also, more or less simultaneously, remove Don Foster. Foster, by that time, as the Lanchester Polytechnic grandees increasingly cast their bigoted and spiteful eye over the Art Theory course was relatively easy prey. The Polytechnic apparatchiks had little time for sixties art school culture, let alone work that was then widely considered outrageous (whether now historically 'decisive' or not, as our correspondent claims in the quote with which I opened these remarks) in the wider art school world. [64] Foster's catalogue of typical sixties art school

'indiscretions', not least his drinking, was music to the Lanchester grandees' self-righteous and supercilious ears. Once having lined up suitable witnesses and documents they made short work of removing Foster. [65] The new Dean appointed was Robin Plummer. On hearing of his appointment one thing I noted wryly, was that Plummer was moving to Coventry from Wolverhampton School of Art, where Eric Rimmington was Head of Painting. In view of the purge of Art & Language that Plummer conducted immediately on his appointment, I have often wondered if Plummer's inevitable contact with Rimmington at Wolverhampton, in the years preceding his move to Coventry, informed at all his actions against Art & Language. Not that Plummer lacked, as I have noted already, enthusiastic cheerleaders within the upper echelons of the Lanchester Polytechnic directorate. As the three of us, Bainbridge, Baldwin and myself, strongly suspected then, and which was confirmed to me personally several years later by three informants, high on the points which recommended Plummer to the Lanchester grandees, was that he would be a willing axe-man of the Art Theory course. I heard later, that this was one of the explicit discussions/instructions of his interview for the post of Dean – that he rid the School of Art & Design, and especially the Lanchester Polytechnic hierarchy, of the Art Theory course and Art & Language. [66] He certainly succeeded. Plummer's very first move was to sack David Bainbridge and Michael Baldwin. Both were part-time appointments and had no tenure. He could not sack me because I was a full-time appointment and had tenure. But had he been able to he undoubtedly would have done. I resigned in 1973.

Plummer's brief, and he tried to accomplish it with marked relish, was to get rid of Art & Language. Plummer was a worthy forerunner of the Thatcherite managers who were inserted throughout education a decade or so later and are still more evident throughout education today, although they cannot now, since the crash of 2008, be quite as confident in their managerial culture as they were prior to this date. [67] I found myself in a predicament concerning the Art Theory course. Bainbridge advised I stayed with it, at least, until the students who had applied for and been accepted on the course graduated in 1972 and 1973. Baldwin thought I should have resigned there and then. I chose to take Bainbridge's advice. As I have remarked already, I resigned from the course and the job in 1973, and I had made up my mind to do this by the late summer of 1971. The problem was, how to get through the two years until

the summer of 1973. As I had a serious contempt for Plummer and considered him a bully, I did not view the passage of the following two years as anything other than a trial. One main strategy I devised in attempting to deal with Plummer over the next two years was one of lying whenever I thought it necessary. Between 1971 and 1973 I had several interviews with Plummer, a few of these meetings were group meetings along with other members of staff, but several were on a one-to-one basis. From these meetings I judged that Plummer's notion of the artist was a kind of standard one of the time - the artist as a kind of entrepreneur, but the romantic possessive individualist entrepreneur. It was quite few years later when I first heard about Rockefeller's description of Abstract Expressionist painting as 'free enterprise painting' – but retrospectively it fitted pretty well with what I judged to be Plummer's outlook in 1971. Plummer, in 1971, described the students who had enrolled on the Art Theory course as having 'been sold a pup'. When I confronted him about this, he told me that what we (the protagonists of the Art Theory course) were encouraging the students to produce (texts are what he had in mind) did not conform to what was, in fact, Plummer's interpretation of the Diploma in Art & Design requirements (DipAD, as it was called colloquially) – too right! In having to listen to Plummer, the Art & Language view of the AGMOAS collided full-on with a bullying representative of a very narrow interpretation of the Diploma in Art & Design, which august body was largely peopled by figures whose idea of advanced Modernism, if they had one, was Henry Moore. Since it was fairly easy to see that 'object' versus 'text' was the *summa* of Plummer's outlook, I then asked him about the *Technos* component of the Art Theory course, which did produce something that might be termed 'object', and might easily be interpreted as conforming to even Plummer's static mid-twentieth century ontology: Plummer flannelled on this particular exchange. His ontology was as demonstratively crude as his axe-man tactics – for David Bainbridge had been dismissed as well as Michael Baldwin, and David Bainbridge, even at the height of 'hysteria against text' harangue, had sustained a practice that certainly produced objects; perhaps not quite the 'objects' Plummer had in mind, which (surprise, surprise!) was a range of traditional objects that could be easily recognized as 'paintings' and 'sculptures'. Michael Baldwin and myself were the protagonists who required 'texts' of the students. David Bainbridge fully supported this part of the course, and often sat in on the seminars Michael and myself conducted, and was as

firmly committed to the 'text as art' programme as were Michael and myself, and David's *Technos* section of the Art Theory course also admitted textual production. The basic presupposition on which the Art Theory course rested was that throughout the sixties art practice had become more complex and expanded *vis*-à-*vis* the kinds of objects through which the practice developed.

The level of Plummer's ontological spiteful dogma demonstrated that, in respect of the then current state of art practice, the epistemology he embraced, had a very limited range. What Bainbridge's dismissal confirmed was that Plummer required not only the liquidation of the Art Theory course, but that his main requirement was, wherever possible, the dismissal of Art & Language, and any part-time teachers who he saw as supporting their programme and exchange. [68] Plummer's prejudices were transparent. Full-time appointments such as myself he could not dismiss, but as I have already stated, part-time teachers were much softer targets for the exercise and outbursts of his prejudices, and those of the Lanchester grandees who he represented. It should not be passed over either here that no members of either the other full-time or part-time staff teaching in the Fine Art Department at Coventry came out of this situation as models of fraternal solidarity with Art & Language. But having noted this, it was ironic that the liquidators of the Art Theory course and the Art & Language contribution to it, should be ideologues and administrators who had thrived and risen within the higher education system state apparatus resting upon the mix of Keynesian economics and social welfare-ism that Art & Language were committed to defend and expand, and which had been a significant contributor to their outlook. The double irony happened thirty years later when so-called 'conceptual art' became a darling promotion of urban regeneration in a Blairite-cum-Thatcherite pick n' mix Coventry. By that time 'conceptual art' productions as a vehicle of militant socialist aspiration was clearly absolutely hopeless.

3. Leeds:

Facing out the full Thatcherite agenda

I was appointed to the post of Lecturer in Fine Art in the Department of Art History and Fine Art at Leeds University in June 1977. I took up this appointment in October of that year. As it turned out, 1977-80 were to be the last three years in which the post-war consensus of Keynesian economics and social welfare-ism were to have any significant hold on Western economies. Serious erosion of this kind of civil society was already starting to take place after just one year of Margaret Thatcher's administration. I taught in this full-time post at Leeds until 2002, when I retired. From 1992 until I retired, my status was upgraded and my title became Reader in the Rhetorics and Practices of Fine Art. The title itself, invented by myself, I took as a kind of ironic strategy, since I viewed it as mimicking what I considered to be the inflated academic rhetoric of the then Fine Art forum of academically vainglorious grand titles as art schools passed from what they saw as the polytechnic lower slopes to the full university mountain peaks. Professors of Fine Art rapidly became par for the course [69]. After 2002, I then taught on a post-graduate course on a part-time appointment until 2005. Thus, my teaching period at Leeds lasted 28 years, by far the longest stay I had at any academic institution. Although the Fine Art Department at Leeds could not altogether avoid the demands of the emerging Thatcherite management in higher education, my job at Leeds was a good one, on a day-to-day basis far the best teaching post I had. It had three periods of sustained very rewarding student exchange - 1977-81, 1987-91, and 1994-98 - but there was rarely a year when there was not a rewarding exchange with a number of students.

The period between leaving Coventry in 1973 until I started at Leeds in 1977 was divided into two periods of practice. From 1973 until April 1975 I was a 'full-time career artist', although I was uneasy about such a status, since, as I have stated already, by 1969 when Michael Baldwin and myself wrote an article titled 'Art Teaching' in the magazine *Art-Language* I was pretty well convinced of my earlier view that teaching was at the centre of the practice, not least, I should mention, by Michael's role in conducting

exchange and seminars in the Art Theory course. Nevertheless, the two years of attempting to sustain some kind of practice in the terminally depleted remnant of the Art Theory course at Coventry had wearied me of teaching. Thus, the period 1973-75 was the only period in which I occupied the status of 'career artist'. [70] In fact, that period of nearly two years was prominently occupied by the event of leaving Art & Language and attempting to form the start of a further ongoing practice. In April 1975, I was appointed as Gulbenkian Artist-in-Residence in Video (the first rather over-inflated title I found myself the bearer of) at Sidney Stringer School, a city centre school in Coventry, and at that time something of a flagship school for the City of Coventry Education Department. I have written a little about this event elsewhere and do not intend to say any more about it here. My main concern here is to try to impart my view linking the trajectory of teaching at Leeds for so many years to that of the reflections of social, and changing, aspects of the city of Leeds itself as the framing urban environment in which my teaching took place in the period 1977-2005; and, in doing this, to use what I call Leeds' regeneration programme as yet another city environment bearing witness to the delusions of the Thatcher-Blair political continuum.

To start, and a significant event stacked against my theory that students were inevitably *more* interesting than staff, I had as rewarding an exchange as any exchange I had with any group of students in my entire stay at Leeds, and instrumental in my appointment there in 1977, was the exchange I had with the then Professor, T. J. Clark. But Clark was very much the exception not the rule. He left Leeds in 1979 to take up a place at Princeton Centre for Advanced Studies. In Leeds a kind of semi-official line doing the rounds was that Clark would stay a year in Princeton and return to Leeds, but as he had intimated, at least to me, before he left, he may, after the year in Princeton, be offered an academic post in the US, which would entail him leaving Leeds. This is what happened. From Princeton he moved to Harvard to, at least as I understood the situation then, a full-time appointment. He never returned to Leeds. For me this was a serious loss personally, not to mention the loss I thought his departure marked to the department. Teaching at Birmingham, I found the head of the area in which I worked, Eric Rimmington, who decided the future of the studio situation, simply a blockage, a foul-up to any intuitions, let alone any plans, I had concerning gaining a practice which put critique in the driving seat of

teaching. For Rimmington the art teacher was definitely subservient to the artist. Rimmington was an art fan with, as I have remarked already, a conservative and proprietary twentieth century view of what constituted the avant-garde art object, the 1912 Duchampian model – the last thing I required at that time, positioned as I was, and saw myself as such, firmly imbedded in the interregnum between the established view of the art object as a concrete in the world three-dimensional object and the first inklings that practice could, so to speak, be written out. Thus, at Birmingham, in the Research Workshops there never was any defence of my views from above, not least because I suspect I was considered to be too much of a young Turk-cum-charlatan to have my views acknowledged. By the time I was sacked I had come to expect none.

Teaching at Coventry offered richer prospects, and especially for the two years, 1969-71, such prospects were realized and rewardingly implemented. Don Foster, the head of department, was the critical administrative fulcrum and, at least in the meetings of the higher echelons of the institution, the symbolic presence on which the continuation of the Art Theory course depended. He became too vulnerable to the incoming change to the old art school culture from the preposterous ignorance on matters of art practice manifest in the higher echelons of the new Polytechnic administrative culture to which Fine Art practice, and especially the Art Theory course, found itself answerable. The newly acquired art school culture, which they had inherited, was in general a society of which the Polytechnic managers were suspicious. And the powers that were at that time, finding they would have to deal with the assimilation of the incoming art school, had few, if any, cognitive resources, through which they could evaluate the Art & Language positioning of teaching from within the fluid position of viewing art practice as an interregnum which to much of the conventional art world and art school culture appeared alien and outrageous. All this was absolutely inimical to these educationally tight-arsed bosses. As a result of Foster's dismissal the Art Theory course lost its defence from above. Had Clark , for example, been head of department at Coventry I suspect the Art Theory course would have got a ten-year run with a serious expectancy it would have been allowed to develop and perhaps render itself far beyond what it was when it was so brutally terminated in 1971. At Leeds, Clark was a full professor, with considerable administrative autonomy, and a 'boss' with intellectual power, a commitment to a notion of expanded practice, and, best of

all for me, an intellectual comrade who elevated critique of art and artists way above celebration of art and artists, to what I think is its proper place, as the driver of practice. After the disappointments of 1971, and the struggles and sometimes arid environment in which I found myself (I have little doubt now that much of this was due to my own shortcomings) between 1973-77, Clark was, in those two years we were at Leeds together, 1977-79, a pleasure to work with. Since that time I have followed his work with as much determination as I could from a distance, and with expectancy of always learning something contributing to my view of practice. The memory of the event of Clark's departure from Leeds in 1979 has also remained as a kind of spectre of what might have been had he stayed. In respect of the exchange with him at Leeds he seemed to me to never put the timbre, and precariousness, of that 1977-1979 contact better than in the following passage, which he wrote in 2009:

"Maybe just putting a *post-* on the front of Modernism is inadequate, but would I not agree that modernity has been reconfigured in the last thirty or forty years? Reconfigured to the point of becoming some thing else …

And is not that part of reconfiguration a new form of visually spreading like a virus through the culture at large – a new machinery of visualization, a tipping of the social balance from a previous regime of the word to a present regime of the image? Surely that circumstance offers visual *art* a special opportunity? Is it not uniquely placed to enter into a dialogue with what has now emerged as the central means of production in a newly imagined life? Or will what looks to be a unique opportunity turn out to be exactly the same problem? Will the closeness of visual art to the present instrumentation of power -- the current means of production of subjects – turn out to be not closeness but identity? Is not visual art in the process of becoming simply and irrevocably *part* of the apparatus of image-life production? Is not this the real sense of the much-noticed fact (a flip through the pages of *Artforum* or *Parkett* confirms the fact, relentlessly, monotonously) that the one of demarcation between visual art and the fashion industry, for example, simply does not exist any longer? Not only does it not exist, but art glories in its non-existence. The non-existence is one of art's great present themes.

Do not mistake me here, I do not intend to posit a Modernism, in contrast to the present situation, that stood at a safe critical distance from the image-regimes that truly had power in the culture at large. Modernism always stood in close, dangerous proximity to the realm of appearances it fed on." [71]

To me, in this passage, Clark furnishes a strongly characterized

outline of the absorption of the AGMOAS by the Corporate Tyranny. When he states, through the device of what appears to be a rhetorical question, 'Will the closeness of visual art to the present instrumentation of power – the current means of production of subjects – turn out to be not closeness but identity?', he seems to me to be suggesting something like I am arguing in claiming the AGMOAS - where the last S in the acronym standing for subject I take to be an example of Clark's, 'the current means of production of subjects' - to have been absorbed by the Corporate Tyranny. Which latter, I am also arguing, is at the present political juncture, the primary instrument of power in all Western Societies. But from 1979, Leeds pedagogy was, so to write, *Clarkless*, and, again in my view, probably quite a bit the worse for it. I stayed at Leeds for 28 years, and during that whole period there was an intermittent but nevertheless persistent background tinge of regret and from time to time this reflection would emerge in poignant form. However, the personal exchange I had with Clark was to be politically eclipsed and overtaken by wider seismic social shifts during my time teaching at Leeds in the summer of 1979. The summer of that year was not only to be marked by Clark's departure but by a wide-ranging national event. His departure from Leeds was coincidentally conjoined with another event. Clark left Leeds in June, just a month or so after Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister as a result of the Conservative election victory on May 3rd, 1979. The demise of the post-war economy, resting, as I have noted earlier, founded upon a mix of Keynesian economics and social welfare-ism, was assured from the moment of Margaret Thatcher's emplacement as Prime Minister. I had a foreboding about Margaret Thatcher from day one of her administration. Over the next three decades the city centre of Leeds was to become a visible ornament of the initial Thatcher-Reagan political amalgam, followed and ramified by the Blairite reinforcement and expansion of the Thatcherite agenda; an agenda promoting neo-liberalist dogma and the increasing deregulation of financial markets. And, as it turned out, for the next twenty five years Leeds city centre was the environment I was to either drive or walk through in order to reach my teaching site in the University, right until my retirement from teaching at Leeds University in 2005.

This journey through the city, most weeks of each year for over a quarter of a century, was to be a fairly accurate gauge of the demolishing of the post-war urban environment by the Thatcher-cum-Blair political continuum and the environment's conversion,

again by the Thatcher-cum-Blair continuum, into the trading floor towers and consumer lounges (a number of which were, throughout the nineties, not without a certain historical irony as it transpired in 2008, converted bank premises) constituting the pick n' mix architectural motifs and logo flags of neo-liberalism. In a quarter of a century Leeds city centre became itself a kind of giant advertisement for neo-liberal advertising, an advertisement consumed by a credit-driven consumership – a built environment outrider (or should it be inrider?) of the enveloping process of global neo-liberalist bling. Across the national UK urban arena such developments were, and are, architectural representations of the zealous transfer of power, under the Thatcher-Blair appointed (not elected) mandarins, from manufacturing to finance and service industries, aka the transfer of public services to private finance. Not only was Margaret Thatcher the heraldic concubine of the Corporate Tyranny's ascendancy in Britain, but also, along with Ronald Reagan, she was a leading paramour of its global expansion. Blair's administrations, like the first Bush's and Clinton's, made deregulating whoopee after the Thatcher/Reagan wage-gap widening fest. Succeeding Thatcher/Reagan, the Bush into Clinton administrations deregulating caper developed a wage-gap into a wage-gape.

During the 25 years and more I taught at Leeds University, Leeds' increasingly finance-cum-finance-knowledge-industry-centred economy became increasingly displayed in the ensemble of architectural motifs of the aesthetics of trading floors, insurance lounges and consumer salons. This aesthetic is one of the characteristics of the development of the urban environment under the financial dictates of the Thatcherite and New Labour administrations. Before 1992, I drove to Leeds by car; from 1992, I travelled to the city by rail. Whilst both kinds of entrance gave some idea of the altering and emerging architectural patterns of the city, the entrance by rail offered the more panoramic view, to say nothing of the gain in concentration from the train seat which, obviously, required no focus on the contingencies of Leeds' road traffic. It should be noted too, I was not infrequently offered this panoramic view for sustained periods as Richard Branson's Cross Country service stood at signal delays just outside Leeds City Station. [72] Such opportunities to study the Leeds city skyline had a particular kind of bitter reward in respect of observing the growth of what can be called the emergence of 'knowledge-industry' architecture; one of the many signs of the Thatcher-Reagan privatizing mania and Blairite PPI initiatives. And,

not incidentally, these journeys amounted to a veritable index of the built environment representations of the steady approach to a state of indenture with which the successive Thatcher-Major-Blair administrations have regaled the mushrooming student population throughout England and Wales.

In December 2010 Owen Hatherley in an article in *The Guardian* titled, 'Why we should care about the Quill', wrote the following:

"During the Blair-era building boom, student housing usually took up the slack in less affluent cities. In Manchester and London tall student towers were crowded out by far more lucrative competitors, but in Sheffield, Leeds and Liverpool they were frequently the most prominent new monuments – and the most visible proof of the privatization of education. Developers emerged with typically aspirational names such as *Unite*, *Liberty Living* and *Derwent Living*, solely catering to students and soon replacing the earlier subsidized college-run halls of residence with junior yuppidromes." [73]

A good deal of this 'yuppiedrome' student housing in Leeds was completed after I left Leeds University in 2005. But the mark of this property-developer beast were to be seen everywhere in the city centre by the early years of this century. I last went back to Leeds in 2009, and by that time Bridgewater Place had been completed nearly two years before. It is not student accommodation (more on this, to follow), but it is, apparently, the tallest building in Yorkshire (excluding the Emley Moor mast). Bridgewater Place has thirty-two storeys, of which two are used for car parking, ten for offices, and twenty for residential use. There is car parking for four hundred cars and two hundred flats. Office tenants have included Ernst and Young, Eversheds (law firm), BDO (Binder, Dicke Otto & Co – main office in Brussells, an accountancy firm), Stoy Hayward (a company of BDO), DWF LLP (international law firm) and a number of large retail firms including Tesco, Starbucks, Philpotts, and Casa Mia. The architect of Bridgewater Place is Aeneas, the developer was K. W. Linfoot, and the main contractor Bovis Lend Lease. As a standing monument to the super-lucrative era for finance packaging and property development from the 1990s until 2008, Bridgewater Place singularly punctuates the Leeds city skyline. And whilst the various towers spread across the Leeds city skyline, both stacked trading floors and student housing versions, furnish the dominant configuration, then it is also worth gaining a closer view of some of the detailed 'aesthetic' motifs of Bridgewater House as a means

of observing the relation between the Corporate Tyranny and the AGMOAS. In the atrium of Bridgewater Place is a 17.5 metre column sculpture called 'Hello Friends', by artists Bryan and Laura Davies. Mention of the latter pair focuses up the networking conduits of a cabal of happy aesthetic foresters named *Grizedale Arts*. To follow is a quote from a text written by *Grizedale Arts* illuminati Adam Sutherland and Alastair Hudson, their eulogy to Bryan and Laura Davies oeuvre is a sight for critique-filled sore eyes – take a peep!

"Defined as 'healthy successful people' and the 'art equivalent of Friends' by Grizedale directors Adam Sutherland and Alastair Hudson, the pair's work contains the message that happy fun loving people can transform the world around them for the better, challenging a contemporary social stereotype that cynicism and a removed critique are credible."

Hello Friends! What price Greenberg's 'umbilical cord of gold' now? And with the foregoing remarks held in focus, when the social décor inserted into the trading floors and urban *chique* of the local arena of Leeds city centre built environment are pinpointed, then they confirm the whole environment as a symptom of the act of alliance between corporate finance and property development, on the one hand, and the increased business management of the art world, on the other.

Thus, if the presence of the Davies' work, 'Hello Friends', *circa* 2008, is held out against the defining role T. J. Clark, as Professor at Leeds University in 1979, assigned to critique as distinct from celebration in fine art practice, then the path of the Corporate Tyranny's increasing enclosure of the AGMOAS over the last thirty or more years is, in this comparison, clearly traced out. [74] Set against the business hegemony of Leeds city centre, the expanding prominence of the Business School in University academic display and the increasing 'cultural industry' tendency, which was to lead to such blissful aesthetic confections as the Davies' 'Hello Friends', I increasingly saw my Tuesday seminar as an island of near-last-gasp socialist aspiration. Our friends the public artists, 'challenging' and 'radical' as they no doubt pride themselves to be, find that their works occupying the piazzas and atriums of corporate development are in corporate bed with not only happy folk but folk glowing with health. Not a sign of the old Parisian tuberculosis or scabies or sexually transmitted diseases in this environment! As for, say, Africa or the Gaza Strip, maybe our friendly public artists will eventually put

all that to rights too with a few Hello Friends–like columns. What more could a 'radical' and 'challenging' artist want? Nevertheless *Grizedale Arts*, despite their view that critique is equivalent to cynicism, are not above mentioning in their publicity their projects with artists who themselves have often claimed their work to have at least a critical component, Mark Wallinger and Jeremy Deller for two. Such alliances probably say as much about the artists as they do *Grizedale Arts*. And, *Grizedale Arts* is also not above mentioning that self-acclaimed driver of 'challenge' and 'radicalism', the healthy and glowing Turner Prize as a means of decorating their CV. Also, God only knows what a 'removed' critique is! At its most virulent ruling class end the Corporate Tyranny boasts Halliburton and Murdoch, at its most brazen 'above-all-serve-the-rich' foot soldier end it boasts happy and healthy artists who apparently, following the *Grizedale Arts* bizarre logic, sport an 'unremoved' critique, whatever it may be? If their writing here is characteristic, then in the *Grizedale Arts* world it appears critique is not the only thing that has been removed. There is also in the world of *Grizedale Arts* the not unusual art world mix of opportunism and contradiction – much 'heavier' artists than the Davies' find themselves laden with, and apparently gladly embrace, the mix. It is the scent of career that pulls them on.

At any rate, a public art work of Laura and Bryan Davies seems entirely appropriate for both the local Leeds finance-motif charged city skyline and the national Blairite programme of alleged urban regeneration. In Leeds itself the earliest new regeneration monument to significantly imprint itself in my twenty-seven year weekly survey of Leeds city centre, seven years before Blair came to power, was the West Yorkshire Playhouse, which opened in 1990. It is built on the site of the old Quarry Hill Flats, which were opened in 1938. They were demolished in 1978 (one of my first series of memorable images in taking up the post at Leeds University in 1977, was, periodically, watching the progress of this demolition). [75] Since, with the completion of the West Yorkshire Playhouse, the *fait accompli* amounted to the fact that Quarry Hill Flats were social housing replaced by what was to become a monument forerunner of the 'industry' that, in Blair's term in office, was known as the 'cultural industries'. It was sign of things to come, not just in Leeds but in UK city 'regeneration' programmes in general. It is recorded that in 2007 the West Yorkshire Playhouse received an Arts Council of England grant of over a million pounds, and a Leeds City Council grant of £820,000, and other grants from

West Yorkshire and Leeds Education Authority. And it is noted, in passing, that the theatre encourages corporate sponsorship. The second notable monument to emerge, also built on the Quarry Hill site, was Quarry House, opened in 1993, the giant Department of Health/Department for Work and Pensions building. The expansion of the functions of this institution are currently ongoing, and not without controversy. Quarry House found itself being nominated as the venue to house the central administration for the then Coalition government's 2012 NHS reforms. It is curiously appropriate. The building is the most formidably overbearing structure in the whole of Leeds; it has a family resemblance to the SIS building (MI6 Building) on the Albert Embankment besides Vauxhall Bridge in London. It is both custodian and surveyor of the Leeds City centre built environment. Quarry House is typical of the dogged but brazen surveillance culture of the Thatcher administrations. Quarry House is a hilltop shades-of-Ceaucescu-like bunker exuding the presence of an introverted bureaucracy. There is anyway at least a faint whiff of a paradox about the notion of an introverted functioning apparatus being projected outward, which perhaps is suggestive of the opaque procedures of the tax and pension regulative authorities.

Quarry House betokens both an attempt to survey into the world outside and, equally, it is also positively fortified against intrusion by any outside agency whatsoever. The building is an architectural realization of the Thatcherite dream of petty bourgeois administration paranoid about its security and omnipotence - the very image of a domestic paranoia realized as an urban security function. At Quarry House any relation to modern art is much more tenuous than in the decorated atriums of sites of the later Bridgewater Place and the stacked student battery-houses and financial neo-boosterist financial towers characteristic of the later part of Leeds' love of 'regeneration'. If I did not know better, I would have thought that Quarry House is a decorated nostalgic evocation of Stalinist authoritarianism, the Thatcherite version of Social Realist architecture - Finance-Capitalist Realist architecture. Although there are endless signs of gentrification throughout central Leeds, Quarry House is not so much a 'beachhead for gentrification' – the phrase is Mike Davis' – as an occupation zone for auditing and surveying a perceived satanic other. [76] The 'beachhead for gentrification' in Leeds city centre is to be found elsewhere, at Clarence Dock, noting also that the appearance of Harvey Nichols is a prominent corporate city-centre outrider of the expansion of gentrification. However, it

did not require the acquisition and benefit of hindsight to discern in the image of structures such as Quarry House a paranoiac accounting and surveillance machine in place to regulate the increasing pension-dependent classes nor to take it as a sign predicting a crash of the Thatcher-Blair luxury-worship and consumership that would bring a halt to the fantasies generated by a thirty year whipped-up fervour around the concept of a 'property-owning democracy' and a deregulated City of London. And it is surely obvious by now in the global citadels of Capital that property owning is no index by which to measure the egalitarian character of a given society. To the contrary, the regeneration programmes in UK cities show property owning to be a visible architectural representation of the wage-gape society. And equally depressing, the seeming public *double entendre* of, on the one hand, an apathy prepared to tolerate it and, on the other, a consumer addiction prepared to welcome it and of such magnitude and addictive character that this has constituted a flagrant campaign of thirty-year Capitalist anti-egalitarian mischief.

As the skyline in Leeds accumulated throughout the first ten years of the twenty-first century another thriving property-market industry of urban development became increasingly visible in that skyline – that of student housing. In Leeds the following projects are listed only because they are amongst the tallest student enclosures: Mill Street Student Accommodation, 2005 (architect: Carey Jones Architects Ltd.); Opal Tower, 2008 (architect: Morrison Design); and, Sky Plaza, 2009 (architect: Carey Jones Architects Ltd.). These are battery student developments to deal with mass higher education expansion, but, typically, a higher education system increasingly privately and corporately funded. Thus, such stacked towers are visible representations of the mounting contempt for education as a public service – and the deterioration of this service and hard-fought right into a consumer item. All this in proportion to how far higher education, as one of the public services, has become increasingly managed by Thatcherite privatization and outsourcing zealots, of which New Labour were perhaps the most zealous, where education is not so much provided but rather retailed out to progressively indentured client-consumers. Sky Plaza tower is a kind of focus point of a gated heavily defined enclosure. It is developed and managed by Unite Group plc., a major room supplier to the expanding student body count of the knowledge industry. Unite Group plc. is one of the most advertised corporate services running the body life patterns of the customers of the higher education system. Like many buildings

comprising student stacks, Sky Plaza has small windows – perhaps a visual safety catch for neurotic parents. It is rumoured that, somewhere in early Thatcherite commercial transactions undertaken to plan ongoing higher education accommodation supply, the model for this genre of student accommodation is a Swedish prison blueprint. [77] Such student battery breeding houses as Sky Plaza are dubiously advertised as one of the 'benefits' of the so-called Blairite boom. In respect of the particular Leeds skyline these are the towers of the alleged New Economy. After the crash of 2008 they begin to look suspiciously like visual representatives of a very old and familiar economy. Whether I liked it or not, because I worked in Leeds city centre for over a quarter of a century, and which during the latter dozen or so years entailed a walk through the city centre from Leeds City rail station to the Leeds University campus adjacent to Woodhouse Moor, the environment comprising this walk became a kind of concentrated magnet for my attention in which I registered the ever expansive white-collar boost-and-boast of the city centre development patterns. After 1997 the walk became a kind of ongoing intensive mapping of New Labour urban development as Thatcherville.

At the end of the incoming walk, railway station to university, and at the start of the outgoing walk, university to railway station, was the Leeds University campus itself. There was a constant weekly reminder of considerable historical contrast here on these twice-a-week journeys. Leeds University campus was built in the nineteen fifties and sixties. It is claimed by some to be unreadable because it is abstract, or at least because of the kind of abstraction it is. [78] I have heard it said, although I have my doubts, that this may be the case to both wide swathes of the UK population, and perhaps more particularly to generations of Leeds University students born since, say, 1974, who have used and traversed it in the ensuing years from the early nineties onwards. However, if it is the case, then it should come as no surprise, since militant fifties/sixties Modernism has had the Thatcherite witch's wand drawn across it, casting the spell-like screen of filmic Kubrickesque demonization and Windsorite contempt over the aspirations of social democracy. In my own case, as I tramped, uphill on the incoming walk and downhill on the outgoing walk, either out of or into the boosterist white-collar privatization insignia of the ever escalating Cappuccino-soddened eighties/nineties Leeds city centre, then in the contrast between sixties campus and boosterist city centre

(the opening out onto the campus (uphill) and closing off from the campus (downhill)) then the campus was to me at least, only too readable. And a final signature writing the imprint of the Corporate Tyranny on UK higher education itself, was when the University aesthetic decoders (whoever they were), either in the face of the intimidating aura of Thatcherite-New Labour spell-casting or in a state of full bewitchment, had the concrete painted mushroom-cum-magnolia. If ever there was a gesture to blank out the concrete roster of nineteen sixties Modernism, this is surely it. Paint it mushroom-cum-magnolia! In any case, as the Charles Windsor cheer leading paranoia heightened across the eighties, the campus became a kind of light-switch, on after 9am, and off after dark until 9 the following morning. [79] The fabric of the Brutalist architecture was never neglected, but its prominent square could be made desolate, a sort of tidy forlornness, as if some hard to locate overseeing committee became more and more frightened of its socialist symbolism and consequently restricted its social functioning. Ironically, as I mapped, by the week and month, the attempts by the University authorities, in the late nineties, to modify its forceful and formidable modernist campus, then the more desperate these attempts appeared. It is apparently not so easy, even with the aid of princely eloquence, to erase its social democratic credentials. But in the attempt on Leeds campus, the tritest versions of the expanded characteristics of modern art were enlisted (a typical outbreak of what might be called Corporate AGMOASism), including at least one attempt fostered by cultural studies eminenti in the cultural studies/art history area, who, one would have thought in view of their self-acclaimed radical conceits, might have known better.

This was a particularly vivid illustration of how easily self-alleged 'radicals' could be set to the task of aiding the Corporate Tyranny to eliminate the aspirations of socialist militancy. In this kind of context, the kudos and promise of career, both artistic and academic, easily overrode any claim to considered historical critique. This particular move to alleviate the sixties Brutalism of the square took the form of the small-scale 'landscape garden' as *objet d'art*. It was dead easy to recognize the serpentine shaped beds of greenery worked into the floor of the main square, a familiar horticultural strung out tittivatory version of the corporate AGMOAS, as a particular sample of the 'artists working with 'nature'' genre - in this case planting plants in an allegedly nature-compatible-artistic way; an equally frequent excrescence of this genre is, say, 'sculptors'

who use natural materials with which to make their work. All this 'gardening' was readily detectable as an attempt to diminish the sixties Brutalism of Chamberlin, Powell & Bon and supinely conform to that mix of Charles Windsor domestic patriotic fantasies of at least a minimum condition of 'greening the Brutalists' where it is, for whatever reason, not possible to demolish the buildings themselves. Aligned to this gardening neurosis and somewhere in the mix is the equally Windsor-inspired petty-bourgeois 'let's have a weekend cottage in the country' sentiment; the sentiment so beloved of that Thatcherite-chattering-classes-property-loving extrusion mix n' match warm-Cotswold-stoneglow-into-restored-Tudor-gabling. And in the case of the Leeds campus, the renovation was rendered more decorative still by the already mentioned Urban-Splashlike-modernist-deodorizing of painting over the so much feared and therefore derided sixties concrete surfaces. This process of overpainting was the ideologically loaded aesthetics of corporate capitalism literally trying to airbrush out the ideologically loaded aesthetics of the representational surfaces of modernist socialist aspiration. As with many civic and institutional actions upon sixties modernist structures, the university showed here the stock reaction, a mixture of disdain, perhaps contempt, and certainly alarm.

The university was caught, rabbit-like, in the glaring headlights of the Thatcherite fantasy-hysteria that denounces as a statist dystopia not only the Nye Bevan high tide of British social democracy, but perhaps more importantly the Bevanite aim to extend it. The couple of hundred steps I took twice weekly, corner to corner, across this increasingly tittivated square, became more and more a marker and reinforcement of a determination to continue to teach a fine art practice that would attempt to face out the Thatcherite legacy. To insist on a practice that would reach out back to the days of sixties social democracy but that might make a contribution, no matter how small, to a future culture that would far surpass the small flimsy egalitarian gains that were made between 1945 and 1979. One of the aims such an ambition for my teaching entailed was, pretty obviously, an attempt counter the anti-egalitarian hyper-capitalist drive of the postmodernist art 'star' system of the last twenty-five years, to challenge the AGMOAS of the Corporate Tyranny. [80] This aim, to me at least, conforms to Brecht's requirement of abolishing bourgeois culture. But sticking to the entire spirit of Brecht's work, this should not be an over-worthy and over-enunciated promotion of critique. Just as a start, such a teaching commitment will aim at an exchange and

critique with some strong notion of pleasure at its centre, hopefully set in alongside a framework of erudite inquiry; and pleasure here includes intellectual pleasure and apposite social critique. And the commitment is an attempt to oppose the indisputable fact that, when all is said and claimed, universities have increasingly become, over the last thirty or so years, more or less uniformly, bourgeois culture transmitting stations quite content, since the mid-eighties, to house zones of permitted dissent that protest bourgeois culture as a serene part of its academic continuity of bourgeois culture. [81] Nonetheless it is also worth remembering that within academe there is a great deal of procrastination and lack of confidence in dealing with the modernist part of the past. Whilst the academy is fearful of militant socialism it is also not sure about Thatcherite right wing restoration. Although in the midst of their procrastination it seems the academic powers-that-be will always bow to the latter out of fear of the former. At the most transparent UK political level Shirley Williams is a conspicuous personal representation of this procrastination, and her party a serpentine collective representation. Indelibly an even more consummate, because more successfully deceptive in gaining popularity in the later nineties and opening years of this century, was New Labour. New Labour did not even need to coalesce with the Tories, they were *them*. The national comforting sigh of relief when New Labour were elected in 1997 was audible. This psychological ascendancy rendered difficult the finding of any kind of space in which a critique, and there were prescient ones, might be heeded. Even after Blair sending the army into Iraq emerged as the first big hole in the charm costume, New Labour still comfortably won the 2005 General Election. This transformation of all UK governing parties into parties supporting and increasingly dependent upon the Corporate Tyranny took place during the period of 1979-2005 near enough coinciding with the span of my teaching at Leeds, 1977-2005. So an anti-Thatcherite stance increasingly became the unavoidable foreground, and, as such, forced itself into this content of my teaching.

To reiterate, the first aim of the teaching was one of attempting to contribute at least something, no matter how small, toward the attainment of a more egalitarian society. Many times I have had art world people of one sort or another telling me, often with marked conviction and nearly as often with an air of 'I know culturally better' that the quality of art practice has nothing to do with the achievement of a more egalitarian society. In plain terms

I think art practice's most important task is to contribute to more equitable sharing of the resources of the world (planet). A critique of art itself as the centre of the motivation for practice seems to be a plausible way of starting to approach this task. Such a teaching-as-practice situation seems to be a worthwhile instrument in raising questions concerning the matter of pointing toward the achievement of a more egalitarian society. This was the overarching *via positiva* of the teaching. From this it thus seems to follow that a further important aim, and this was the overarching *via negativa*, was to furnish a critique of the position and deployment of the artistic subject, more especially the way the position of the avant-garde model (the AGMOAS) has been deployed in the interests of the Corporate Tyranny. The idea is that supplying a *via negativa* might encourage students to think about ways of making a practice that did not copy the established pattern of art world approval and warned students of difficulties and inconsistencies I held to be attached to the AGMOAS. But first, it is a kind of obligation to also point out that holding teaching as part of the centre of the practice itself generates problems. The claim to hold teaching as the centre of the practice is not to claim a rapturous set of applications, which might ignore the pragmatics of teaching in the academy. Celebrating such a claim would press far too close to those tyrannical protocols which treat art practice itself as a celebration of art. As an integral part of the general rite of the celebration of art a celebrative art practice has little, if any cognitive space. The space such a celebrative mode has cleaved to the past forty years reduces more and more to a space manipulated by the courtly and ingratiating career art interpreter medianik. Against this foreground, my claim that teaching has been at the centre of my practice only compounds the problematic of art teaching since what I saw as the interests of students persistently entailed compromise with first the academy and second the rite of celebration so pervasively transmitted by the media. In this sense, teaching within the framework of this alliance of academy and media is something like what Susan Watkins describes as 'the illusion of an endless present'. Despite the likes of an erstwhile forty-year pugnacious Clarkian programme of materialist interpretive heroics, the model of the artistic subject in the wider art world popular view remains a lot like religion, it can be used to serve almost any social purpose. [82] The transmission of what traditionally has been called some such as technical skill, if the twentieth century art teaching record is anything to go by, leaves, at best, social arrangements more

or less untouched, but more characteristically such transmission has reinforced and augmented capitalism. But the transmission too in the art schools of what might very loosely be called cognitive skill, and noting that too frequently in art schools a claim requesting cognitive skill is treated as a derisively inappropriate stipulation, has pressed the AGMOAS closer and closer to the capitalist notion of entrepreneur.

This is where the legacy of early conceptualism (if it can be called a legacy) has been suborned and transmuted into an outright capitalist celebratory ritual. Paradoxically, and both kind of laughably and brutally at the same time, it is only since I have retired from teaching and not had to concern myself with what I saw as the interests of the students that I find I have been able to strip down my production to what I hold to be its ideological primary task – to attack and, if possible, reposition the AGMOAS from its dominating position, and, again if possible, to contribute toward the demolition of the AGMOAS. In respect of the broad cultural front, I am assuming that in respect of the current condition of Western society then Capitalist society and the Corporate Tyranny are more or less synonyms. Hence, the argument goes something like the following: The communities of the West live under the rule of the Corporate Tyranny, and accordingly, since the Corporate Tyranny increasingly reaches out globally, many people in countries other than those in the West also live under the rule of the Corporate Tyranny, and the Corporate Tyranny in these regions has a number of further options, including the military option. [83] This is the meaning of globalization. But the impact of the policies of the Corporate Tyranny upon many of these non-Western societies is much more draconian and severe in respect of the day-to-day conditions under which these people live, and an impediment to the fulfillment of requirements which these communities need to achieve in order to live a basic civilized life. Thus, a first premise of the teaching exchange is to study the impact and place of a higher education student in Western society as things presently stand. This insofar as the occupation of such a place and impact of that occupation, supports and is supported by the Corporate Tyranny, and to find out the relation of the AGMOAS to the Corporate Tyranny's global reach.

Students studying fine art and making fine art practice in Western higher education are then no exception to the hold that the Corporate Tyranny exerts, not least because of the many inarticulate claims that art transcends the social arrangements of the world, where

this very lack of articulation is viewed as a symptom of the profundity of such claims. As hinted at above, there is a sense here in which I would prefer to read planet instead of world, since the name 'world' used in a context such as this often has accrued to it some notion of the spiritual (e.g. 'the world of the artist' – 'the planet of the artist' has a more jarring and less immaterialist ring): The name 'planet' seems to moor the argument more firmly in the realm of the material world and material effects, of which, obviously, globalization is a major one. Thus, the next requirement of the teaching is to attempt to show that art practice is one of these places in Western society fitted out by now by the Corporate Tyranny to ensure that the interests of the Corporate Tyranny are, at a minimum, maintained, but, in respect of the characteristic ambition and impetus of the Corporate Tyranny, preferably expanded. The Corporate Tyranny discovered a long time ago, as these remarks have tried earlier to demonstrate, that the argument that art transcends the grubby world of the social is a useful ally in maintaining and expanding its interests. Moreover, within the framework of what the Blair administrations called the 'cultural industries', it is desirable to the managers of the industries, seen as necessary condition of employment, that the cultural workers in these industries approve of the system which is in place to produce them. And even in the case of many students who are dissatisfied with the AGMOAS, it often seems impossible to transcend it, and equally important, and intimately related, that this approval is realized regardless of the rhetorical claims made (in linguistic performance) on behalf of the artistic subject, not least through the device of permitted dissent. And the device of permitted dissent is indispensable to the Corporate Tyranny, since it is a significant contributor to the maintenance of persuading its publics that it is not a tyranny. Permitted dissent has been a significant propaganda device in allowing the Corporate Tyranny to increasingly organize a society that in the last thirty or more years has become more and more remote from the achievement of an egalitarian society. In this precise sense, permitted dissent is an important component in the Corporate Tyranny's process of manufacturing consent. Therefore, the policies and ambitions of the Corporate Tyranny require that it organize and administer an illusion. A significant part of successfully administering this illusion rests upon the notion of allegedly delivering artistic freedom, for artistic freedom equals permitted dissent.

Logically, for an illusion to be successful it must not be

detected as an illusion. Equally, such tyrants do not believe they are tyrants. The current state of culture in the West perhaps more and more approaches what Adorno termed the fully administered society. Permitted dissent is a paradigmatic function of the Corporate Tyranny. But as the events in the Capitalist organized world that have taken place since 2008 clearly indicate, the administration can soon be reduced to a financial shambles. The Corporate Tyranny system is far from totally stable, and substantial sections of Western societies are skeptical of it, to say nothing of the attitude of other societies towards it. They do not necessarily have to recognize it as the Corporate Tyranny in order to be skeptical of its claims. Nevertheless, in the democracies of the West the system is evidently working sufficiently in favour of the Corporate Tyranny for them to have increased their hold on the levers of power such that the illusion can be sustained, seemingly even in the face of the blatant failure of the system in 2008, although we await the longer-term outcome – the question is how much longer-term. [84] In successfully maintaining the illusion that it is not a tyranny, one of the main ideas in which the Corporate Tyranny has invested is the concept of the individual, resting upon the concept of possessive individualism; this is the concept that provides the long-term historical underpinning of the concept of artistic freedom. It is a kind of paradox, since the Corporate Tyranny aims to make a collective of a society of individuals who all despise the notion of a collective subject - a collective subject of anti-collective subjects. The notion of the entrepreneur, not only as the primary creator of wealth, but also as original thinker and problem solver, rests on the concept of possessive individualism – literally the individual possessing her or himself. In this complex of ideas the model of the artistic subject is a prominent representative. It is obvious that being creative and being defined as creative may not be the same thing nor is being told that you are creative the same thing as being creative. One of the points that the record of the art schools since World War 2 emphatically demonstrates is that the concept of 'being creative' is transmitted socially rather than being the natural phenomenon it is too often taken to be in the art school. In art school day-to-day conversation the use of the concept of 'being creative' is notoriously susceptible to rhetorical contentment and is used as unexamined propaganda. This was another of the debates I attempted to raise in my teaching in Leeds.

This debate at least sets up conditions where the student may be able to frame a question about choice. For example a starting point

for exchange is the following type of question: Is it the case that the student can now reject or further consider whether my arguments, say concerning the Corporate Tyranny, have any merit? Regularly, students would disagree with my argument and some would reject it outright? This position, not uncommon, often presupposes a refusal, either explicitly or tacitly, to draw a distinction between practice and career. Such students are in the business of practicing art to make a career rather than a practice – but to many students a practice is a career and it is an absolutely conventional view, and perhaps even more the conventional view of the parents of the student, of what the pathway of further education in fine art should be. After all, one of the most important tasks of higher education, many would say it is not only the primary task but the only worthwhile one, is to provide students with a job when they graduate. But such a pathway does not necessarily sit very consistently with the notion of the artist as producing a 'radical' or 'challenging' practice and it is contra the incessant rhetoric and propaganda of the current art world concerning the alleged radical role of the artist. The model of the artist considered as an avant-garde model is thoroughly conventional today; it has been since the end of World War 2. This is certainly the result of propaganda, and, equally, most students are content enough to be 'challenging' so long as the notion of career (which they see not only as providing them with the means to live but as an important signifier of being an artist) is not challenged. Such students seem to be perfectly happy, often to be proud, to be characterized as 'radical' and 'challenging', so long as what is taken conventionally to constitute avant-garde behaviour/production is not challenged. In this they are embracing the role model of the successful artist – that is, the model of the artist who has achieved a career. That, obviously, is not to argue that they achieve it, relatively few of them do, but they aspire to do so. Sustaining this aspiration is what the Corporate Tyranny requires in order to use the AGMOAS as an important part of its apparatus of cultural maintenance. A central question of my teaching-practice was to raise this kind of debate. Raising this debate relies upon an awareness of the historical development of this notion of the AGMOAS since the earlier years of the twentieth century until the present. This I have tried to recount in section II, titled *Appraisal*, of these remarks. So what follows is an attempt to detail this out a bit more, further expounding it more specifically in context of teaching at Leeds for the 28 years I was there.

IV - THE NEXT TO LAST SEMINAR

In respect of the number of years over which I conducted the seminar then the seminar at Leeds was by far the most sustained effort of any kind of practice I made between 1964, the start of my teaching, to 2005, the end of my teaching. There are no doubt quite a number of ways I could outline the matter of the seminar, and the issues I tried to raise throughout my teaching at Leeds. However, since my time teaching at Leeds covered the transition from Modernism into Postmodernism, and this transition was a main event exerting a consistent pressure on my ideas of practice (as I have noted already the discussion, development and exchange of such ideas being practice), I have no itemized account or record of a blow-by-blow charting of the seminar programme I conducted for all the twenty eight years I held it. In fact, I never planned a seminar more than a month ahead, and such forward planning as this represented did not happen very often. I preferred to try and follow the response from students informally and, if possible, without too long a presentation. In the light of this pattern of exchange, then one way to count off some of the concerns of the seminar path across those years is that I have chosen to recall in broad terms the alleged moves from Modernism to Postmodernism, especially throughout the eighties the high tide era of Reagan and Thatcher.

And I have chosen to do this, for example, by attempting to examine some of the issues raised in Caroline Jones' book, *The Machine in the Studio*, concerning particularly her remarks on a generation of artists in the sixties, of which she chooses three New York artists - Stella, Warhol, and Smithson - as representatives. These three artists are iconic figures of the sixties moves in art, and they are iconic not least in their collaboration with corporate power in the US. [1] Her discussion of these artists bears strongly on the concept of the avant-garde. Jones' book mirrors, albeit from a different ideological stance and frequently a seemingly opposing one, many of the issues I tried to raise and the arguments I tried to develop in the passage of the seminars through the nearly thirty years I taught at Leeds. The issues I am concerned with here are particularly raised in Jones' Conclusion section in the book. Inquiry into and a questioning

of the issues Jones raises will provide a suggestion of the model of why and how the Tuesday seminar was conducted as the central platform not only for my practice programme at Leeds but for my practice *per se*. Whilst when recounting some aspects of the content of the seminar it might be more apt to concentrate on the notion of the effect on the generation of artists than the particular artists with whom Jones in her book is particularly concerned, I intend here to pretty much stick with her commentary on the three artists, Stella, Warhol and Smithson, especially Smithson.

I use Jones' text mentioned above because, for me at least, it is a text that raises some basic questions concerning what it is to practice art presently set in the framework of what it was to practice art during the last fifty years. The raising of these kinds of questions was frequently what I tried to use in the Tuesday afternoon seminar at Leeds. The issues Jones raises that I am particularly interested in explicitly link the matter of what she calls 'the strategy of the avant-garde' to the matter of a political programme, or, rather, in Jones' case, explicitly denies, in the case of Stella, Warhol and Smithson, the link of what she calls 'the strategy of the avant-garde' to what she calls 'the intention of political critique'. Which, again, is related to a central topic I repeatedly attempted to discuss and sustain in the seminar throughout my tenure at Leeds. My differences with Jones' views rest on the issue that I would not see avant-gardism (the AGMOAS) as just a strategy, I view it more as an explicit political ideology. I hold the avant-garde (in any of its twentieth century versions) to be a political stance insofar as it became, throughout particularly the last half of the twentieth century, an endorsement of an established system, namely the Corporate Tyranny directed by US corporate power. And, therefore, I hold that the three main examples she uses throughout her book, Stella, Warhol and Smithson, do endorse the Corporate Tyranny since the AGMOAS has been absorbed in the sense of being financially funded and manipulated politically by the Corporate Tyranny. What Jones calls artists 'secur[ing] their position in art discourse' is another way of stating that artists who embrace the AGMOAS embrace the regime of the Corporate Tyranny, and in doing this invariably prioritize career over practice:

"The younger artists' subsequent rhetoric and provocations thus began as defensive postures after being shunned by the Abstract Expressionist brotherhood. Such postures helped secure their position in art discourse,

through the established modernist technique of defiant publicity (known in art circles as the strategy of the avant-garde)." [2]

Whether or not the younger artists were shunned by the Abstract Expressionist brotherhood, a first point to note is that Jones straightforwardly equates what she terms 'the strategy of the avant-garde' with Modernism since she asserts that the strategy of the avant-garde is 'the established modernist technique of defiant publicity'. Her argument goes on, made explicit a few pages later, claiming that all three artists, Stella, Warhol and Smithson, were 'destabilizing Modernism'. Thus, she seems to argue that a modernist technique ('defiant publicity', as Jones calls it) is used to destabilize Modernism. I am deducing, based on what I take to be the argument throughout the whole book, that she is arguing that 'destabilizing Modernism' is a worthwhile thing to have achieved, if indeed regardless of whether or not Smithson and the other artists did achieve this. Whatever destabilizing Modernism may turn out to be, it is worth noting here that destabilizing Modernism is far from destabilizing the AGMOAS. To the contrary, presuming I have grasped Jones' notion of 'destabilizing Modernism' reasonably accurately, I would argue that it is the reinforcement and amplification of the AGMOAS.

I should note first that I judge Modernism not to have been replaced at all, but rather that what is now called Postmodernism is a logical capitalist induced continuation of Modernism, the common factor being the preservation of the AGMOAS. Presumably then, according to Jones, to be a participant in whatever it is that she claims to come after Modernism (perhaps sticking with the obvious logic, call it Postmodernism) was not to participate in the avant-garde. Yet, if to be avant-garde is to engage in 'the strategy of defiant publicity' (is being 'reflexively oppositional' also a strategy?) then postmodernists, presumably, do not participate in 'the strategy of defiant publicity', since modernists are avant-garde. Thus, postmodernists are something other than avant-garde. But it would not be hard, I think, to characterize some figures of Postmodernism as engaging in the strategy of defiant publicity, which is what Jones, at one point, so conspicuously points out. To extricate ourselves from this conundrum we perhaps need to ask for a tighter and more developed notion of both defiant publicity and of Modernism. Who or what is being defied, for example? In the auction of his own work organized by Hirst at Sotheby's, mentioned earlier in these remarks,

he is characterized by one commentator as defying Gagosian, White Cube, and Saatchi all at once. And the event was certainly big art world publicity. Let us move on by leaving the matter, so to write, unresolved, by inquiring whether Hirst is a modernist, and therefore avant-garde, or a postmodernist? Which raises the question, is a postmodernist artist a post-avant-garde artist? I have argued above that this is not the case. Perhaps Hirst is a kind of hybrid, a kind of Gruffalo of the art world, half modernist and half postmodernist, which I would argue, as I have argued in the preceding remarks, anyway is indistinguishable. Perhaps we can press the argument into the realm of further caricature by suggesting Hirst might be either *avant* or *garde*, but not both? Perhaps, more plausibly, arguing that he is avant-capitalist and corporate garde.

Jones, on the same page from which the above quote is taken, further declares:

"In the triumphalist history that art writes for itself, however, these nuances disappear. Stella, Warhol, and Smithson appear in much criticism and monographic writing as reflexively oppositional or avant-garde – the *strategy* of defiant publicity being mistaken for the *intention* of political critique. Despite these assumptions of avant-garde positions or strategies (as measured against the earlier Abstract Expressionist generation), it should be clear by now that Warhol, Stella, and Smithson were not endorsing some progressive political program, or even espousing less organized utopian goals (as is usually assumed of earlier modernist artists). Whatever its urgent political context in 1918 Russia or 1923 Weimar, the iconic, performative, and even the dispersive 'technological sublime' was hardly revolutionary in 1960s America in the eyes of art-world critics and collectors." [3]

You can say that again, Caroline!

Apart from noting that a technique has now turned into a strategy, Jones' accusation here is that the aforesaid critics and writers of monographs mistake 'the strategy of defiant publicity' for 'the intention of political critique'. For the present, accepting 'the strategy of defiant publicity' and then condensing Jones' claim to the bare structure, it is worth keeping in mind that Jones' accusation is that this monographic writing mistakes what is in fact strategy for an intention. The book's narrative traces a series of events that I am going to summarize here with the phrase the 'trek out of the studio'. She sees Stella and Warhol as major participants in this trek,

but the book climaxes by assigning Smithson the role of the most ardent and successful accomplisher in completing the trek, seeming also strongly to imply that the trek out of the studio is a strategy that 'destabilizes Modernism'. In fact, she argues that in their later practice both Stella and Warhol fell back into a more studio-centred practice. Smithson, she claims, accomplished this because he was the committed devotee of something Jones calls 'the technological sublime'. There are some assumptions worth inquiring into in the above writing of Jones, and, to reiterate, I am proposing them here because they constitute a kind of shorthand of some of the problems I attempted to inquire into in my teaching at Leeds. Take her sentence, "It should be clear by now that Warhol, Stella and Smithson were not endorsing some progressive political programme, or even espousing less organized utopian goals (as is usually assumed of earlier modernist artists)." You can say that yet again, Caroline! To repeat, I would reply that there was an endorsement here. I think both Stella and Warhol especially were to a considerable extent endorsing a political programme.

Although, as I will argue below, a discussion can be raised as to what does and what does not constitute an endorsement – as to the degree of explicitness (behavioural, which includes the linguistic) required for a statement, assertion, etc. to count as an endorsement. Warhol, I think, without any question, promoted and celebrated the status of celebrity itself as a means of defining career as practice and welcomed corporate promotion of his outlook, quite aside from embracing some typically corporate publicity tactics, and celebrity status, it is also worth noting here, is a big part of the corporate apparatus driving consumership. Warhol's self-promotion was much closer to the promotion protocols of the advertising industry than to the demands of critical practice, for example the practice of someone like Walter Benjamin. If this kind of promotion of celebrity is not endorsing a political programme I don't know what is! Stella's theatre, certainly at the end of his practice, presented and mimicked an image of the executive function of corporate management. Both these promotions slot comfortably within an outlook endorsing capitalism, or perhaps more appositely in respect of this essay, endorsing the Corporate Tyranny. And anyway the programme of the Corporate Tyranny is certainly a political programme. Jones' book, from which the above selections are drawn, is a big book. As far as I can ascertain her analysis kind of fluctuates and procrastinates between whether Stella and Warhol were or were not endorsing a

political programme of any kind ('liberal ideology' as she calls it). One thing Jones does state clearly is that none of the three artists were explicitly endorsing a political programme. As I have just remarked I would argue that they did, and that for sustained periods of their practice they endorsed it explicitly in respect of their behaviour, and that the political programme they endorsed was far from a progressive one. As I have remarked above the argument toward the end of the book seems to claim that all three of them, Stella, Warhol, and Smithson, destabilized Modernism in one way or another. The muted implication being that destabilizing Modernism was in some way progressive in the sense that it represents a surpassing, an advance. But there is no clear definition of 'progressive' present in Jones' writing. The separation of teleological progressivism from progressivism in general seems to me to only compound the confusion.

"Without labouring under the problematic assumption that their works were necessarily politically avant-garde, we can nonetheless see how extensively these artists destabilized Modernism (and the teleological progressivism that it was then seen to possess)." [4]

The writing in the passage moves the notion of 'progressive' into the notion of 'teleological progressivism'. This only focuses the fact that there are quite a few notions floating in and out of Jones' text warranting further examination:

(1) Strategy of defiant publicity (known, according to Jones' text, in art circles as the strategy of the avant-garde)

(2) Reflexively oppositional

(3) Politically explicit programme

(4) Politically progressive (presumably explicit and implicit), assuming it is possible to be implicitly progressive

(5) Politically avant-garde

(6) Teleological progressivism

(7) Plain avant-garde (in some sense such as non-political or apolitical), which in some art world parlance comes out as some such as formally radical [5]

(8) Destabilizing Modernism

Jones does not explicitly say, for example, whether 'destabilizing Modernism' does or does not constitute a political programme, progressive, reactionary, neutral, whatever. One of the points that the tone of her writing at this point does seem to suggest is, that if it is, then it is not an explicit politically progressive one, but, on the opposite hand, other parts of the framework of Jones' argument seems to invite the notion that it is progressive in some way. At this juncture some points arise, which, for purposes of this essay, need to be further elucidated. For example, in the context of Jones' claims: A question (a) what does or does not constitute an endorsement? And then the following two questions (b) and (c), locked together. (b) Is or is not Smithson, for example, endorsing the destabilization of Modernism in destabilizing it? (c) Is Smithson somehow destabilizing Modernism without being concerned he is, or perhaps even knowing he is? This could then be taken to suggest that if Smithson had been aware he was destabilizing Modernism, he might not have done it? This could then be unpacked as, (d) can an endorsement be made by accident, that is, without the endorser knowing she/he is endorsing? The term 'endorse' perhaps, at first glance anyway, does seem to suggest something self-conscious and explicit. The above also seems to raise the question, (e) what is the notion of 'progressive' in the term 'progressive political program'? And then, (f) does an endorsement of a political programme, whether or not it is politically progressive, necessarily have to be explicit? And then, (g) what is the difference, if any, between endorsement and approval? That is to hint at something like the following: That, for one reason or another, an endorser of a political programme may wish either to disguise the endorsement or may wish to not have this endorsement appear too emphatic. All the above questions, again, raise the matter of (h) what are the conditions required for an action to count as an endorsement?

This again seems to bring the matter back to the relation between endorsement and intention to endorse. Neither does Jones write out explicitly that such an endorsement does have to

be explicitly stated. But in the remarks quoted above is there not a suggestion that an endorsement for what she calls a progressive political programme does have to be explicit? Something like, for a person to endorse something, say a political view or programme, then she/he has to show this by some explicit piece of behaviour or the performance of an appropriately explicit linguistic act – the latter of which is subsumed under the former. Is this, for example, what Jones claims Smithson is doing by his cleaving to what she calls the technological sublime? Is Jones perhaps suggesting that since Smithson is endorsing the technological sublime then in so doing is he then endorsing, say, a non-political programme or an apolitical programme? Which is yet another question raised by the matter. Assuming that the technological sublime is, or can be, a programme, can it be a political one? We are back in the zone of the 'strategy of defiant publicity' – that is, in the case of an artist acting such that she/he destabilizes Modernism, is then 'a strategy of defiant publicity' a non-political act? Is a kind of event being suggested here in which a non-political act is conducted such that it has political effects – a separation of act from effect of that act? Or, is Smithson endorsing a political programme, but one that is not progressive but, say, regressive and reactionary? Or, seemingly alternatively, is Jones claiming, for example, that in cleaving to the technological sublime, which is, apparently, also an instrument that destabilizes Modernism, Smithson is achieving something that progresses past 'teleological progressivism'? At this point, perhaps the term 'teleological progressivism' requires further review. Jones, with specific reference to the Abstract Expressionists, argues that, "the exaggerated trope of individual creation" positions "the artist as a lone, existential figure isolated from a hostile society, like a prophet in the desert …" This seems uncontroversial since it is the version of the AGMOAS directly inherited from nineteenth century Romanticism. But certainly as the ROD of the Abstract Expressionists grew in the forties (Pollock with his $25,000 cheque and his appearances in Vogue) then the corporate mark was already on this nineteenth century inspired version of the AGMOAS by, at least, 1950. It was by then already a corporate brand subject to the corporate hand.

The term 'teleological progressiveness' is not without ambivalence resting on two differing definitions of teleology. The notion that Modernism was progressive, that is, more advanced than whatever artistic regime had preceded it, was widely held in the

fifties and into the sixties. What I am interested in here is, in what way is this notion of progressiveness teleological? Below are the two definitions of teleology:

(1) Philosophical - The explanation of phenomena by the purpose they serve rather than by postulated causes.

(2) Theological -The doctrine of design and purpose in the material world.

[*both from the Oxford English Dictionary*]

It is not easy to make out which of the above definitions, or how if either or both, or parts of either or both, applies in Jones' use of 'teleological progressiveness'. According to the above quote from Jones' book, Modernism was then (the sixties, say) seen to possess teleological progressiveness. So, according to Jones, whatever 'teleological progressiveness' is or might be, Modernism definitely possesses it, or possessed it then – in her words was widely seen then as possessing it. But the teleological 'bit' remains unclear. If I was to hazard a guess, then I guess I would plump for the philosophical definition playing a bigger part than the theological – but then the nineteenth century romantic stereotype of the artist sits at the foundation of the AGMOAS and retains the use of strong theological roots through the primacy the stereotype gives to the concept of the soul, and the claim that the AGMOAS is high octane, even spiritual. Leading up to Jones' use of 'teleological progressiveness' she contends that the move away from what she calls the 'exaggerated trope of individual creation' is into a 'largely masculine discourse of technology' that 'grew ever more persuasive in American society through the early 1960s, reflecting a refulgent capitalist economy and serving as the vehicle for a left liberal ideology that was optimistic on the home front and pessimistic at the charged borders of the cold war.' This shining American economy was, by the 1960s, an economy in which the corporate attempt, starting immediately after WW2, to 'sell free enterprise' (echoing Fones-Wolf's term) had completely succeeded. Thus, the 'left liberal ideology' was a rhetoric that conformed pretty thoroughly within the boundaries of permitted dissent, which, as I have argued already, in turn is a critical part of manufacturing consent to the rule of the Corporate Tyranny. Another odd part of Jones' assertion here is the bifurcation she introduces in claiming the left liberal ideology was optimistic (on the home front)

and pessimistic (at the charged borders of the cold war).

It is hard to detect in any definite way whether, according to the way Jones writes the matter out, it is the case that 'destabilizing Modernism' is considered to be an action that is progressive without being 'teleological'. In fact, an argument can be made that simply ditching teleological form is itself progressive. But there is at the very least a hint that 'destabilizing Modernism' is sort of retaining progressivism whilst ditching the teleology. This, if it is the case, delivers a kind of truism, in the sense that to progress means to advance past in some way (improving on the past state), and that therefore Smithson in 'destabilizing Modernism' is progressing past it and is therefore the advanced guard? This latter assumes that progress = advanced, which seems kind of logical. If this is what Jones is arguing, then she seems to be implying that Postmodernism is more progressive than Modernism, that it is an advance on Modernism. But it is not, it seems, a teleological progress. Sidestepping my view that Modernism and Postmodernism are the same thing and staying within that of Jones' framework, then the following question: Is the superseding of Modernism by Postmodernism a progressive supersession – say, in the sense of being cognitively an improvement over Modernism? Is, for example, Jones suggesting or implying that to destabilize Modernism is emancipating the relevant community from, let us say, the thrall of Modernism and that then, by implication, to remain in the thrall of Modernism is, in some significant sense, not an advanced (good) state to be in, is a reactionary state, such that Postmodernism, if it does nothing else, emancipates us from Modernism? And, that therefore, in this sense, Postmodernism is a seemingly emancipatory programme? The requirement then would be a coherent description of 'progressive'. Or, is the project of destabilizing Modernism an undertaking that has adopted an emancipatory rhetoric with no connection to the concrete achievement of an emancipatory programme? The Corporate Tyranny often uses such a rhetorical device. The requirement then would be to provide an accurate description of 'emancipatory'. When Smithson's own approach to corporate culture in respect of his later projects, of which read more below concerning Jones' account of this approach, is taken into account, I would say it is perfectly permissible to query the 'emancipatory rhetoric' of the AGMOAS, which I take to subsume notions such as 'destabilizing Modernism', by asking the question, emancipatory to whom or to what community? And, it is worth noting at this point, that in Jones' terms the AGMOAS can

be unpacked as the subject who uses or deploys the 'strategy of the avant-garde', or equally, the subject who uses the 'strategy of defiant publicity' – Jones further confuses the matter by also using the term 'avant-garde positions and strategies', which invites the question, is avant-garde[ism] a position or a strategy, or both? If it is one or the other, which? If it is both, how so? Certainly, whether or not Smithson signed up to the Art Workers Coalition, there is less and less sign of anything approaching socialist militancy in his work, as Jones observes, and Smithson, it seems to me, was quite explicit about this. [6]

I guess Smithson would have kept a laudable distance from any cultural event such as Live Aid, since such events are characteristic of the self-centred charity-posturing and complacent individualism of Postmodernism. But Smithson's own type of ethical immediacy is also characteristic of the AGMOAS in postmodernist mode. The AGMOAS is a paradigmatic receptacle for the sentiment of ethical immediacy - celebrity. Jones writes 'the strategy of defiant publicity known in art circles as avant-garde' and she argues the strategy is a defining characteristic of the avant-garde. Jones also characterizes this position as 'reflexively oppositional'. The word 'reflexively' says quite a lot here, it is politically pliable, simply underlining an admission Jones has already made, '… namely that Warhol, Stella, and Smithson were not endorsing some progressive political program', and makes again later, 'Without labouring under the problematic assumption that their works were necessarily politically avant-garde.' This stress on avoiding the suspicion that these artists might be politically avant-garde has been an incubus nagging away at art practice and its interpreters for a century and a half. It seems unlikely that any one attempting to achieve a more egalitarian society would make the mistake of thinking Warhol, Stella or Smithson would be judged as making significant explicit contributions towards the execution of this end. First, it is worth reminding ourselves yet again, that liberal sentiments are a necessary output of the Corporate Tyranny formula that fashions permitted dissent as an indispensable part of the device of manufacturing consent. Despite many of them expressing such sentiments the hesitancy of Western modernist artists to contribute to the attempts to attain a more egalitarian society lies in their overriding commitment to ethical immediacy (the more familiar word is career). The post-Cold War postmodernists often gave up on even an expression of sympathy, some ditching the rhetoric of liberal ideology. Sadly,

because of his early death, Smithson was not post-Cold War so we can only speculate as to what his position might have been, say in 1995, but this matter is no concern of these remarks. But Smithson, for all the rhetoric proffered on his behalf, not least that of Jones, leave Modernism altogether. The confessional subject is one of the common structural parts of both Modernism and Postmodernism. The confessional subject is common to both; in this sense no postmodernist ever left Modernism. That is why the AGMOAS is common to both. Smithson did not, seemingly could not, leave the model of the confessional subject. Like the rest of us, Smithson was stuck with the confessional subject. Being an artist means to accede to it. It is a line of continuity from modernist to postmodernist artist. Smithson's self-defined position (confession) by the early seventies is very like Paul Klee's in the forties. The motivating muse is a little different, Klee's self-definition is a little more ethereal and celestial, but the structural assignment is the same. Both Smithson and Klee confess a helplessness, if not a hopelessness, in front of their respective situations. Below is Jones talking of Smithson on the matter:

"Smithson kept some distance *and* some control over the market, without proposing a falsely idealist denial of market effects. 'I'm just interested in exploring the apparatus I'm being threaded through', he commented in his last interview. In this telling metaphor, where Smithson is the flexible substance being worked by a large and impersonal machine, we see clearly that the best vantage point for his exploration seemed to be both mechanical and peripheral, well out of range of the modernist studio outlook." [7]

This notion of a 'flexible substance' being worked over by 'a large and impersonal machine' is very like the way Klee, in his 1925, *Pedagogical Sketchbook,* describes himself as a kind of tree where the 'creative resource' enters at the roots (from some mysterious source – one seemingly unavoidable suggestion being that Klee is positing some divine or near-divine origin for the process, yet another kind of large and impersonal machine) and the outcome issues through the branches and, presumably from the twigs and leaves. Smithson posits a more terrestrial source – the *threader* is the Corporate Tyranny. Thus Klee strongly suggests a process in front of which he is helpless. In this sense Smithson carries with him the very modernist notion of the artist as yielding instrument. Smithson's description of himself perhaps gives more weight to the realpolitik of modern political arrangements in taking hold

and determining the individual artist ('being threaded through'), and replacing Klee's notion of being organized or manipulated by his 'mysterious source' with an American can-do 'technological sublime' – the *threader* being the American technological corporate state apparatus *viz* Virginia Dwan and the De Menil industry, for example (the *threader* threading Smithson through). Being, 'well out of range of the modernist studio outlook', does not mean being well out of range of the corporately dominated AGMOAS. In the face of this kind of politics the matter of being in or out of the studio seems of little consequence. And Smithson's commentary that he is 'just interested in exploring the apparatus' leaves matters as a very opportunistic procedure. Proclaiming a kind of helplessness, which the term 'just interested' suggests, hints at some kind of acquiescence in front of such a state apparatus, allowing the opportunity for career to take priority over practice. In fact, earlier in her book, Jones has offered us some specific examples of what 'being interested in' and 'exploring' might entail in Smithson's case. If Smithson was, as Jones explicitly states, 'well out of range of the modernist studio outlook', he was not out of range of explicit corporate sponsorship, and corporate sponsorship entails, and strongly entails at that, being an AGMOAS. Jones offers her readers clear examples of Smithson explicitly courting corporate sponsorship both cultural and financial, which in most cases amounts to the same thing. Although perhaps the passage below should be presaged by the following question: Is there any other kind of sponsorship in a US corporately dominated society? The following passage from Jones' writing suggests enough concerning Smithson's approach and quest to find sponsorship for his work in corporate America:

"Similar questions need to be asked about Smithson's work, and its patrons and collectors. It is significant that the most important dealer, collector, and sponsor of the Earthworks movement (and certainly Smithson's most important patron) was Virginia Dwan, heiress to the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company (3M) fortune. The works she made possible, and, as we have seen, even participated in as collaborative photographic author, were directly involved with aestheticising the kind of industrial activity and industrial sites in which her family fortune had been made. Similar connections might be speculated for the De Menil family's backing of other Earthworks in the 1970s (via the DIA Foundation) given that the De Menil fortune comes from a patented drill bit used in every oil rig on the planet. There is nothing pernicious about such creative philanthropy – but one cannot position the works it supports as necessarily or intrinsically critical

of ‘the system’.” [8]

You can say that latter assertion again! There is certainly nothing pernicious toward the ongoing reign of the Corporate Tyranny – it is called having the AGMOAS in your pocket - literally. What price now Greenberg’s umbilical cord of gold - literally? The process of ‘aestheticising the kind of industrial activity and industrial sites in which her [Virginia Dwan] family fortune had been made’ more or less spells it out without any equivocation. The verb ‘aestheticising’ is the operative concept in the above citation; one of the significant operations it describes is that of extending the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company’s brand. In exchange, in this particular case, 3M sponsors and brands Smithson’s AGMOAS. If there is dissent in Smithson’s output here we can be sure it is the permitted kind. David Harvey’s ‘economy of spectacle’ comes to mind. [9] In terms of dissent, compare Rivera’s face of Lenin with the spectacle of *Spiral Jetty*. Not to forget that Warhol used images of Karl Marx, Lenin, Mao, Che – very clearly more aestheticizing, more branding. How things have changed since Nelson Rockefeller ordered the destruction of Rivera’s mural in the thirties. Warhol brands commie heroes/villains as easily as he does reigning queens, self-portraits, or electric chairs. This was the Thatcherite-Reaganesque conversion system at full aestheticising throttle.

A passage, referring specifically to the British political arena, from a Mark Fisher text serves to remind us of the particular Thatcherite-Reaganesque conversion of communities that would have been better served by socialist militancy than they have been by being converted into participating in do-gooding, mutually congratulatory, hand clapping celebrity-led gala charity-junkies. The cultural cousins of which are the burgeoning celebrity junky art fairs, and such communities would have been better served too than they have been by the celebrity-junky society’s finance and cultural MDs, the Wall Street and City of London finance junkies – permitted dissent is an integral part of what Fisher calls consensual sentimentality.

“The required subject – a collective subject – does not exist, yet the crisis, like all the other global crises we are now facing, demands that it be constructed. Yet the appeal to ethical immediacy that has been in place since at least 1985 – when the consensual sentimentality of Live Aid replaced the antagonism of the miners’ strike – permanently defers the emergence of such a subject.” [10]

Can the AGMOAS sustain the notion of a collective subject? Could it ever? Did not Courbet in 1871 find this a problematic factor in his role in the Paris Commune? Is the AGMOAS, by definition, a model of the subject too much dependent on the concept of possessive individualism? Does not the alleged group collective, often claimed to be present in, say, early Art & Language, Gilbert and George, Tim Rollins and the Kids of Survival, etc., assimilate the collective into the idea of the possessive individual? [11] It is not easy to get around, if it can be got around at all under the conception of artist. In the case of Gilbert and George for example inter-subjectivity of the two possessive individualist figures is the defining characteristic, the duo are definitely an anti-collective subject with a collective career. Is it not the case that the confessional subject, which is the ideological kernel of the AGMOAS, is as prevalent in a duo such as Gilbert and George as ever it was in the staunchest and most isolated possessive individualist protagonist of the earlier twentieth century AGMOAS? There are no doubt degrees of confessionalism to be acknowledged, but the confessional subject is a defining characteristic of the AGMOAS. Artists and their champions confessing artistry as special (read the promotion of career possessive individualism trumps the construction of a collective subject every time) is these days a media bromide.

NOTES:

I - INTRODUCTION

1. Ian Boal, T. J. Clark, Joseph Matthews, and Michael Watts, *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in A New Age of War*, (London and New York: Retort imprint, Verso Press, 2005), p. 23.

2. Noam Chomsky, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, (London: Pelican Books, 1968).

3. David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crisis of Capitalism*, Kindle edition, 5%.

4. Ibid. 53%.

II - APPRAISAL

1. Glenn D. Lowry, Director of MOMA, New York.

2. From its earliest days, Conceptual Art perhaps had an uncomfortably close relation to promotion by logo and branding. Moves such as alleged expanded-object and post-object (text works for example) were heavily marketed as a kind of furore-image of the concept of the avant-garde as necessarily 'progressive' and 'radical'. Perhaps too, an early sign of a new kind of emergent curator much concerned with logo and brand. Texts requiring what might be called the heavier type of cognitive application were absorbed into a category brand promoted as, say, post-object. Cognitive work on the text took a lower position than identity of object-type. At this kind of point branding of work type became more important than study of work – obsessive career promotion began to take priority over a cognitively worked practice.

3. See Christian Marazzi, *Capital and Language*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Semiotext(e), MIT Press, 2008, and, Rome: Derive Approdi, 2002), and, *The Violence of Financial Capitalism*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Semiotext(e), MIT Press, 2011).

4. There has been no more glaring and, in the end, more exposed a case of the abuses that an over-centralized neoliberal control of the media effect than the case of the Murdoch family's ownership of News Corporation, which they intended to use as the springboard to make their case for ownership of BSkyB. James Murdoch's attack on and claim to moral supremacy over the BBC in his address at the Edinburgh festival a few years ago is now starkly historically contrasted with hacking of the phone of Millie Dowler by his media hoodlums at News Corporation.

5. See Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism 1945-60*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

6. Wendy Brown, *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. Kindle edition, especially Chapter 3, 'Neoliberalism and the End of Democracy').

7. See, for example, Fones-Wolf, pp. 44-51.

8. Tim Bell, now Baron Bell of Belgravia, mandarin of the advertising industry, helped found Saatchi and Saatchi, leaving in 1987, to found his own agency. Bell was a close adviser to Margaret Thatcher in all her election campaigns. He was seconded to the National Coal Board during the National Union of Mineworkers strike of 1984-85, where he was virulently active in encouraging the non-striking miners in Nottinghamshire (let's not mince words with Baron Bell – the Notts scabs). The latter, it should be remembered, soon after the end of the strike, suffered the same fate as their striking opponents. Bell was noted for his special manipulative encouragement of Silver Birch, whose real name is Chris Butcher. During the strike, and maybe still for those who are old enough to remember, in the South Yorkshire mining villages where I originated, as I was constantly reminded when on visits to my mother who still lived there at that time, Silver Birch was known as 'Dutch Elm Disease'. Butcher was promoted and funded by rabid free-marketeers and neoliberals, not least the Daily Mail. Just to press a certain point, Baron Bell has carried out work for the Pinochet Foundation and other administrations and organizations with less than spotless reputations. The latest, the exposure of Bell-Pottinger as a PR agency whose work has threatened the fragility of South Africa's democracy by stirring up racial tensions via their commission by the Gupta Brothers. Bell has recently resigned. For a telling recount of the sins of Bell-Pottinger see *The New Statesman*, July 20 2017.

9. The dreams of the neoliberals seemingly never stop. Today capitalist economic forecasts remain increasingly gloomy. The British economy during the course of the writing of this essay has undergone a double-

dip recession. The Bank of England predicts a decade of, at best, further economic sluggishness. Many banks, it turns out, have been fixing the LIBOR rate to their advantage and it follows, obviously, to the disadvantage of small businesses and ordinary punters. The neoliberal culture turns out to rest on preserving and increasing the interests of the wealthy through sharp financial practices and not a little fraud. Whilst through all this many neoliberals have, reluctantly, forfeited their bonuses, just to compound matters a majority of the British people's elected representatives refuse a public enquiry into the wangling of the LIBOR rate. The matter of sharp banking practices being investigated by politicians is yet another neoliberal dream come true since it keeps the interests of the banking class within the orbit of the political class. At the present juncture there are only nods and winks toward actually changing the system. What change seems to amount to is the replacing of one figure by another to occupy the identical job within an identical capitalist ideological framework.

10. Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, (London: Penguin Books, 2007).

11. David Harvey notes one vivid event in the Corporate Tyranny's investment in cultural projects as follows:

"They also invest in cultural capital through sponsorship of museums and all manner of cultural activities (thus making the so-called 'cultural industries' a favoured strategy for urban economic development). When Lehman Brothers tanked, the MOMA in New York lost a third of its sponsorship income."

David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crisis of Capitalism,* (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2010 Kindle Edition 5%).

Harvey also describes the relation between corporately supported cultural projects and the general urbanization of capitalist culture as follows:

"Quality of urban life has become a commodity for those with money, as has the city itself in a world where consumerism, tourism, niche marketing, cultural and knowledge based industries, as well as a perpetual resort to the economy of the spectacle,
producing wealthy celebrity artists *via* wealthy collectors and the neoliberal view that money can and should be made out of money.

23. Stonor Sauders, p. 258, and Harvey.

24. Stonor Saunders, p. 261.

25. Lautréamont. Compte de Lautréamont pseudonym of Isidore-Lucien Ducasse. Lautréamont was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, of French parents. He was educated in France. He died age 24 in November 1870, six months before the Paris Commune began, during the siege of Paris by the Prussians in the Franco-Prussian war. His best known work is *Les Chants de Maldorer.* This work was retrieved from relative obscurity by Soupault in 1917, who then handed on the copy of the poems to Breton, and from then on Lautréamont's works have been held out as a prophetic and heraldic surrealist text. *Les Chants de Maldorer* has enjoyed a more or less permanent cache with many prominent figures from the twentieth century's alleged avant-garde. Rene Magritte has illustrated one publication. I have for twenty years preferred to situate Lautréamont a bit differently, placing an emphasis on his historical proximity to the Paris Commune rather than literary absorption by the Surrealists as the primary setting for *Les Chants de Maldorer*. A number of Lautréamont's ideas seem to ask the right questions of many of the concepts which the twenty first century avant-garde seems to me to be so puffed up about, not just Lautréamont's black humour on ruling class interests, but the general conceptual framework of his work – his interesting notion that plagiarism is necessary to progress for example, which seems to me to be something of an antidote to all the current guff about the artistic subject being 'challenging', 'radical' and 'original'. Lautréamont's notion of the usefulness of plagiarism I have taken as a strong acknowledgement of the requirement for a collective subject. In respect of setting up the pathway to a society which would enjoy a more equitable distribution of wealth, I much prefer Lautréamont's black humour applied more socially than within the quasi-aristocratic poetics of the canons of surrealist literary performance, in the same way that I prefer Rimbaud's *Illuminations* set into the social ambience leading up to the Paris Commune than when they are given over to the AGMOAS laden canons of surrealist automatism and performance. This too seems consistent with what Kristin Ross calls the 'azimuthal understanding' which she claims Rimbaud claimed was required to best interpret his work. Such a demand then, it seems to me, sets up a trajectory in which Lautréamont's work can, for example, more nearly be made to approach Ken Loach's scenarios in his film *Riff-Raff* (1991), where Ricky Tomlinson enjoys a bath in the nouveau riche apartments he is helping to kit out and the finale when Robert Carlyle burns down the whole building site. This latter trajectory sites Lautréamont's work closer to the way Debord and Vaneigem situated (no pun intended) it. In this way Lautréamont's work can be positioned within the historical impetus of the Paris Commune and in continuity with the likes of Reclus' contribution to and Courbet's role in that event.

26. Within the present day art and art education worlds there is plenty of commitment to alleged 'freedom of expression' when expression is defined according to neoliberal sentiment. This amounts to some such as 'Say,

more or less what you like, but do not concretely enact the following …'. This is the structure of permitted dissent, which itself is an important part of what Noam Chomsky has called manufacturing consent. Thus, freedom of expression inside the parameters of permitted dissent is ring-fenced and artists are happy enough to conform to and indulge in this ring-fenced conformist notion of non-conformism and with, it should be said, not a little self-congratulation. But when they are faced with measures that might achieve a wealth egalitarianism (that is, a more equitable distribution of wealth) celebrity artists in particular are the very model of neoliberal greed, and since celebrity artists, by definition, are promoted by the media, noting that significant sections of the media itself are owned and promoted by private sector neoliberal agents, then the celebrity artist role model acts as a template to students and other artists driving them on to aspire to a prime neoliberal characteristic – that of greed; and, neoliberal greed is characteristic of celebrity artists. And furthermore, as the case of James Murdoch's attempt in Edinburgh to cosh the BBC showed, the remnants of public sector media can be put under serious pressure to conform to the business model of the neoliberal private sector, none more striking than the BBC.

27. Stonor Saunders, p. 259.

28. Tracey Emin is a clear case of the celebrity artist/media mutual admiration swap. I have never viewed Tracey Emin or her work as in any way contributing, in even the smallest way, to either the achievement of social democracy nor a more equitable distribution of wealth. I presume neither has she. To the contrary, she is the very quiddity of neoliberal opportunism, kudos-avarice and media showing off. Her interview with Melvyn Bragg of a few years ago was a pit of patronizing one-liners (some such as 'if you can't stand the heat you should not be in the kitchen') and steaming self-regard. Her heavy breathing confessional mode (the people she has slept with - in tents even!) absolutely conforms to the dumbest devotion to the view of the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth.

29. Maybe Rockefeller was a more articulate advocate of Pollock's work than was Pollock. This would perhaps leave Pollock in something like the position that Paul Klee claimed for himself as a kind of helpless vehicle (receiver of some process the source of which is mysterious – perhaps not a bad stab at characterizing what in the art schools/art world is frequently cited as some such as the 'creative process') through which the work was channeled.

30. Anthony Caro was, in the sixties when I had art school contact with him and his student group at St Martins, a big supporter of Greenberg's views on art. I guess he still is, certainly in respect of some kind of vague

notion of the primacy of the visual. I presume he still holds to this kind of view after reading his eulogy in response to the obituary of John Hoyland where Caro writes, 'The paintings stand for nothing but themselves'. (*The Guardian*, 2nd August, 2011) My first thought in response to this was to ask the question, 'To whom?' Caro's metaphysical thaumaturgy seems to have a strong strain of something like Greenbergian transcendence running through it. It matches Mel Gooding's eulogy to Hoyland of the day before (*The Guardian*, 1st August, 2011) where Gooding claims that Barnett Newman 'especially struck a deep chord' with Hoyland. He continued, '"The image we produce," Newman had written, "is the self-evident one of revelation, real and concrete, that can be understood by anyone who will look at it without the nostalgic glasses of history."' Is this arguing that we view it with glasses that are not nostalgic, or that we should ignore history since history is, *per se*, nostalgic? However, both sides of the Newman quote, and somewhat contrary to it, Gooding goes on to give a literary strewn panegyric to Hoyland in which the nostalgic scent of something (I am not sure whether it is glasses, history, the glasses of history, or something else altogether) is up and about in Gooding's text, not least a long list of items that Gooding claims Hoyland claimed (at a talk at the Tate Gallery in the 1980s) 'fired his imagination.' And to which Gooding adds a further list, 'At any time, Hoyland might be reading and absorbing … (whatever this latter might mean? It seems we may be in the realm of mysterious processes again) … the writings of Miro, the poetry of Frank O'Hara, the novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Japanese and Chinese poetry.' I met Hoyland a couple of times in Sharjah, in 2005, where he several times described himself as 'an unreconstructed man.' Whilst Caro's statement concerning Hoyland's paintings are perhaps the proclamation of the *grunt* on the front line, where I am kind of picturing (please note the verb) both Caro and Hoyland as grunting together in front of 'paintings that stand for nothing but themselves' in the case of Gooding's Guardian homage columns to Hoyland I think I detect a marked example of the art world chattering classes holding forth. There is, at least, a faint whiff of paradox about 'paintings that stand for nothing but themselves', and all the chatter surrounding both them and their producer

31. The notion of critical insight I leave undefined here, except to state that insight can be used to indicate a response that is not linguistically articulated, whereas criticism perhaps more frequently implies either spoken or written articulation, although, obviously, for example, the dropping of Little Boy on Hiroshima could be interpreted as criticism of the Japanese political system of that time. War, again obviously, is a heavy form of criticism of each respective side by the other.

32. Both passages are from Stonor Saunders, p. 258.

33. Acts of deliberate destruction of art for ideological reasons are not that uncommon. In recent decades the Taliban have engaged in at least two such actions destroying sculptures from what are competing religions, and which they consider to be ideologically unacceptable representations. It is perhaps worth recording that, in the West, the boundary between what is held out to be art and what is held out to be religious iconography is a diffuse one. It seems pretty obvious that, for example, the Taliban do not cleave to any Western conception of art. Nelson Rockefeller felt he could order and execute the destruction of the Rivera mural because he had paid for it and therefore considered it his property, which within the capitalist framework it surely was. There are countless instances of attempts to damage art works. In February 1974, Tony Shafrazi attacked Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) in MOMA in New York in an act he claimed to be a protest against the act implemented by Richard Nixon, then US President, pardoning William Calley, the lieutenant in charge of one of the hit squads (Charlie Company) of the 11th Infantry Brigade, which assassinated civilians at My Lai in Vietnam in March 1968. Shafrazi was given five years probation and no trial – presumably because MOMA, for whatever reasons, wanted to close down the matter as quickly as possible. Shafrazi's comments on his reasons for carrying out the act are worth reading. Another example is perhaps more revealing in contrast to Rockefeller destroying the Rivera work. In July 1987 Robert Cambridge entered the National Gallery in London with a sawn-off shotgun hidden under his coat. Cambridge then shot the painting *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne and St John the Baptist,* by Leonardo da Vinci, from a distance of about two metres. The pellets did not penetrate the protective glass, but shattered it, and the splinters caused significant damage to the art work. Cambridge told the police that he wanted to express his disgust with the 'political, social and economic conditions in Britain'. Cambridge was placed in a mental institution. Presumably one of the reasons for this rather restrictive and punitive measure was that Cambridge did not own the da Vinci work. Had Cambridge owned the work then presumably it would have been more difficult to have charged him; I am assuming this since Rockefeller was not charged nor placed in a mental institution when he destroyed Diego Rivera's work. I have not been able to find out what has happened to Cambridge since he was committed to the asylum. The restoration of the painting took more than a year to complete. Accidental destruction of art works amounted to a veritable carnival during World War 2. Courbet's *Stonebreakers* (1849) was one of a batch of over three hundred art works then in transit as a result of being looted from France by the Nazis, destroyed by the RAF Bomber Command raid on Dresden in 1945.

34. In the late nineteen fifties/early sixties, there was a noticeable if not widely held view in art school culture that non-figuration was a kind of essence of modernist art practice. From the late fifties/early sixties Pop Art,

for example, emerged as a kind of counterbalance, although the division is a far from comprehensive map, since it does not account for much of the detail of work at that time – the work of, say, Robert Indiana and Peter Phillips, for example, at that time might have been characterized as sort of non-figurative but displaying prominent figurative motifs, such as numbers, letters and stars.

35. Stonor Sauders, p. 265.

36. Galleries such as Betty Parsons, Sidney Janis, and Samuel Kootz were established in the late nineteen forties/early fifties. The progress of the establishment of such galleries in New York at that time matched pretty exactly the period in which US corporate culture, of which such galleries were part, started to re-establish its pre-Rooseveltian dominance. Looking at a later example, the Leo Castelli Gallery, for example, opened later, in 1957, when US corporate culture was well on its way to establishing the present Corporate Tyranny. Castelli gave both Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg early, perhaps their first, one-person exhibitions.

37. Fones-Wolf.

38. David Hockney is reported to have made comments pointedly emphasizing that he produces his work himself. Such comments seem to have been conspicuously directed at someone like Damien Hirst, who has frequently used a team of workers to produce his work under his direction. Competing versions of the model of the artist as fashioned by the concept of possessive individualism are at work in this spat. Hockney seems to cleave much closer to the pre-nineteen-sixties model of the artist as solitary producer. Don Judd had many of his works fabricated by professional fabrication companies. Somewhere in such a synthesis as Hockney postulates here, there is, faintly, a splicing of the tenacious remnant of the old late-nineteenth century notion of the romantic artist as heroic toiler to the later conversion of this nineteenth century notion into twentieth century business models of art practice, of which operation Hockney has proved himself to be no slouch. The late nineteenth century notion is an important component of the model of the artistic subject as a self-confirming centre of truth. But Hockney, like Hirst, is pretty adept in exercising an entrepreneurial penchant for the neoliberal market place. For Hockney's involvement in venture capitalist projects in Los Angeles, see Mike Davis, *City of Quartz* (London: Verso, 1990). Again, vis-à-vis the likes of Hockney and Hirst, a distinction between commitment to career and commitment to practice might be rewardingly examined, not least in respect of the UK arts media-drenched postulation-cum-competition of 'Britain's greatest living artist'. This latter particularly became a source of culture-chatter when Lucian Freud died.

39. There have been notable attempts at collectivist action and co-operation in the twentieth century art world. For example: the Bauhaus in Germany in the nineteen twenties and thirties; Vkhutemas in the twenties in the then infant Soviet Union; and, the Art Workers Coalition in New York in the sixties. The first two did draw together practice and career such that a threat to one was a threat to the other, as both collectives found to their cost. The third was very issue-focused, pressing for and achieving changes in museum practices, and protesting the Vietnam War. But the idea of artists as a universal unionized profession does seem to offend and contravene the art world's view of what it is to be a possessive individual and the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth. Thus, such wide-ranging collective organization is viewed as an impediment to some such as 'creative freedom', and increasingly in an art world dominated by the idea of the corporate entrepreneur as the paradigm of possessive individualism.

40. For historical detail of Picasso's ongoing practical and financial commitment to the French Communist Party after World War 2, see Lynda Morris' catalogue for the exhibition, *Picasso: Peace and Freedom,* at Tate Liverpool, May-August, 2010. See, also, Alexander Moffat's essay, 'Picasso: the Red Period', in *Perspectives*, No 27, (Dundee: Democratic Left Scotland Press, Autumn 2010).

41. See, for example, Graham Robb, *Rimbaud*, (London: Picador/Pan Macmillan, 2000), especially part Four (1880-91).

42. Rockefeller's term 'free enterprise painting' is a precise and prescient one foretelling the folding in of the AGMOAS into a corporatized enterprise. It is perhaps one of the best descriptions of the comfortable alliance between the Corporate Tyranny and the art world's widely propagandized Whiggish version of 'creative freedom'. It also, and obviously in the case of it being pronounced by a Rockefeller, furnishes the timbre of a twentieth century art world coming to be led by American instead of French capitalism. Whilst France in the nineteenth century had spectacular finance capitalists such as the Péreire Brothers who, for instance, founded the Credit Mobilier and financed Baron Haussmann's anti-proletarian reconstruction of the central Paris built environment during the Second Empire, such financiers, including the Rothschilds, were not as intimate with contemporary art as were the Rockefellers in New York in the nineteen forties and fifties. Nor were the nineteenth century French finance capitalists so intimately wedded to the security organs of the French state as the Rockefellers became to those of the US state during and after World War 2. It is the Rockefeller phrase 'free enterprise painting' that explicitly joins the concept of avant-garde artist to that of capitalist entrepreneur, and, to use Elizabeth Fones-Wolf's term, 'the selling of free enterprise'.

43. Unlike Caro's stultified and frozen 'The pictures stand for nothing but themselves' (see note #30 above), T. J. Clark can articulate a lot out of a picture. In respect of wringing something out of Tony Oursler's faces, in an article titled, 'The Painting of Postmodern Life', Clark argues, and through a series of questions, the following:

"Maybe just putting a *post* in front of Modernism is inadequate, but would I not agree that modernity has been reconfigured in the last thirty or forty years? Reconfigured to the point of becoming something else …
And is not part of that reconfiguration a new form of visually spreading like a virus through the culture at large – a new trajectory of visualization, a tipping of the social balance from a previous regime of the word to a present regime of the image? Surely that circumstance offers visual *art* a special opportunity? Is it not uniquely placed to enter into dialogue with what has now emerged as the central means of production of a newly imagined life? Or will what looks to be a unique opportunity turn out to be exactly the problem? Will the closeness of visual art to the actual present instrumentation of power – the current means of production of subjects – turn out to be not closeness but identity? Is not visual art in the process of becoming simply and irrevocably *part* of the apparatus of image-life production? Is this not the real sense of the much-noticed fact (a flip through the pages of *Parkett* and *Artforum* confirms the fact, relentlessly, monotonously) that the one of demarcation between visual art and the fashion industry, for example, simply does not exist any longer? Not only does it not exist, but art glories in its non-existence."

[T. J. Clark, 'The Painting of Postmodern Life', *Modernities*, (Barcelona: Quaderns Portatils, Museu d'Art Contemporain de Barcelona, 2000). pp. 7-8.]

44. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 has exponentially increased the corporate hold on the AGMOAS, not least ensuring that a chain of new Russian capitalist oligarchs became prominent collectors and they are moored firmly alongside artists within the ROD of art on both sides of the old capitalist/communist border. Some idea of the financial weight of these collectors can be gauged from the following passage from David Harvey:

"Shock market therapy in Russia put seven oligarchs in control of nearly half the economy within a few years (Putin has been fighting them ever since)."

[David Harvey, ibid., Kindle edition, 6%, (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2010)]

45 The individual pathologies of artists have, certainly throughout the twentieth century, been a subject that has enjoyed a lot of focus (to call it inquiry would perhaps grant the event too much analytical credit), not to mention sustaining a lot of cultural gossip. Behind the scientific inquiry in such matters, on a wider Western cultural level there is a kind of oft-repressed populist root cliché, 'the mad artist'. This cliché still perhaps cloudily circulates amongst the current media-drenched panegyrics, exclamations, condemnations and reproaches addressed to contemporary art practice. In recent decades inquiries into the character of artists' output have been made based on the assessment of medical conditions. Such inquiries have occasionally been directed at the cases of both living and dead artists alleged to be suffering from such conditions, have been broadcast in the media. For example, on British TV channels there have been commentaries by Susan Greenfield discussing, amongst other similar cases (but these were people who either do not practice art at all or, who, if they do, have not yet reached the pantheon of Western art) the case of Van Gogh apparently suffering (if this is quite the right verb) from the condition of Temporal Lobe Epilepsy. In respect of a case of a living artist being the subject of an analysis of his cognitive state, see Matthew Collings discussing Willem de Kooning's apparent development of Alzheimer's disease. Incidentally, for me, this is one of the better ones of the many Collings programmes. [Susan Greenfield, *Brain Story*, BBC TV, 2000. Matthew Collings, *The Greatest Living Painter: De Kooning*, Omnibus, BBC TV, February, 1995.]

46. Adam Curtis has made three TV programmes that offer a telling survey of such manipulation, intrusion and surveillance: (1) *The Century of the Self*, BBC4, 2002; (2) *The Trap: Whatever Happened to our Dream of Freedom*, BBC2, 2007; and, (3) *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Care*, BBC2, 2011.

47. Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason: How the Enlightenment Transformed the Way We See Our Bodies and Souls*, (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 138.

48. Ibid. pp. 3-4.

49. Wendy Brown, *Edgework: Critical Essays in Knowledge and Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), Kindle Edition, 55%.
50. Ibid.

51. Matt Ridley (5th Viscount Ridley) in the light of events since 2007, fits the perfect neoliberal profile. He, for many years, trumpeted neoliberalism's alleged virtues (basically the free market) and continues to do so. He has written about its alleged natural evolutionary character (*The*

Red Queen [1994], *The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves* [2010], etc., etc.). Ridley was a prominent ideologue for *The Economist*. He was praised by Bill Clinton (surely the consummate neoliberal commendation), awarded the Hayek Prize (surely yet another consummate neoliberal commendation), and has committed (perhaps behaved would be a more appropriate verb in this case) neoliberalism's now infamous mistakes. Ridley was non-executive chairman of Northern Rock when it collapsed in 2007 and the venture had to be bailed out by that characteristic socialist instrument – public ownership. The bank was taken into state ownership in early 2008. In November 2011 Virgin Money bought Northern Rock for £747 million. The deal was finalized in January 2012. Although the deal means that the British government (in this case read taxpayer) is to lose hundreds of millions on the deal, it argues that this represented the best deal for the taxpayer. The National Audit Office is to investigate the sale of the bank to Virgin. Judging by the Office's past record, not too much should be expected of the investigation.

52. The intrusion of the business model into the British pre-business model fine art school culture was a strange affair. Unsurprisingly, I suppose, the introduction of the business model has generated a number of performance variations. Perhaps the first point to note is an obvious one; that the business manager type art school head was, since they were head of school, by definition, full-time. A second was that there was a typology of these heads of school, departments, etc., in the earlier years of the conversion of art schools into business schools. First, there was the newly appointed head direct from business (for example, I came across one head of fine art who came from a management post in a prominent corporate glass company). This kind of head of school exhibited two main characteristics, not infrequently simultaneously. One that prioritized the business model out of conviction to what they thought an appropriate way to run a business, and one in which they saw themselves as contributing to what might be called the established 'cultural aspirations' of fine art practice. Whatever the respective proportion of these characteristics, they were not necessarily mutually exclusive and in most, perhaps all, cases, this habitually entailed viewing art practice as a career rather than a practice. Such appointments often had the accompanying academic rank of professor attached to them and this trend had first been established when the polytechnics, in which many British art schools became situated by the late nineteen seventies, began to attain university status in the later eighties and throughout the nineties. This latter characteristic was especially attractive to those teaching staff in the art schools who, at the point where their institutions attained university status, judged that this newly acquired status gave them increased sociocultural standing. Obviously, this characteristic was attractive to the wider art school teaching community since, equally important, such elevation often meant a significant hike in wages. It was

not unknown to meet old art school cultural veterans who saw themselves as now zealously part of the new business culture of art schools – and the converted zealot is often the individual who most avidly embraces the (newly acquired) ideology, not to mention status. The introduction of this business model inevitably entailed a noticeable increase in time spent in meetings and administrative paperwork. Certainly, in my view, the old art school culture left a lot to be desired, much less special pleading on behalf of the various versions of the AGMOAS for one thing. But the proliferating bureaucratic tendency of the newly converted business model version of the art school seemed, paradoxically, to bureaucratically augment and magnify much of this old special pleading. Certainly the pre-business school model art schools would have been improved by acquiring an attitude that more respected the notion of an efficient and ethically sound bureaucracy, rather than embracing uncritically some notion of the artist as a super-individualist. Whilst this would have run contra to many ideas in the old art schools concerning romantic stereotypes of the concept of the artist, it might have provided bureaucrats who had informed views about the complexity and development of practice and were not so fixated on business models. But the conversion to business models in art school management in the nineties seems only to have amplified and increasingly bureaucratically imbedded the established models of the artistic subject, especially the AGMOAS, and this time much more as a professional brand and a logo.

53. The character of neoliberal economics and finance is complicated and attenuated, not to mention deceptive as the events since 2007 have revealed. A fairly thorough commentary on this character can be found in the works of a number of Italian and Swiss-Italian economists and social commentators. Christian Marazzi, *Capital and Language*, (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2008), and, *The* Violence *of Financial Capitalism*, (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011); Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of Our Times*, (London: Verso, 1994); Paolo Virno, *A* Grammar *of the Multitude*, (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2004); Franco Berardi, *The Soul at Work: From Alienation to Autonomy,* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009); and, Federico Rampini, *New Economy*, (Bari: Laterza, 2000). Outside of this group of economists and social analysts, readers may also find the following of use: Noam Chomsky, *Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and Global Order*, (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998); Peter Drucker, *The Unseen Revolution: How Pension Fund Socialism Came to America*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1993); Daniel Cohen, *The Nature of Capitalism in the Information Age*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004); and, David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

54. "The hidden face of financialization, of the current production of 'debt traps' as happened with the subprime bubble, is constituted by the production and exportation – silent but real – of what we call the common. The common is the entire knowledge, understanding, information, images, affects and serial relations that are strategically subject to the production of goods. In respect of natural primary materials, which are limited, these new common cognitive and immaterial goods that capital appropriates are theoretically unlimited, hence their privatization (for example with copyrights and patents or with some simple privatization of entire sections of public service networks) brings about the artificial creation of *scarcity* through private property." Christian Marazzi, *The Violence of Financial Capitalism*, (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011), pp. 118-19.

55. Christian Marazzi, ibid. p. 121.

56. This is part of what Wendy Brown calls 'the dance of the petrified'. I link it to the following passage from Brown:

"[It asks] … whether our contemporary crisis of truth has not been displaced into an endless stream of words about ourselves, words that presume to escape epistemological challenges because they are personal and experiential. It asks as well whether this stream of words does not perpetuate the crisis of which it is a symptom." (Op cit., Kindle edition 55%)

Brown contends that the situation the questions describe is 'the confessional subject run amok', which seems to me to be a pretty accurate description of the present state of the AGMOAS and the notion of 'presuming to escape epistemological challenge' is about as a good a description of the notion of the artistic subject as a self-confirming centre of truth as can be made.

57. Gould, pp. 217-18.

58. Ibid. p. 228.

59. The notion that Pop Art could be superseded was one of the junctures in Fine-Artz ideas that I began by 1966 to think was of little point, and was an item, once I had left Fine-Artz, that I saw little reason to further spend time thinking very much about. I suppose by the early months of 1966 the issue of whether or not it could be superseded was of less and less importance to me, it was becoming less and less an issue with which I thought worth engaging. It was one of the items on the agenda of becoming more and more disengaged from Fine-Artz. In retrospect, as is often the case, by 1967 and the enacting of the initial moves in practice that led to the forming of Art & Language in 1969, it was fairly easy to see that during the

early months of 1966, say, January to April, in respect of my exchange and input into Fine-Artz, I began to practice a more cautious approach to Fine-Artz ideas. This was not without some difficulties since I was responsible for finding the venue and acting as ongoing conduit for the upcoming exhibition in Birmingham of *Miss Misty and the Tri-Cool Data*. Again in retrospect, in 1974, I began to realize that once in group working exchange, I have never been good at clearing my head of group loyalty, as I found out once more during the years 1972-74, when leaving Art & Language (David Bainbridge was much better at making this kind of decision, at least he was in 1971 when he so clearly and emphatically announced he was leaving Art & Language). In respect of my leaving Fine-Artz in 1966 it was the witnessing of the Fine-Artz event *Miss Misty and the Tri-Cool Data* that focused my repressed critique and caused me to protest – to put it mildly. I was disappointed when I actually saw the event realized. Witnessing the event confirmed some suspicion I had about myself in relation to the Fine-Artz group. Almost immediately at the end of the event, and alcohol fuelled, I demonstrated my frustration with the situation. I behaved badly, but I guess I could not figure out any other way to register my apprehension that I judged I was in an increasingly unrewarding cognitive situation and therefore in the wrong practice.

Again, in retrospect, by 1970 I saw my leaving Fine-Artz as strongly linked to the fact that at that time, 1966-67, my 1950s investment in rock'n'roll as an instrument aiding the realization of a more socially democratic society was beginning to appear a pretty foolish one. To the contrary, by 1966 I at least had a suspicion that rock'n'roll as music industry-driven was as much an instrument for producing rich kids to become models of and for capitalist consumership and celebrity hubris, as it was for promoting some, at best, skewered notion of equality of opportunity. Keeping in mind here that, much like art practice, for every successful individual and group there were a thousand that fell by the wayside, not all of them any worse, again much like art practice, than many of those who did succeed. By 1969, due not least to my exchange in Art & Language with David Bainbridge, Michael Baldwin and Harold Hurrell, I perhaps had clearer ideas as to the status of rock'n'roll and the complexity of its capitalist expansion than I did in 1966. Whilst all the Art & Language personnel continued to enjoy much of the music rock'n'roll had produced I think, by that time, we were under little illusion as to where it was heading. This is not to say that there were not, and remain, serious attempts at dissent within the rock'n'roll constituency. It is an atemporal, long and cryptic pathway from Country Joe and the Fish at Woodstock in 1969, the Dixie Chicks in 2003 and CSNY and the DÉJÀ VU tour in 2004, to Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Cliff Richard, and Sir Elton John at the 2012 Royal Jubilee Concert. Whilst the courage of the former groups is to be admired, I doubt they will have very much impact upon the neoliberal device of consuming celebrity, which is one of the main instruments of

social control and compulsive imitative consumership, the latter of which is a main part of the former.

In the late fifties, US rock'n'roll and the Soviet space programme were two primary cultural programmes which seemed to me to offer an optimistic vista of solid cultural investment for a better more equitable future society, this was buttressed too by the Cuban Revolution. With the exception of the Cuban Revolution, by the late sixties I had almost completely revised my view. By that time I was pretty well convinced that both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the US, the Wilson administrations in the UK and the Gaullist imperium in France and equally the input of the freezing Brezhnev Stalinist reflex in the Soviet Union could all clearly be seen as more of the same hierarchical top-down edifices. In the late sixties the US space programme seemed to offer up some of the best aspects of American scientific culture, whilst its rock'n'roll culture, despite its dissenting sector, was clearly by that time out to set up the American Dream factory of celebrity hubris, not the least figures of which were, paradoxically, some of its leading dissenter chanteurs. Alongside this, America, always complicated, found itself generating and sustaining a militant civil rights campaign and Black Power movement, with these movements unfolding alongside the most vehement US imperialist adventurism in Vietnam. In the same era if I had any doubts about whether or not the Brezhnev regime was a vicious frozen revival of the Stalinist reflex then the Soviet totalitarian juggernaut's crushing of the Prague Spring was an incontrovertible symptom that it was. In the longer ideological run, and set against this disappearance of original teenage hopes, I vaguely (too vaguely by any measure) thought, back then in the late 1960s, that Darwin's theory (not that I fully understood it then and probably still don't) would make inexorable progress in becoming accepted as the solid scientific theory it is. Instead today, forty years later, Richard Dawkins is still compelled to write a book laying out the evidence for the theory. In one of his later books, after opening the Preface with the following two sentences:

"The evidence for evolution grows stronger by the day, and has never been stronger. At the same time, paradoxically, ill-informed opposition is also stronger."

In a later passage from the same Preface, where after recounting the sequence and very briefly summarizing the nature of the content of some of the earlier books he has written, Dawkins states the following:

"Looking back on those books, I realized that the evidence for evolution itself was nowhere explicitly set out, and this was a serious gap I needed to close. The year 2009 seemed like a good time, it being the bicentennial year of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of *On the Origin of Species*."

Richard Dawkins, *The Greatest Show on Earth,* (New York: Free Press, 2009), pp. vii-viii.

The books Dawkins refers to are, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: OUP, 1976), *The Extended Phenotype* (Oxford: OUP, 1982), *The Blind Watchmaker* (New York: Norton, 1986), *River Out of Eden* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), *Climbing Mount Improbable* (New York: Norton, 1996), and, *The Ancestor's Tale* (Boston: Houghton Miffin, 2004). I take Dawkins' long struggle to try and offer up the evidence for Darwin's theory as plausible as an appropriate response to the constant reassertion of conservatively superstitious culture over the forty years since the late sixties. Rock'n'roll and the AGMOAS have been far from immune from this reassertion. It occurs to me frequently these days that the Corporate Tyranny's hold on the AGMOAS may be one of the most prominent cultural signs of this reassertion, not quite as prominent a symptom as is its hold on rock'n'roll, but glaring enough.

60. John Von Neumann and Edward Teller were two notable and vociferous opponents of anything that even remotely smacked of socialist sympathy. In respect of scientific culture, there have been acclaimed scientists who have protested at least certain aspects of the trenchant Western embrace of capitalism; Oppenheimer, Pauling and Szilard, for example, in contrast to scientists like Von Neumann and Teller, have exhibited sympathy for socialist ideals. Of these latter, perhaps one of the oddest, and most brilliant, is Paul Dirac, who, at various times throughout his long professional life, sustained an interest in Soviet life, especially Soviet science, seemingly able to ignore the Stalinist reflex so imbedded by the 1930s in Soviet culture. (See, Graham Farmelo, *The Strangest Man: The Hidden Life of Paul Dirac, Quantum Genius*, (London: Faber & Faber, 2009)). Contrast the view of Bertrand Russell, one of the most influential figures on the view I have of practice, who from the early days of the Soviet project arraigned it with a sustained and prophetic attack.

61. Marazzi, *Capital and Language*, p. 153.

62. Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

63. Cited in, Marazzi, *Capital and Language,* p. 40.
64. *Cloud Gate*, Wikpedia, (p. 2 of printout).

65. Ibid. (p. 6 of printout).

66. The contrasting position is the notion of the 'artist as helpless (and

sometimes also hapless) transmitter', equally familiar in the AGMOAS; see, for example, the remarks comparing the similarities between Robert Smithson's and Paul Klee's modeling of their artistic subjectivity on pp. 100-101 above. And the model of the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth fits just as well with the version of artist as 'helpless transmitter' ('I can't help being profound') as it does with the more assertive version 'Since I am a successful artist I am profound'.

67. A $23 million cost is tiny compared to the sums involved in the global capitalist economy, for example, consider it alongside the sums required to bail out the failing British banks in 2008. Nevertheless, as a fee for constructing what can be called a 'public art' work it is a tidy sum. If the cost is compared to the money in the contemporary art economy, say, when I started at the Slade in 1960, it takes on astronomical proportions. Viewed in this kind of trajectory, it is a reasonably accurate index of the deluge of corporate money now pumped into, in various ways, the contemporary art economy; proof of the dependence of the AGMOAS upon corporate culture and its integration into that culture.

68. Chuck Goudie, *Bill is in for "The Bean"*, ABC7 News, Chicago, July 13th, 2009, (printout). Goudie, in drawing a comparison between Kapoor's fee and Picasso's donation is clearly saying nothing particularly explicit about the status of the AGMOAS. But implicitly he perhaps does commend the model insofar as he seems to be using the Picasso sculpture as a model of economic parsimony, and therefore virtue, and the Kapoor sculpture as being economically indulgent. The pricing of the AGMOAS in this way accords with the popular view of evaluating the AGMOAS. There is, obviously, nothing explicit in Goudie's article which questions the cognitive value of the AGMOAS as the successful 'progressive' model, panning out as wealthy = cognitively successful, nor anything in his article to suggest a connection between corporate economic intrusion/dependency and cognitive degrading.

69. David Harvey argues, in *The Enigma of Capital I,* that the distinction between nature and culture can be overdone. It is unarguable that the projects and outcomes of human social and cultural activity are increasingly invasive into the natural state of the planet and its surrounding environment, the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were perhaps an early spectacular example of this. And our present concern with environmental issues is proof enough. These issues are the outcomes of the effects of the ongoing Industrial Revolution of the past two hundred years, of which it seems the human population planet-wide has to increasingly take account. On the other hand, as Stephen Gould reminds us in the passages cited earlier in this essay, it does seem to be the case that, for example:

"The most impressive contrast between natural evolution and cultural change lies embedded in a major fact of our history. We have no evidence that the modal form of human bodies or brains have changed at all in the past 100,000 years … The Cro-Magnon people who painted the caves at Lascaux and Altamira are us." (See, p. 10 above)

70. The wider Western public perception of the concept of the scientist seem to oscillate across a kind of scale upon which at one end, the negative end, sits the Frankenstein image, and, at the other, the positive end, sits a model of the scientist as an instrument delivering public benefit. In the thirties and forties, perhaps right up to the end of the sixties, the concept sat more toward the positive end. In the thirties, for example, the New York World Fair projected science and technology as universally beneficial, a wide-ranging bestower of a more secure lifestyle, a delivery mechanism of the relief from domestic and industrial drudgery, and of projects of civic grandeur and engineering prowess and achievement. This was maybe very Western culture centred. And this Western-centred view was nowhere perhaps more publicly reinforced in the West than by the act that closed WW2 in August 1945 – the achievement of the invention and delivery of the atomic bombs (to hint at the atomic physics involved, the Hiroshima bomb used uranium-235 and the Nagasaki bomb used plutonium-239). In the West the Manhattan project's outcome was seen as something like saviour science, since its driving origin had been to beat Hitler to the bomb's invention. In late 1945 I doubt the Japanese had the same view of the matter. Throughout the fifties and sixties, science continued to sit toward the positive end of the scale. For example, Salk's invention of the polio vaccine in 1955, and the Soviet-American space race during the fifties and sixties, especially the Soviet Sputnik in 1957, Yuri Gagarin's first manned space flight in 1961, and the US moon landing in 1969 when Apollo 11 crewed by Michael Collins, Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong landed Armstrong and Aldrin on the moon's surface. Since the seventies the concept of the scientist has moved more toward the negative end of the scale but it is far from a steady state. The scientific projects that have achieved the GM crops, stem cell research, and cloning, for example, are far from viewed as achievements by significant numbers throughout the world. Scientific experiments with animals provoke vociferous and sometimes violent opposition. And as Richard Dawkins writes (see note #58 above): 'The evidence for evolution grows stronger by the day, and has never been stronger. At the same time, paradoxically, ill-informed opposition is also stronger than I can remember.' Although the surface, if not of the substrate, of Western societies is noticeably more secular than it was, say, fifty years ago, in the US right wing religious ideology exercises significant power on US consciousness. But at the fundamental epistemological level it is arguable that Darwin's theory exercises real

influence on people's view of themselves. The American right's obsession with Creationism and 'intelligent design' is typically procrastinatory on the concept of the scientist. Is it arguing that religion is science or that science is religion? Either way it seems to be pretty absurd. On a less religiously dogmatic wider front, in Western society today the concept of the scientist seems to be one of mixed messages.

71. Marazzi, *Capital and Language*, p. 23.

72. Ibid. Especially Chapter 1, 'From Post-Fordism to the New Economy'.

73. Ibid. pp. 47-48.

74. http://www.NYTimes.com (accessed 2008/9/17)

75. http://www.economist.com/mode/16990811 (accessed 2008/9/17)

76. Ibid.

77. In media coverage of David Hockney's recent show at the Royal Academy in London, Hockney was shown, and the media coverage seemed to make a point of it, using an iPad to build up to a painting. The implement was billed, at least in the media exchanges, as a kind of aid for working out and working up to the painting. Hockney himself was shown (TV) using the iPad, and cited (printed media) explaining the point. In respect of Hockney's claim that he produces the work himself (see note #38 above) there seems to be no inconsistency here – the iPad is another aid to a working process which is firmly set in the nineteenth century model of the artist as sole producer of the art work which carries her or his signature.

78. Marazzi, *Capital and Language*, see especially chapter 1, 'From Post-Fordism to the New Economy'.

79. Again, this 'pioneer's hymn' is an attempt to summarize the input and impact of the linked notions of 'expanded notion of object' and the 'embrace of the new materials' ethos which became so familiar in the early more reductively programmatic framework in Minimalism and at the start of so-called conceptual art. Both the 'expanded notion of object' and 'the embrace of new materials' ethos was expansive in what I have, in earlier writings, called the 'trek out' and the 'trek in'. The 'trek out' was exemplified by the moves out into the physical environment (the spread into geographical space) in the work of the likes of Robert Smithson and Michael Heizer. The 'trek in' was the textual 'reduction' of the object to a kind of nominalism (declaring the 'work' in and as language

– the declaration device) exemplified in the early textual works of Art & Language. Neither succeeded as a trek out of the AGMOAS. Both practices were unable to break out. But, it should be noted, in the case of work such as that of Smithson and Heizer the model of the artistic subject remained conventionally avant-garde, whilst it was not articulated at all, it was taken as a kind of act of faith that the AGMOAS could sustain 'advanced work', that art could and would 'progress' (see the remarks on Caroline Jones' views on the matter in the main body of remarks in this essay). Accordingly there was a contentment with the AGMOAS, and therefore there was no attempt and no aim to move out from the AGMOAS. In the case of Art & Language 1967-69 there was a marked dissatisfaction, and therefore an awareness, of the inadequacy of the model in respect of achieving a substantial cognitive practice. But, in the end, and I was as much to blame as anyone for this, it seems that requirements of career took precedent over the requirements of practice.

80. Deregulation, more often than not, means deregulation of the boss - in order that the boss can better regulate the employees. Deregulation of the financial system, as we now know to our costs, means regulation of the taxpayer in order that the taxpayer can be compelled to bail out the bank management. As for deregulation of public transport, certainly in the UK, most everyone who uses the system has a tale to tell, especially about service in relation to rising fares. Deregulation is, in one way or another, another name for the effort by capitalism to achieve its required 3% profit margins.

81. Julie Schweitert, *Matadornews*, August 12th, 2008. http://www.Matadornetwork.com

82. Jacques Élisée Reclus was a geographer who, having joined the National Guard, defended Paris against the Versaillais during the Commune in 1871. He is an important figure in the development of geography as a major study. Reclus conceptualized geography as necessarily formed by social relations and class interests. In this sense he was an important forerunner of Henri Lefebvre's notion that everyday life is primarily a spatial concept. Reclus was anarchist in outlook and conviction, and disputed many of the Marxist views of the method of achieving a more just society. In his view concerning the effects of social relations being an important influence on geographical study he might be considered today as a forerunner of a geographer like David Harvey. For a telling study of Reclus' contribution to the Commune and his placement alongside such figures as Rimbaud and Courbet, see Kristin Ross, *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1988).

83. For a vivid and articulate account of these events in the UK, see Owen

Hatherley, *A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain*, (London: Verso, 2011).

84. Bob Kerslake, now Sir Bob Kerslake, was the appointed but unelected chief administrator of (ostensibly for) Sheffield's New Labour Council. In this role that began in 1997, he was a paragon of New Labour anti-socialism bourgeoisification, and a destructive automaton of Sheffield's council housing stock. He increased the housing waiting list in Sheffield by a quite spectacular amount. After his visitation upon Sheffield he rose to dizzier heights, which is where he presently presides. Being appointed as chair of the Homes and Communities Agency (2008-10) a super quango, merging the PPP sponsors English Partnerships with the Housing Corporation. Opportunist to the last, this Trojan Horse of council housing in this appointment intended to sponsor new social housing which, he claimed, was to help people through the property crash. In September 2010 he was appointed Permanent Secretary at the Department of Communities and Local Government. Whilst hanging on to this latter job he rose to even dizzier heights, being appointed in 2012 to succeed Gus O'Donnell as Head of the Home Civil Service, noting that he shares the civil service chief managing role with Sir Jeremy Heywood, who is appointed Cabinet Secretary. For an intelligent and cutting assessment of Kerslake's impact in Sheffield, see Hatherley, ibid. pp. xix-xxi, and pp. 96-97, and, http://themeasurestaken.blogspot.com *The Measures Taken*, May 2nd, 2009.

85. See, for example, the tale of Matt Ridley, briefly recounted in note #50 above. A roll call of the neoliberal authoritarian 'wise men' can be chronicled at this stage: Sir Fred Goodwin, the mandarins at Enron, the Murdoch media empire, Lehman Brothers, Fanny Mae, Madoff, Barclays and Bob Diamond – only the tip of the iceberg no doubt! And let us not forget the political delegates who contributed to the implementation of all this chicanery: Thatcher, Reagan, the Bushes, Blair, Brown and the idiocies of New Labour.

86. Urban Splash is an architectural practice that specializes in renovating and 'updating' already established buildings. By the end of the New Labour administrations in 2009, the practice was practically hegemonic in respect of such projects throughout the UK. It has a significant presence in current projects in Birmingham (it has already 'renewed' the Rotunda) and splashes its presence at Fort Dunlop. It has implemented projects in, for example, Sheffield (Park Hill), Bristol (Lakeside), Liverpool (Tribeca), Morecambe (the Midland Hotel), and has a huge presence in its home city of Manchester. During the last years of New Labour it was ubiquitous. Like Ridley and Kerslake it is a paragon of what was before 2007 considered the neoliberal virtues. Owen Hatherley's *A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain,* (London: Verso, 2010), has some trenchant tracking of various of

Urban Splash's projects - as does his blog (http://nastybrutalistandshort.blogspot.co.uk/)

87. Art schools and rock'n'roll were soul-mates in the fifties and early sixties. Since the emergence of Pop Art and its installation in the pantheon of Western art, not least via an artist like Warhol, the concept of the avant-garde has become infinitely re-usable for purposes of recycling the fixed social criteria of celebrity. In respect of the UK, art school culture has been claimed by, and itself proclaimed, a whole series of figures and groups. In main line pop, for example, Lennonism at Liverpool, Brian Ferry at Newcastle, Ian Durie at Walthamstow, Charlie Watts at the Royal College. Pete Townshend has also advocated his contacts with art school/art world figures as some kind of significant influence on his musical work. This is the conventional rock'n'roll track. Then there is a kind of protest/social concern track, for example Gang of Four at Leeds University, Scritti Politti at Leeds Metropolitan (or Leeds Polytechnic as it was in their day) had members of the group from these art schools, and Pulp had links to Sheffield Hallam art school, Jarvis Cocker attended St Martins. On the wider international stage and outside the art school track, one of the most prominent social concern platforms in recent years was the Déjà Vu tour that CSNY performed in protesting the 2003 Iraq war. This was a courageous event to undertake; they played venues in the US southern states that were hostile to their message. See the CD, *CSNY: Déjà vu*, A Neil Young film, 2008.

88. The art schools remain, to this day, particularly vulnerable to this kind of flattery – all the neoliberal rhetoric cosseting such notions as challenge, risk and entrepreneurship.

89. On this list of areas within British cities I have not mentioned any area of Belfast. Obviously, throughout much of this period Northern Ireland was a sociopolitical cauldron, frequently being in a state of near civil war.

90. Hatherley, *New Ruins, etc.* p. 141.

III - THREE CITIES

1. A popular art school/art world view at that time was that the part-time teacher taught in order to fund proceeding with his/her work. Roughly, adopt a kind of half-career of teaching to support the pathway to a full career as an artist - a kind of hierarchy of careers. After proclaiming in what follows in these remarks that I have held teaching to be the at the

centre of my practice, I still have some kind of insubordinate, if these days somewhat repressed, sympathy for this sentiment, if only because part-time teachers are more vulnerable to the whims of our political masters. Nevertheless, I do not think part-time teachers have any better record than full-time ones in respect of what seems to me to be much of the whimsical and epistemologically puerile crap I have overheard and observed in art schools over the past forty years or so, although it should be noted that the epistemologically puerile crap is, since such stuff is, more often than not, issued by those holding the point of view that 'my own work' is more important than teaching.

2. I was embroiled in the break up of my first marriage at that time.

3. David Wise was appointed to teach in the Research Workshops a few months after I started teaching there. He came from Newcastle University Fine Art Department, in which Richard Hamilton was teaching at that time. I found Wise an interesting and knowledgeable person and rewarding to talk with. As 1965 progressed and through into 1966 we became allies together, sharing and reinforcing our increasing skepticism toward Eric Rimmington's views on teaching and art in general; we became kind of allies by necessity. David Wise admired Surrealism more than I did, but I found his politics engaging and had a lot of sympathy for his political views. He was a near identical twin. His twin Stuart was of a sufficient physical likeness to him (at least to an outsider like myself) and a sufficient match of David's views and demeanor that I sometimes wondered whether it was David or Stuart who came to teach at the Research Workshops. To see them together and hear them in full political throttle was sufficiently memorable for me to still recall vividly, nearly fifty years later, parts of exchanges with them in one or another of the art school pubs we used to visit after finishing work.

4. One of the strongest reasons why I took the job at Birmingham was that in the framework, confused as it turned out to be, I had explained to me about this newly starting venture, that the fact that it proposed that the teachers would work on projects, so to write, amongst and with the students. At the time I took the job, I found this very persuasive and saw it as chiming with my commitment to Fine-Artz practice. Thus conforming to my participation in Fine-Artz at that time, the first project I planned in the Research Workshops was that I would build a dragster *in situ*. This I started as soon as I started teaching in September 1964. However, over the last half of the second year of teaching (roughly the first six months of 1966), as my commitment to Fine-Artz became more hesitant, the emergent dragster stuttered to a stop and increasingly became a kind of visible index, at least to me, of my cautiously forming disenchantment with Fine-Artz. When I left Birmingham in 1966 for Coventry College of Art, I had to trash the

half-completed dragster, which had for the past five or six months stood in the Workshops like some derelict fragment from some industrial workshop. The demolition of its skeletal remains was not without some regret, but by that time I was starting to move on and was starting to attempt to re-think some concerns I had before my association with Fine-Artz. I had started to re-read Bertrand Russell's *Mysticism and Logic*, which I had not considered since 1963, and I was also becoming familiar with so-called Minimalist work which was another growing influence on my view of practice at that time, and, although I had only an ill-formed sense of it, my ideas about practice were beginning to change. It was only after six months at Coventry that I could see some strong form to this change of direction.

5. By this time the tension between Rimmington's views on art and the views of Wise and myself was palpable. Rimmington had no time for either of us – I think he thought our ideas ridiculous and maybe even dangerous in some respects - and Wise and myself had nothing but contempt for his ideas. I guess we, each in our different ways, regarded his embrace of avant-gardism as, at best, a pompous copy of Duchampian strategies and hopelessly anachronistic.

6. Lucas had big factories in Birmingham, and Dunlop, the tyre producer, had a huge factory right alongside the M6; and this is to say nothing of the myriad middle-size and small factories that bespangled the city.

7. Union presence in the big factories in Birmingham was always significant at this time. A forceful demonstration of this presence was enacted in 1972 when 30,000 engineers from across Birmingham marched to Saltley Gate in support of the striking miners who were picketing Saltley Gate Coke Depot. On the other hand, despite a serious union representation, working on the hectic Fordist organized track at Longbridge in the seventies could be precarious. Layoffs were frequent, often conducted on a last in-first out basis, and deaths on the track happened. Whilst Birmingham has seen fairly active union leaders, many of them have been far from militant. Derek Robinson (Red Robbo) was a noted militant convenor and shop steward at Longbridge, but Bill Jordan was an equally noted figure, but an establishment oriented, not to mention sycophantic, Trade Union official. He is now known as Baron Jordan of Bournville, which seems to rather prove the point. Another moderate, but perhaps less establishment collaborative, Trade Union eminenti from Birmingham is Bill Morris. He was General Secretary of TGWU. He lived in Handsworth during his first years in Britain after leaving Jamaica. He was a noted supporter of Tony Blair, at least in the early Blairite administrations. It was during the Blairite period that he received his honours. He now sits in the House of Lords and is known as Baron Morris of Handsworth. No doubt there are readers who remember the phrase 'Trade Union barons'. I doubt whether Derek

Robinson would have ever been appointed Baron Robinson of Longbridge, although no doubt if Jack Dromey, the present Labour MP for Erdington, had he won the election over Bill Morris in the 1995 TGWU election for General Secretary, he would have been, on his retirement, have been happy enough to accept the title of Baron Dromey of, say, Erdington. Oh for the days of Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon (Baron Scanlon of Davyhulme – resistance is apparently hard to maintain!) and Arthur Scargill (it is possible to maintain resistance).

8. There was of course quite a number of left wing Labour MPs in Attlee's party after WW2. Manny Shinwell and Sidney Silverman for two!

9. Liverpool became an especial target of the spleen of part of the Tory party and media throughout the eighties. In keeping with this extreme Whig anxiety about inner city populations and how to control them, and especially Liverpool, is the document recording Lord Howe's remarks exposing him as making statements concerning the city in which he suggested the city be allowed to suffer a controlled decline. This letter was amongst the documents released in 2011 under the thirty-year rule. His remarks, reported through the disclosure of a letter he sent to Margaret Thatcher at the time of the Toxteth riots in 1981, state he wrote that he urged Thatcher's administration to abandon Liverpool to managed decline. Howe has denied that this was a plea for such management in a series of bumbling, procrastinatory and unconvincing recent encounters in the media. But the main attacker of Liverpool's socialist city politics and administrations was the now Baron Kinnock of Bedwellty. Throughout the eighties, Kinnock led the charge of the emergent New Labour in executing expulsions of the organizational apparatus and individual members of Militant Tendency from the Labour Party. Incidentally, the remarks of Peter Taaffe in the late eighties, a leading figure in Militant, on the US-backed Mujahideen, make telling reading today. But without any doubt, the most spectacularly gross attack on the character of the city of Liverpool by the right wing press came in the reporting of the causes of the Hillsborough disaster in 1989. This disgraceful institutional cover-up has turned out to be a poisoned chalice for the right wing press, not least for the *Sun* newspaper and its right-wing malignant editorial gob of that time, Kelvin MacKenzie. Phil Scratton in his book, *Hillsborough: The Truth,* (Edinburgh and London: Mainstream Publishing, 2009 edition), exposed the angle, demeanour and blind spitefulness of the Tory and media attack on the supporters of Liverpool FC. Scratton writes, and the quotes are worth committing to memory:

"A bullish government anticipating a 'law and order' victory over the miners had another target at which to direct its authoritarian crusade. Leon Brittan, then Home Secretary, did not disappoint. Two months later introducing the draconian white paper on public order … The following day the *Daily*

Express warmed to Brittan's theme, adding 'race riots, animal rights demos, Greenham, the miners' strike', and the 'Libyan Embassy siege' to 'soccer violence'. As Thatcher railed against the 'enemy within', she and her ministers fed the voracious appetite of a violence obsessed media." (p. 33)

And equally telling Phil Scratton records the following responses of Bernard Ingham, Thatcher's Chief Press Secretary:

"This has since become starkly apparent in observations made by Sir Bernard Ingham who, at the time, was Thatcher's press secretary, and accompanied (Thatcher) on her visit. He was privy to the press briefings and off- the-record comments surrounding the visit: 'I visited Hillsborough on the morning after the disaster. I know what I learned on the spot. There would have been no Hillsborough if a mob, who were clearly tanked up, had not tried to force their way into the ground. To blame the police is a cop-out. In replying to Dolores Steele, whose son Philip died at Hillsborough, Ingham reiterated his allegation that a 'tanked up mob had stormed the perimeter wall "causing" your son's death and I believe 95 others'. He continued, 'They are the guilty ones. They caused the terrible disaster and I am astonished that anyone can believe otherwise.' … The conclusions bore a remarkable similarity to Dukenfield's (The South Yorkshire Police inspector in charge of crowd control at the ground) lie in all but the 'broken gate' theory." (pp. 119-120)

Of such reliable objective outlooks are our political masters made! And perhaps we should not forget to mention here too that the Tory Joker in the Pack, the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson (the UK's current Foreign Minister), had to take a trip in 2004 to the banks of the Mersey to apologise for an article he wrote in the *Spectator* after the death of the Liverpool man Ken Bigley, taken hostage in Iraq. Johnson told the Scousers to stop wallowing in their 'victim status', and wrote as follows:

"The deaths of more than 50 Liverpool football supporters at Hillsborough in 1989 was undeniably a greater tragedy than the single death, however horrible, of Mr. Bigley; but that is no excuse for Liverpool's failure to acknowledge even to this day, the part played in the disaster by drunken fans at the back of the crowd who mindlessly tried to fight their way into the crowd that Saturday afternoon."

(Boris Johnson, 'Bigley's Fate', The Spectator, 16th October, 2004: https://www.spectator.co.uk/2004/10/bigleys-fate/ - last accessed August 1st, 2017)

Of such reliable objective outlook … etc!

10. I heard Ken Loach, at a public talk in Brighton, put the matter succinctly when he stated, 'that it was quite sexy to be on the Left in the sixties.' His TV film, *Cathy Come Home,* (BBC Production, 1966, first aired BBC1 November 16th, 1966 - teleplay by Jeremy Sandford, produced by Tony Garnett and directed by Ken Loach), was a social/cultural frontrunner media event in the mid-sixties and led pretty directly to new legislation.

11. In summary, my teaching sojourn in Birmingham had not been successful, but then I would not judge the sojourns in Coventry and Leeds as particularly successful either. In Birmingham not only was the ideology to which I had been a contributor in forming in Fine-Artz very difficult to situate in what turned out to be the rather conservative avant-garde regime that Rimmington instigated in the Research Workshops, but this, in turn, became compounded by my own increasing interrogation of my commitment to Fine-Artz, and the ensuing early attempt to make a different kind of practice. Thus far I have only written of the teaching I did in the Research Workshops. I have not mentioned that for one of the days of the two-day stint per week at Birmingham I taught on the Foundation Course at the Gem Street Annexe. This, for me at least, was a much better teaching environment than the Research Workshops, not least through the influence of full-time teachers such as Ken Hughes and Don Prince.

12. Contemporary with myself at the Slade were a number of students from Norwich School of Art, who appeared to coalesce around Michael Andrews; who, intermittently, taught for short spells at the Slade. Andrews was himself from Norwich, and seemed to have strong connections with Norwich School of Art. The students at that time all coalesced and explicitly claimed Andrews as a mentor. The only student from Norwich I remember as being at a distance from this coalition, although he was perfectly friendly toward and respectful of Andrews, was Colin Self.

13. I have a theory about how and why Bowstead and Jeffs came to the Slade rather than the Royal College of Art. It involved two factors. The first concerned the situation Bowstead and Jeffs found themselves in at Coventry, the regional school of art from which they came to the Slade. The second was the situation of the Slade itself and the Slade's attitude at that time concerning the status of Slade student work in comparison to that of student work at the RCA. In respect of some of the details of Bowstead's and Jeffs' Coventry situation I know that George Wall was one of their painting tutors during their time at Coventry. He had been to the Slade, and I think it was from him they gained information as to a comparison between the Slade and the RCA painting courses. When I came to Coventry later to teach, in 1966, I eventually became quite close friends with George Wall, and he recounted to me his memories of these discussions with Bowstead and Jeffs. Based on these discussions I have since presumed that George

Wall, to some extent, informed Bowstead's and Jeff's decision to apply for the Slade. In the year that Bowstead and Jeffs came to the Slade there was a big entry of Coventry students into the institution, including Bowstead and Jeffs at least seven. In respect of the Slade side of the juncture, it has always seemed to me to be pretty obvious why the Slade accepted Bowstead and Jeffs, although I have never heard it confirmed by the Slade. At the time Bowstead and Jeffs were accepted into the Slade in 1962, the student exhibition The Young Contemporaries was the main forum for student work. This exhibition had been started in 1949. In the late fifties and into the turn of the sixties students from the Royal College of Art had won many of the prizes, and had certainly collected much of the kudos from the exhibition. This was the generation of students at the RCA that included Peter Phillips, Derek Boshier, R. B. Kitaj, Pauline Boty, David Hockney and Frank Bowling; all were in the RCA painting department except Boty, who was a student in the stained glass department – and thereby hangs a tale of institutionalized sexism. At the Young Contemporaries of the early sixties these RCA students became prominent and the Royal College painting department gained considerable tribute. At the 1962 exhibition Bowstead and Jeffs were picked out as notable exhibitors. They were both at that time final-year students at Coventry College of Art. It was unusual for the work of students from regional art colleges to be so noted. Against this Royal College hegemony the Slade powers that were at that time, and not, I think, without some resistance from within the established academic staff in the school, judged that the Slade needed to assert more presence and achieve a more prominent position in the main London art student forum. The acceptance of Bowstead and Jeffs, and maybe the whole Coventry contingent, seemed to me to be part of a planned programme at the Slade attempting to redress the lack of the Slade's presence in the London student art exhibition arena and establish connections to the burgeoning US-led contemporary art practice. For example in 1964 Larry Rivers spent a year in residence at the Slade.

14. During the later months of 1962 and the early months of 1963 the exchange between Jennings and myself and Bowstead and Jeffs was discursive; from the late spring of 1963 the exchange began to include practical ideas for group work, in which group discussions were a central part of the exchange.

15. From the start of our final year and the founding of Fine-Artz we were more combative toward the institutional protocols of the Slade, and in respect of some of the older established Slade teaching staff and significant numbers of the student body there was sufficient enough opposition for us to begin to start feeling besieged.

16. For a survey of the development of individualism in Western culture that can be rewardingly applied to the development of the AGMOAS, see Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason: How the Enlightenment Transformed the Way We See Our Bodies and Souls*, (London: Penguin Books, 2004); especially the Introduction to Section 1, pp. 23-27.

17. The intrusion of rock'n'roll into my teenage life in 1956 (*Blackboard Jungle* in 1955 and Bill Haley in *Rock Around the Clock* in 1956) I took as a signal from the start of some vague kind of anticipation of a coming more socially equal society. This vague signal was conventionally mixed in with the standard, and I guess eternally biologically driven, teenage amalgam of music and sex – the formative after dark knee-trembling encounters on the eerie Thurnscoe market stalls after dances at the baths (converted to a dance hall during the winter months) across the road and sallies out after Sunday night church youth club socials. But the conviction that rock'n'roll was an instrument that would contribute to a more socially equal society grew in the later fifties and early sixties. As I say elsewhere in these remarks, by the late sixties this investment was to prove to be an illusion, indisputably by that time a fond and foolish hope. By the late sixties I was in no doubt that the rock'n'roll music industry was going in an entirely opposite direction consisting of a deep and greedy embrace of capitalism.

18. Looking back from 1968 to my last few months working in Fine-Artz in the first half of 1966, I realized that reading Vance Packard's book, *The Hidden Persuaders,* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1957), back in 1964 should have alerted me to the contradictions in the Fine-Artz position at that time. But I missed it in 1964, perhaps I was too committed to the idea of the supersession of Pop Art, and too much generally in the thrall of rock'n'roll as an instrument for social change, whilst not taking enough notice of the clues already evident by that time in the pop music industry of what that change would turn out to be.

19. In the passage below, Fredric Jameson delivers what I hold to be a precise summary of everything I came to regard as reactionary in the views that Wolfe transmitted constantly over the years after 1965:

"All of which is disambiguated in Tom Wolfe's book *From Bauhaus to Our House,* an otherwise undistinguished book report on the recent architectural debates by a writer whose own New Journalism itself constitutes one of the varieties of Postmodernism. What is interesting and symptomatic about this book, however, is the absence of any Utopian celebration of the postmodern and, far more striking, the passionate hatred of the modern that breathes through otherwise obligatory camp sarcasm of the rhetoric; and this is not a new, but a dated and archaic passion. It is as though the original horror of the first middle-class spectators of the very emergence of the modern itself

- the first Corbusiers white as the first freshly built cathedrals of the twelfth century, the first scandalous Picasso heads with two eyes on one profile like a flounder, the stunning 'obscurity' of the first editions of *Ulysses* or *The Waste Land* – this disgust of the original philistines, Spiesseburger, bourgeois, or Main Street Babbitry, had suddenly come back to life …"
(Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or The Culture of Late Capitalism*, (London: Verso, 1991), p. 56.)

Wolfe published *From Bauhaus to Our House* in 1981. He published *The Kandy-Colored Tangerine-Flake Streamlined Baby* in 1965 about halfway through my teaching period at Birmingham. At the start of the second, and last, year I taught at Birmingham, October 1965, I held this book in some regard, by March 1966 I was seriously re-reading Bertrand Russell's *Mysticism and Logic*. I guess by June the passage from Wolfe to the return to Russell represented a sea-change in my outlook on practice.

20. The 'heroism' rhetoric attached to the AGMOAS was knee-jerk by 1950, it has continued so up to the present. Despite all the rhetoric about 'originality' and 'radicalism' its status now rests on role-copying and wealth accumulation. By 1974 I considered the Western notion of avant-gardism to have no better a critique of Western society than did Soviet Socialist Realism of Soviet society. My exchanges and friendships in the early years of Art & Language was an important contributor to my forming this view in 1974, the year I left Art & Language.

21. That the idea of a collective practice stayed with me was due in no small measure to my continuing the exchange with David Bainbridge and Harold Hurrell after I left Fine-Artz. Both Bainbridge and Hurrell had followed Fine-Artz practice fairly closely, whilst cautiously keeping their distance and developing their respective practices into which their close discursive exchange was a main input. During 1966-67, I shared a flat in Shepherd Bush with them, this close domestic-based exchange was a big influence on my continuing thoughts about practice and teaching. The idea of making a collective practice was frequently discussed in these exchanges. The early years of Art & Language was the last time I was part of a collective practice. Not to be part of such a practice is still a loss and will remain so. Nevertheless, I have had to face the fact that I may not be very good at participating in a collective practice.

22. As I note in the remarks below on my teaching in Coventry, meeting and then getting to know Michael Baldwin in the late months of 1966/early months of 1967 was emphatic confirmation of this hunch.

23. Hearing New Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat MP's endless paean to the concept of the entrepreneur as the heroic possessive individual

during the last thirty years really started to grate at the point it became clear that the bankers and medianiks had indeed been doing what many of us had been convinced for a long time they were doing. The relation between the concept of entrepreneur and the concept of successful artist is no more clearly demonstrated than in the marketing of the merchandise occupying the spaces of the Saatchi Gallery.

24. To me at least, three years after I had left Fine-Artz in 1966, there seemed to be a great contrast between Fine-Artz and Art & Language. In 1969, as we formally founded Art & Language, I recall thinking how alien Fine-Artz then appeared to be to me, a considerable impact upon my view being the powerful input from my by then established friendship with Michael Baldwin. By that time, the idea of claiming to surpass Pop Art seemed to have no point at all, and the notion of having a practice which valued, centred upon and deployed advertising imaging techniques and a preoccupation with fashion, both areas which were, and still are, so driven by attempting to attain capricious consumership, seemed more or less politically unacceptable. And perhaps the main difference was the cognitive approach of the two groups. I saw the contrast, and still do, between the two groups as Fine-Artz being an image group, Art & Language being a thinking group. For Fine-Artz the visual was primary, for Art & Language the visual was coincidental.

25. Perhaps one thing that Fine-Artz and Art & Language did share was the seeking after a critique of art practice as it stood in the middle and late sixties. Each group in its different ways sought after extending, in some fashion, the notion of art object. But the content of the critique was very different, almost the completely opposite positions – as the preceding paragraph tries to suggest. The difference lay in the resources from which each group's critique was produced. As I note above, Fine-Artz sought it attempting to deploy advertising techniques, teenage fashion imaging and styling, and what I think was a kind of fetishizing of the Marshall McLuhan view of technological utopianism. Art & Language in 1967-68 cleaved to the resources of philosophy and logic, cybernetics and some engineering and electronic resources, and Marxist social analysis. In respect of developing a practice that would expand and reconstitute the notion of art object, I personally witnessed and came up against the restrictive practices and institutions of the art school world three times. The first event, in 1964, was the clash between Fine-Artz and the requirements the Slade demanded in order to award the Slade Diploma to its graduates. This event manifest itself as a stubborn slogging match and Mexican stand-off between Fine-Artz and the Slade academic authorities. The confrontation turned on Fine-Artz's refusal to recognize the demand that the submission of nine life drawings was a necessary condition of developing a practice as an artist, and that it in any way could be counted as an indispensable sign of

cognitive and technical competence. Since Fine-Artz refused to submit life drawings (Bowstead and Jeffs did not have any anyway) the event ended with the Slade authorities refusing to award Fine-Artz a Slade Diploma.

The second event, in 1967, was when Michael Baldwin and his friend Ronnie Rees, then final-year students at Coventry School of Art, were expelled from the course by the then Director David Bethel. Their alleged misdeed was to go to the movies in an afternoon when the two were both summoned to meet Bethel to be issued with a warning and reprimand for earlier alleged malfeasance. No doubt both Michael and Ronnie were set on intending to challenge some of the restrictions, not least the cognitive ones, that academic authority at that time placed on art practice. But I thought Bethel's action in expelling them was mean-spirited and a draconian ridiculous knee-jerk reaction to his seriously wounded neurotic pride, since he seemed to treat it as a challenge to what he seemed to see as his management competence, which he also seemed to see as his right to do as he wished with the students on the course. By 1968, and the rise of student awareness of legal matters, he would have had a difficult job justifying the harshness of his decision. My personal involvement in this matter came after the event. And I think it came about as a result of having said to various others of the teachers that I thought the decision was very harsh. A few weeks after the event I was approached by Bethel saying that he had heard a rumour that I had encouraged Baldwin and Rees to take the action that they did, and that if he should ever find any evidence of this, he would sack me. I was part-time at that time and had no tenure. As I suggest above, whilst I thought Bethel's decision was not only harsh I also thought it ridiculous. I had absolutely nothing to do with Baldwin and Rees making their decision. I knew perfectly well by then, having got to know both of them well, and, by that time I was also starting the initial exchange with Michael Baldwin, which was to be such a pleasure in the years of the late sixties, that Baldwin and Rees were their own men and required no encouragement or otherwise from me in making their decisions. They needed no help from me to act as agent provocateurs to provoke what they saw as rather ridiculous figures of management pride. Just as significantly too, Bethel's decision, it seemed pretty obvious to me, had nothing to do with their cognitive performance as students on the course, they were both very good students. As I state in the main body of these remarks, Michael Baldwin was, and remains, the best student I came across in my entire teaching practice. And Baldwin's record of sustained performance since speaks for itself.

The third event, in 1971 and again at Coventry, was the brutal termination of the Art Theory course. I have covered this event in the main body of these remarks and will not repeat it.

26. The various respective inputs of Wolfe, McLuhan, and Packard into Fine-Artz practice I have attempted to outline in the preceding notes.

27. There was considerable academic and administrative excitement when the CAT was awarded the Royal Charter. I've sometimes thought since that permission to use the Great Hall was granted without too much of an interrogation because the authorities were focused on achieving the Royal Charter.

28. The approach from Coventry was made by Ivor Abrahams who taught at Birmingham during my first year there and had left at the end of that first year to take up a post in Coventry. It was Ivor who advised me to meet, and he also set up the meeting, with Michael Baldwin.

29. For example, on the occasion of my first meeting with Michael Baldwin who was working at a place called the Vine Street Annexe, where he was working colouring some mirrors, which are probably now resident in some international collection somewhere. Although I guess mirrors might be seen as two dimensional and in this way might conform to some distended notion of painting, the technical resources Baldwin was using and the way he was using them in realizing this project could not very easily be described as conventional painting resources at that time in 1966. It is perhaps worth remarking in the light of our later friendship that what was impressive to me about Baldwin's mirrors project at that first meeting were the cognitive resources I judged him to be using.

30. Don Foster was the newly appointed Head of Fine Art at Coventry who started there at the same time as I did. He was instrumental in setting up the space, both physical and cognitive, in order for the Art Theory course to be constructed and for it to commence. He was very important in encouraging and giving administrative momentum to the course. Foster, after Rimmington, was a telling contrast. Coventry was a much more open situation in respect of any view concerning the expansion of the concept of art object and a re-conceptualising of art practice. In 1969, for example, when I had been working at Coventry for three years, and comparing Rimmington's outlook with that of Foster, I was able to summarise the matter in asking some such question as: could something like Art & Language have taken place in the Research Workshops? The answer, which I had no doubt about, was that it would have been impossible, Rimmington was old guard avant-garde, he practiced a very conservative avant-garde view, at best a 1912 Duchampian model, hence his cleaving to Roger Westwood and Richard Hamilton's project of reconstructing The Large Glass at Newcastle.

31. An incident at Coventry that was a cause of amusement afterwards between Foster and myself resided in the following matter. The Head of Sculpture at Coventry was Ted Atkinson. When Foster first heard of my appointment he sent a cryptic note to Atkinson inquiring as to whether or

not Atkinson was in the habit of appointing his younger brother.

32. From the point of the entry of the Thatcher administrations into British working life the notion of making money out of money replaced the idea of the British as a manufacturing nation - the switch to the City of London from that of manufacturing industry as the central driver of the British economy. A fact about which the British, surely, since 2008 now cannot have much doubt.

33. In Newcastle the web of corruption between John Poulson and T. Dan Smith, exposed in their trials and subsequent sentences, was one of the most prominent media events of the first half of the seventies. Alan Maudsley, the city architect in Birmingham (1964-73), was also convicted of taking bribes in the later seventies.

34. Self-interest in public office is, regrettably, to be expected, but it does in many cases contribute to a culture of servility in front of authoritarian figures.

35. I recall John Madin, the Birmingham architect who designed the Central Library, remarking some years ago that at the end of WW2 much of the urban environment stock of central Birmingham was owned by the city, since then most of it has been sold off, bit by bit, to private developers.

36. Owen Hatherley, *Militant Modernism*, (Winchester: Zero Books, 2008), pp. 35-36.

37. Urban Splash is a Manchester based Architecture/Design group. It specializes in renewals and refurbishments. It became ubiquitous in the urban built environment under New Labour. One of its present projects is renewing part of Park Hill in Sheffield. It has done work in Manchester, Bristol, Plymouth and many other places throughout the UK. Last time I drove on the M6 past the building, Urban Splash had a visual advertisement on Fort Dunlop proclaiming its renewal of that building. Urban Splash had to issue quite a lot of redundancies at the onset of the recession in 1998.

38. Not only an equitable distribution of wealth in Birmingham but also an equitable distribution of justice. In June 2010, an investigation by Thames Valley police into the matter of surveillance cameras being set up by West Midlands police to survey the Muslim communities in Sparkbrook and Washwood Heath came up with a pretty damning report. It recounted how West Midlands police had set up hundreds of cameras with virtually no consultation or regard for the law. It stated that West Midlands police misled residents, concocting a story that the cameras were set up to combat vehicle crime and antisocial behaviour. In fact Operation Champion, as

the project was named, was to be run from the West Midlands police anti-terrorism unit with the consent of security officials at the Home Office. The project was closed in June 2010, three months before it was to go into operation in the following September.

39. The ill-fated sculpture, *Forwards!,* in Millennium Square, by Raymond Mason, was one of the public sculptures commissioned by Birmingham City Council and paid for within the Per Cent for Art scheme. It cost £250,000. It was unveiled in 1991, and destroyed by arson in 2003.

40. There seemed to be some strange features attached to the notion of 'purpose built'. In the painting studios, whilst light came from the roof above, the windows on the vertical walls were narrow and horizontal at about knee height. The studios are still in use today.

41. This militant socialism issued into concrete politics in Coventry in the person of Dave Nellist. Nellist was MP for the now defunct constituency of Coventry South East from 1983-92, at which time he was deselected by the forefathers of New Labour, led by that mighty socialist thinker the Lord Kinnock of Bedwellty who was, as he never tires of telling us, the first in his family to go to university. Nellist was to Westminster and Kinnock's Labour Party what Arthur Scargill was to Ian McGregor and the Thatcherite right.

42. Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. GVA is used for measuring gross regional domestic product and other measures of the outputs of entities smaller than a whole national economy.

43. The Coventry Phoenix Project was a sound idea in the sense that Coventry's initial post-war regeneration project was starting to look dilapidated and was in need of refurbishment and improvement. What has been done in the Precinct is an improvement. The main thoroughfares in the Precinct are at least now less open to the weather. Issue 8 of the RIBA West Midlands journal, *Area,* Spring 2004, reports the following on the Phoenix Project:

"Coventry's leaders had the vision to see that what their city needed most urgently was an overhaul of the public realm and streetscape. Rather than seeing the city as a series of glitzy shopping destinations, the Phoenix Project begins with the spaces between the buildings and works outwards. The result is a series of squares, streets and gardens that draw people back into the heart of Coventry and provide a relatively retail and commerce-free environment in which people can walk, live and play."

The above is rhetoric but perhaps admirable as rhetoric. I guess one of the phrases that require further inquiry is 'relatively retail and commerce free'. Whilst Coventry may not be the shopping mecca and temple to capricious consumership that Birmingham's Bullring is, and its malls and arcades could hardly be described as glitzy, they are, predictably, adorned with all the standard brand names and logos, dominated at one end by conspicuous Primark and at the other by a pretty vehement Ikea. The passage above from *Area* continues as follows:

"With a masterplan and urban design by Rummey Design, new buildings by McCormac Jameson Prichard (MJP) and a series of specially commissioned art works, the Phoenix Project is a truly collaborative piece of new urbanism."

At this point the rhetoric starts to get seriously out of hand and then continues in the same manner throughout.

Rummey Design are a London and Sevenoaks outfit, and are described on one website as aiming to carry out the following functions: Masterplanners, Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning, Environmental Assessment and Design, Corporate CABE Enablers and Civic Trust assessors, Particular strengths in landscape led master-plans and design presentation, Historic Assets and Landscapes UK and Overseas.

44. Public art online, *Coventry Phoenix Initiative*, Joanna Morland, 2002, p. 1. (http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/casestudies/regeneration/coventry_phoenix/description.php.html)
Millennium Commission, Dec. 2003, p. 1. (http://www.sciencecentres.org.uk/reports/The%20Millennium%20Commission.pdf)

45. David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism*, Kindle Edition, 33%.

46. It's a truism, but worth repeating here, pressure on natural resources is driven by the requirement for cultural resources.

47. Harvey, ibid.

48. Leamington Spa Art Gallery organized a series of public events in which a notable Midlands person was asked to choose a picture or object from the gallery's collection and to talk about it. In the first of these events, Sir John Egan chose a picture of mine. He is a very well known British business leader. I had heard of him several times in his various managerial posts, most notably when he turned Jaguar around in the eighties, selling it to Ford in 1990 for £1.6 billion. I also knew he had acted in an advisory

role to Margaret Thatcher's administrations. And I also knew he opened his tenure as Director of the CBI in provocative form – his predictions about the German economy seem to have been a bit wide of the mark, but his caustic skepticism concerning the euro seems to have been pertinent judging by the currency's performance at present. I did not go to his talk on my picture so I do not know what he said, but I cannot imagine he would have much time for my politics.

The picture of mine that Egan chose was titled:

Happysnap 1.
Ruby, after having been assured that she, like Dorothy, was on the Yellow Brick Road of a happy Disneyland childhood, finds out early that it is really the road from Passchendaele to Hiroshima ... and to where and to what? Even the Tin Man melts.

49. Hatherley, *New Ruins,* p. 117. Sir Bob Kerslake's role in startlingly increasing the Sheffield housing waiting list is a striking example of this kind of alliance. For more on Kerslake, see note #83 in the Appraisal section above. Two amongst many glaring examples of the quest to hunt out socialist form and aspiration was the attack on Militant Tendency in Liverpool by the Kinnock-led hysteria-laden New Labour Party leadership in the eighties and the de-selection of Dave Nellist from the Coventry South East constituency in 1992, see note #44 above.

50. Owen Hatherley, 'Architectural localism is no answer to identikit housing', *The Guardian*, 11th March, 2011, (https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/mar/11/identikit-housing-grant-shapps - last accessed August 2nd, 2017).

51. This is not at all to say that religious organizations and figures do not play significant roles in challenging present injustices and contributing to change socially unfair arrangements. During the National Union of Mineworkers strike in 1984-85, the Bishop of Durham was a vociferous and persistent voice against the measures taken by the Thatcher government against the National Union of Mineworkers. The present Archbishop of Canterbury, for example, has issued articulate criticism of the banking system and the entrenchment of wealth cadres in Britain. In the twentieth century, one of the most outstanding participations by a religious organization toward the achievement of a more equitable national social framework was the contributory role of the World Council of Churches in overthrowing apartheid in South Africa. Nor is it to argue that religious organizations do not have something to contribute in matters secular, as the South African case bears out. Nevertheless there is, obviously, a point at which religious thought and secular thought must diverge.

52. Jill Journeaux and John Devane, 'Live Collaboration and the Visual arts Curriculum: Jochen Gerz at Coventry School of Art & Design', 2004, Higher Education Academy, (https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/live-collaboration-and-visual-arts-curriculum-jochen-gerz-coventry-school-art-design - last accessed 2nd August, 2017).

53. Sarah Wilson, 'A Stranger with Secrets: Jochen Gerz, Future Monument, Public Bench in Phoenix', *Architecture / Art / Regeneration,* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004). (Also found at: http://www.jochengerz.eu/html/main.html?res_ident=0afdb8e2de52208dfbf48f722c6c2328&art_ident=58ee7d6b82046146b789935963a5cc1b - last accessed 2nd August, 2017).

54. Brecht's requirement that bourgeois culture will have to be abolished in order that a more equitable society can be achieved is the benchmark for cultural work driven by socialist aspiration. At no point does the Antimonuments project remotely approach Brecht's requirement. I can detect no evidence that Gerz's practice is any more clearly separated from career than any of the practices of the rest of us artists.

55. The collections and transactions of Stephen Cohen and David Geffen mentioned early in the main body of these remarks are standard examples of how 'private art' artefacts typify the cultural industries as wealth accumulating devices for the capitalist rich. After all, the basic idea of the capitalist is not just to get rich but always to get richer.

56. Hatherley, *Guide to the New Ruins*, p. xxii.

57. The recent fiasco of LIBOR finance fixing at Barclays, led by the ubiquitous Diamond, typifies the Western financial system of the last thirty years.

58. Harvey, ibid. 59%-60%.

59. Noam Chomsky, *Human Nature: Justice versus Power. The Chomsky-Foucault Debate*, (London: Souvenir Press, 2011) Kindle Edition.

60. See for example Robert Smithson's transactions and exchanges with the De Menil family and with Virginia Dwan, noted in the quote from Caroline Jones' book on p.102 of the above remarks.

61. My first visit to New York in the summer of 1967 was planned as an attempt to make contact with several American artists in whose practices the future members of Art & Language were interested. The list of artists was LeWitt, Morris, Judd, Andre, Smithson, none of whom we had ever

had any contact with. Morris was out of New York, Judd would not see me, but LeWitt, Andre and Smithson all agreed to see me. LeWitt and Smithson were especially interested in our work and put us in further contact with Dan Graham and Lawrence Weiner. I spent quite a lot of time talking with Smithson that summer who, at that time at least, seemed very interested in what we were doing.

62. Nicholas Logsdail at Lisson Gallery in London, Daniel Templon in Paris, Sperone Gallery in Turin, Paul Maenz Gallery in Cologne, Bruno Bischofberger Gallery in Zurich.

63. Nicholas Logsdail seems to have maintained a loyalty and sustained support to Art & Language right up to the present.

64. For all I know the correspondent, may, of course, not consider Art & Language practice, neither then in the late sixties and early seventies nor up to the present, as amongst the 'decisive' protagonists of Conceptual Art.

65. The dispute they used concerned whether Foster had or had not included in his contract conditions permission to use departmental materials for his own work. I was never sure of, and am not now likely to find out now since Don Foster died in Texas a few years ago, the details of this situation. What is more certain is that the old sixties art school culture was a much more relaxed set of social exchanges and social relations resting on the connection between teaching and practice than it became under the new framework set by the Lanchester Polytechnic headed by people who saw themselves as being in 'the real world' (their very words at many meetings I had the misfortune to have to attend) as opposed to what they, presumably, saw as the 'unreal world' that they alleged the Fine Art department inhabited. At any rate, in the case of these academic mandarins operating in their self-absorbed and intimidatingly superior 'for the public good' roles, of which they saw themselves as virtuous agents, it would not have been hard for them to find all kinds of manipulable points and opportunities in Foster's outlook and view of practice to make his continuing tenure of his post impossible. The Polytechnic mandarins also played interdepartmental rivalries in the Art School very efficiently, having several informants within the Art School willing to testify against the Art Theory course in particular. I have a list of four or five names, some of whose names I was given pretty soon after the Art Theory course was terminated, via Ernest Hoch, others of whom I found out about in later years, and all except one of whom we strongly suspected, vilified the Art Theory course to the Polytechnic mandarins. One of whom was from the Fine Art course itself, and who, anyway, the Art Theory personnel more or less knew that he was what we called 'a Polytechnic mole'.

66. It is obvious from my remarks concerning him in the main body of the text that I regarded Ernest Hoch as a straightforward person, one of the few in the entire event of the termination of the Art Theory course. As he left he was very forthright about the people behind the move to end the Art Theory course, all of his observations made complete sense in the light of what had happened in the weeks prior to the long conversation I had with him in his office as we met for the last time and he left Coventry.

67. See note #51 of Section II.

68. David Hirons was a valued teaching member of the Technos part of the Art Theory course. Like David Bainbridge and Michael Baldwin he was a part-time appointment and thus was dismissed like them.

69. This rapid conversion to professorial status in art schools, especially when the old polytechnics were converted into universities, were one of the signs of the conversion of fine art degrees into business studies degrees.

70. The early months (I'm not sure which month) of 1974 was the last trip I made abroad as representative of Art & Language. I went to Zürich because some members, including myself, needed money to pay mortgages, expenses, etc. This clandestine trip broke an agreement made in earlier Art & Language meetings. I stayed with Nicholas Logsdail in London the night before I flew out from Heathrow – Dave Rushton phoned me there outraged by the breaking of the agreement. This was a kind of defining event persuading me that I should leave Art & Language. By the late summer I considered myself to have left the group.

71. T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life?* (Barcelona: Quaderns Portatils, MACB, 2000), pp. 7-8.

72. Leeds City station itself underwent a serious refurbishment, which in many ways improved it, yet the banners and logos of the Corporate Tyranny are emblazoned all over it. Besides which refurbishment could hardly fail to improve it since the neglect of its fabric as a deliberate part of the running down of public services and nationalized industries (in this case British Rail) by the Thatcher administrations was so emphatic.

73. Owen Hatherley, 'Why we should care about the Quill', *The Guardian*, December 22nd, 2010 (https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/dec/22/quill-private-student-housing - last accessed August 2nd, 2017). One of the most astonishing and unavoidable student accommodations is the new 25-storey Victoria Tower in Lock Street in the centre of Wolverhampton. It literally towers above the centre – an Angel of the Black Country!

74. T. J. Clark, as must be clear from the foregoing remarks, is one of the writers on art (on all the arts and many other areas for that matter) who most interests me. If there is a difference at a fundamental analytical level between his outlook and mine then, in my view, I guess it is that I think he celebrates art more than I do. I do not know if this is because he is more attached to art than I am, but I suspect he is, in the sense that he is not more interested in art, but interested is the wrong word here. Both of us, obviously, are interested in the area, perhaps though he is just more attached to the practices, perhaps more affectionately disposed to the achievements of the practice might be a better way of putting it – but then there would be the matter of whether or not we agree on what are the achievements. His writings are peppered with the adjective 'great'. For example:

"Bradley has a great passage on 'what he ventures as the centre of the tragic impression'." (fourth page of, 'For a Left with No Future', *New Left Review #74*, March-April, 2012) (https://newleftreview.org/II/74/t-j-clark-for-a-left-with-no-future - last accessed: August 2nd, 2017); and, "Baldwin Spencer's great photos of the longest continuing human culture." (Ibid. p. 12); and, from the same essay, this time used more critically, "The trouble with the great reformists within the internationals ..." (Ibid. p. 14); "To adapt Randolph Bourne's great dictum …" (Ibid. p. 15); and then, "… W. B. Yeats's great poem *The Cold Heaven* …" (*The Painting of Modern Life?* p. 4). "It was the middle term in mankind's great reconstruction of Nature." (Ibid. p. 50); "The great *Lecon de piano* ..." (Ibid. p. 12). And so on.

It is not so much the persistence of the use of 'great' but the insistence on it, which I think signifies a basic difference between our views, especially of art. After forty years of practice, I do not have Clark's enthusiasm for the arts, and I probably never did even in my early days in art school when I held art in much higher esteem than I do now. It is perhaps worth pointing out that not holding something in very high esteem is not at all the same as not being interested in it. And to me this seems to be not a wearying with new ideas but a wearying with old ideas that claim, or have it claimed for them, to be new. If I was to use 'great', then I guess I would use it in respect of a Darwin, a Dirac, a Turing, or a Feynman, for example. Or on a more communal level, of Cuba, or Angola, or the ANC, or the US Civil Rights movement, or the Sandinistas, or the NUM. But I am always wary of using it; it seems to me to lead us to inflate ourselves above what I take to be our evolutionary station and exhort our religious superstitious heritage, and certainly when it is used in respect of the visual arts I think it does not sufficiently acknowledge the possibility of Steve Gould's right wall.

75. I was first taken to see Quarry Hill on a visit to Leeds with my parents in in the last half of the forties. At that time, the flats were regarded as a spectacular achievement of social housing. Whilst no doubt Quarry Hill

was one among other features of Leeds we looked at that time, I think 1947 or 1948 (the other feature I remember is the statue of the Black Prince, I still recall vividly my father pointing out to me that he was victor at Crecy and Poitiers, and him being the eldest son of Edward III – still there, although probably slightly relocated, in front of Leeds City station), it has remained of interest to me that a view of an instance of social housing was treated as a feature worth taking the trouble to view on a trip by train from our home in South Yorkshire thirty miles away. I suspect it does seem to give some indication of the status of places such as Quarry Hill in the social iconography of working class culture immediately post World War 2, not simply in the West Riding of Yorkshire, but nationally at that time. I guess nowadays we are more likely to go view a new shopping mall.

76. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, (London: Verso, 1990). The 'beachhead for gentrification' has a wider remit than simply the gentrifying of what might be called the domestic. It has specifically and intimately linked effects for other cultural functions. Davis spells it out throughout the book, nowhere more clear than in Chapter 1, 'Sunshine or Noir?' Below is a passage that presses the 'beachhead' right into the centre of post-50s art practice:

"The itinerary of Edward Ruscha probably best typifies the post-1960s gentrification of the Ferus generation. Although he still describes himself as an 'underground' artist, he has become in fact a reigning art god whose own Brobdingnagian portrait looms over Downtown in a five-story-high mural by Kent Twitchell. As critics have pointed out, Ruscha's progression has been from advertising art, via some brief subversions in the 1960s, to 'advertising art advertising itself as art that hates advertising'. (p. 69)

The process of the corporate absorption of the AGMOAS perfectly described in the person of one avant-gardist, the perfect description of the trajectory of career directing practice.

77. The student accommodation block (since demolished) in which my eldest daughter resided during her first year at the University of Sheffield was rumoured to have been modeled on Swedish prison designs. Whether or not this is true, this was certainly battery-raised student *domestique*.

78. But 'unreadable' more often than not means only too readable. It means something like Charles Windsor's reading of Birmingham Central Library – as I note in the main body of the text, he described the library as looking more like a place where you burn books rather than read them.

79. The Leeds University campus was never more dramatically focused than in 1980, after Peter Sutcliffe murdered a Leeds University female

Student in Alma Street in Headingly; his last victim. After this event the campus came under siege after dark as female students were ferried back and forth in minibuses from campus to wherever they lived, and *vice versa*. It was a particularly disturbing event, eerie and grotesque, it seemed that after dark the whole city was under threat.

80. Nobody has played the media role or the business of making 'controversial' the ' art star' system more adroitly than Matthew Collings. That he accepted a judgmental role in the 'School of Saatchi' TV series more or less summed up the game he plays. In the case of Collings for both career and practice read medianik. No matter his periodic criticism of the art business model, he is a devoted issue (in both senses of the word) of the Corporate Tyranny. His BBC capers with first Kippenberger and then Herold, beluga caviar and all, in the nineties are a benchmark for the media entrepreneurship of art practice as business model.

81. So-called non-representational art can be used to serve the interests of almost any social purpose. That the CIA cornered it in the Cold War was as much a reflection of the dumb and oppressive Stalinist reflex as it was of CIA critical perception. These days the Chinese seem to be perhaps a bit more adroit in manipulating such issues as the Birds Nest stadium in Beijing testified.

82. One sample index of how successful globalization has become would be a head count of how many art students in, say, China and India, aspire to achieve success within the framework of the AGMOAS.

83. Although, thankfully, unfamiliar day-to-day in most Western societies, the military option is never too far from hand. Witness the killing of four students and the wounding of nine others at Kent State University by Company A of 1/145th and Troop G of 2/107th Armoured Cavalry of the Ohio National Guard on May 4th, 1970; the killing of fourteen people on a Civil Rights march in Derry on January 30th, 1972 (Bloody Sunday) by the 1st Battalion of the British Parachute Regiment; the killing of Jean-Charles de Menezes by a civilian anti-terrorist armed response unit of the Metropolitan Police at Stockwell Tube Station in London on July 22nd, 2005. The latter does underline that the line between non-armed policing, a great tradition of the British police force, and military force can easily become blurred, especially at times of marked social stress.

84. For one view, see T. J. Clark's essay in *New Left Review* (March-April, 2012) titled, 'For a Left with No Future' (Ibid.). In the same issue, see the response of Susan Watkins, titled, 'Presentism' (https://newleftreview.org/II/74/susan-watkins-presentism-reply-to-t-j-clark - last accessed August 2nd, 2017).

IV - THE NEXT TO LAST SEMINAR

1. Caroline A. Jones, *The Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Post-War American Artist*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

2. Ibid. pp. 350-351.

3. Ibid. pp. 351-352.

4. Ibid. p. 353.

5. The current show of the Pre-Raphaelites entitled, no less, as *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant- Garde*, has elicited the predictable and standard career-path art writing. The title itself not least! This title prompted me to ask myself: is there a competition between Tate Britain and the BBC arts programme? This, since a couple of years before the flyer to episode 3 (Friday, November 12th, 2010) of the BBC series on the Pre-Raphaelites, *Desperate Romantics*, comprised the following brief description: "How the Pre-Raphaelites blew away the Victorian Avant-Garde." This seems to be a current indication of how the term avant-garde is a kind of catch-all term, a kind of value-added tax, added to the 'aesthetic' item itself. Despite the fate of Adorno's hopes invested in what he termed Modernism's formal radicalism, the idea of being formally radical has been frequently applied to all kind of art, not least to Pre-Raphaelite work. In a blog, titled *The Upcoming*, September 14th, 2012, Eleanor MacFarlane's text adds to the hoard of transcendental pearls, for example: "… it is still possible to look at these paintings for sheer enjoyment" (presumably some kind of a grading – say, less sheer enjoyment or unsheer enjoyment). Her text closes with the immortal words: "A guaranteed experience of beauty" (http://www.theupcoming.co.uk/2012/09/14/exhibition-review-pre-raphaelites-victorian-avant-garde-at-tate-britain/ - last accessed: August 2nd, 2017).

6. Insofar as Smithson asserted that he was 'just interested in exploring the apparatus I'm being threaded through' (see following note), then the phrase 'I'm being threaded through' perhaps at least suggests he saw himself as being a kind of implement being worked or manipulated by some other force. Whilst maybe many in the practice have this view, for others such a view would count as political. On the other hand, the phrase 'I'm just interested in' could be viewed as some kind of limit suggestion where being 'interested in' is a kind of neutral station – *viz*. I'm interested in the

apparatus but I cannot or I don't intend to do anything about changing it, rather I intend to represent it, where change and represent are soon driven to be mutually exclusive. It is the matter of the apparatus itself – as I have just suggested, maybe Smithson is out to describe or represent it without intending to change it, maybe because he thought he could not change it – if this the case then maybe he is content with simply describing, or maybe just happy about the apparatus as an opportunity to further his career, that is, his practice. Maybe 'being threaded through' is a resource of the practice, that is, his career.

7. Jones, p. 356.

8. Ibid. p. 352.

9. It is worth rereading the quote from David Harvey's book in note #11 in the Appraisal section above, concerning the economy of spectacle.

10. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, (Winchester: Zero Books, 2009), p. 66.

11. I do not know what the present Art & Language think of Gilbert and George's practice, but one half of the original sixties group see them as perfect example of a practice absorbed by career. They seem to me to have constructed a theatre of practice absorbed by career. Tim Rollins and the Kids of Survival I here leave as a moot topic.

Terry Atkinson has been writing about the Avant Garde Model of the Artistic Subject (AGMOAS) for several years, exploring, explaining, demonstrating and dismantling the infestations that have occurred to the innovations and experiments of the Avant-garde of early Modernism via the mechanisms and quasi-ideologies of capitalism. These writings provide much needed clarity about and rigorous criticism of the complicated and complex world of contemporary art and its collusions and codependence with capital.

This essay, The AGMOAS is now a Corporate Audit, fuses elements of autobiography, art criticism, art history, political economy, and philosophy in a fervent deployment aimed at art works and artists, criticism and critics, theories and theoreticians, as well as politics and politicians to excoriate the illusions and delusions of both liberal and neoliberal positions prevalent in the art world and beyond, which constrain artistic practices in a chimerical ethos with capital that is now firmly imprisoned within a reductive cyclical abyss of servitude to what Atkinson calls 'the Corporate Tyranny'.

A key component of the AGMOAS, and also a key operational function of 'the Corporate Tyranny', that Atkinson identifies and targets is 'the artist as a self-confirming centre of truth'. Atkinson's writing entreats a counterclaim that if art, and more broadly society, is to progress to a cognitively more complex, productive and humane position then this surprisingly ubiquitous figure must be destroyed and the increasingly career-orientated structure of the AGMOAS as attitude must be restored to a modality of practice.

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