



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Master's Degree

In Economics and Management
of Arts and Cultural Activities

Final Thesis

**The History of Participatory Art
from the Late 1950s to Now and
Prospects for its Future
Development**

Supervisor

Ch. Prof. BERTELE' Matteo

Graduand

FEI XU
887934

Academic Year

2022 / 2023

Catalogue

Abstract	1
Introduction	1
Definition and Scope of Participatory Art.....	1
The structure of the thesis.....	2
Chapter 1 Participatory art between the 1950s to late 80s	1
1.1 The 1950s-1970s: From Early Happening Art to Fluxus.....	1
1.2 The 1970s to late 80s: Performance art and the early social engagement....	16
Chapter 2 Participatory art in Relational Aesthetics	25
2.1 Nicolas Bourriaud: Relational Aesthetics.....	25
2.1.3 Critics towards Traffic and Relational art.....	31
2.1.4 Relational Aesthetics: A state of encounter.....	32
2.1.5 Relational Aesthetics: micro-utopias.....	33
2.2 Perceptual experience through playful installation.....	37
2.2.1 Background.....	37
2.2.2 Participation with new media technologies: virtue and reality.....	38
2.2.3 Participation with material installation: art and daily life.....	51
2.2.4 Critics of perceptual experience oriented participatory art.....	57
Chapter 3 Participatory art in social engagement	59
3.1 Claire Bishop: Antagonism and relational aesthetics.....	59
3.1.2 The aesthetic is the ability to think contradiction.....	61
3.1.3 The shortcomings of Bishop’s theory.....	62
3.2 Grant Kester: Dialogical art.....	63
3.2.1 What is dialogical art?.....	63
3.2.2 The aesthetic of dialogical art: empathy.....	67
3.2.3 The legacy of dialogical art.....	69
Chapter 4 Participatory art from now on	72
4.1 Background for a current new trend.....	72
4.2 Co-creation in participatory art.....	77
4.3 Decentralization in participatory art.....	84
4.4 Facing problems.....	87
4.5 A speculation on the future participatory art: realization of sense of self... ..	87
Conclusion	91
Bibliography	1

Abstract

The art world ecosystem, including artists, museums, galleries, and auction houses, seeks increasing public attention. Thus, the question of involving the masses and cultivating a greater appreciation for art has become a vital contemporary topic. Simultaneously, the development of digital technology has given rise to immersive art forms centred around new media, capturing the enthusiasm of young people and spreading it through social media. Furthermore, since 2023, the explosive emergence of AI technology has enabled computers to effortlessly create artworks surpassing the capabilities of many human artists. This development has posed an unprecedented crisis for traditional two-dimensional art, highlighting the importance of participatory art—a category that is increasingly valued and capable of addressing these three aforementioned circumstances.

This thesis adopts a literature review methodology to explore the history, present, and future prospects of participatory art. Through numerous case studies, it first delves into the origins of participatory art in art history during the 1950s. It then expands to discuss two distinct trajectories that have emerged in participatory art 90 years later—relational aesthetics and social engagement—by examining the works of various influential theorists. By analyzing the former, the paper proposes a future direction for participatory art. Throughout the paper, the temporal dimension examines the past, present, and future of participatory art, while the theoretical dimension introduces the in-depth research conducted by multiple theorists on participatory art aesthetics. Moreover, the spatial dimension encompasses art cases from Europe, Asia, and the Americas, discussing the aesthetic value, practical methods, and dynamic relationships between artists and participants, as well as among participants themselves. Finally, the paper provides a forward-looking perspective on the future development of participatory art.

KEYWORDS: Participatory art; relational aesthetics; social engagement; interactive art

Introduction

Definition and Scope of Participatory Art

Since the 1990s there has been a global emergence of art that emphasizes participation and social aspirations and such art practices are now known by such names as socially engaged art, community art, dialogical art, collaborative art, relational art etc. Since they all require a multi-participation process, this thesis will include them as participatory art.

In a broader sense, any artistic production is made through the collaboration of various actors in society-the production of an oil painting, for example, may involve a professional framer, a canvas maker, a chemist who studies pigments, an artist who paints and a collector whose interests are directed. However, the identity of these behind-the-scenes collaborators is not visible in the traditional discourse of art production, which often highlights the authorship of the artist as a subject. These collaborators (with the exception of the collector) are seen as providing a certain expertise, without any subjective participation in the production of the work. In terms of production methods, participatory art takes on a dematerialised, processual, eventful and temporal form. From the point of view of the subject of practice, the artist involves the audience in artistic practice by means of empowerment or self-empowerment. The role of the viewer changes from that of a passive spectator to that of a participant, or even a co-initiator and actor in the practice.

Therefore, we may take the definition of Claire Bishop as a simple way to understand the scope of participatory art: “The artist is conceived less as an individual producer of discrete objects than as a collaborator and producer of situations; the work of art as a finite, portable, commodifiable able product is reconceived as an ongoing or long-term project with an unclear beginning and end; while the audience, previously conceived as a ‘viewer’ or ‘beholder’, is now repositioned as a co-producer or participant”¹.

¹ C.Bishop, *ARTIFICIAL HELLS: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London: Verso, 2012, p.2

The structure of the thesis

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the historical development of participatory art and explore its potential future directions. Through a literature review approach, this study delves into the origins of participatory art in art history. Chapter 1, with a glance at *The Art of Participation: 1950 To Now* (2008) by Rudolf Frieling, Boris Groys, Robert Atkins, and Lev Manovich, a fully illustrated survey of participatory art and its leading practitioners, shows a very complete list of individual artists and their work activities in Europe and the US between 1950 and 2008. Starting with the Happening Art and Fluxus movement in the 1950s, followed by the emergence of performance art in the 1970s, during this time, artists engaged audiences to expand the boundaries and definitions of art, instructing participants to carry out a series of actions without actively intervening in the artistic creation. Subsequently, Joseph Beuys introduced the concept of “Social Sculpture”², calling for individual engagement in social practices through art and challenging the excessively rational nature of society. But since this book is the catalogue for the exhibition of the same name, it did not elaborate on the theoretical changes in participatory art and the artworks after 2008, therefore, this thesis is trying to address this gap. Then in the 80s, based on *Asking Audiences: Participatory Art in 1980s New York* (2017) by Adair Rounthwaite, by providing two essential artworks in New York, the last part of chapter 1 introduced the early form of socially engaging art.

In the second chapter, one of the two paths that participatory art has taken in its development since the 1990s is explored, focusing on Nicolas Bourriaud’s “Relational Aesthetics” concept as a central theoretical framework. His *Relational Aesthetics* (1998) and a later one in 2002, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* which argued that artists after 2000 they “reorganize and reshape cultural references”³ as a main artistic practice, were fundamental introduction to participatory art. The thesis examines two exemplary exhibitions, *Traffic* (1996) and *Utopia Station* (2003), to discuss the core ideas of

² R.Frieling, B. Groys, R.Atkins, and L.Manovich, *The Art of Participation: 1950 To Now*, Thames & Hudson, 2009, p.62

³ N.Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay : how Art Reprograms the World*, 2002, Translated by Jeanine Herman, New York: Lukas & Sternberg, p.5

relational aesthetics, which emphasize aesthetic relations between subjects, emphasize “encounters”⁴, and aim to create “micro-utopias”⁵. Furthermore, this chapter investigates the characteristics of participatory art practices, utilizing perceptual experiences as a means to achieve negotiated coexistence and interconnectedness. In the latter part of Chapter 2, the thesis analyzes the emergence of participation art forms in the 21st century, influenced by digital technology and the internet. Two distinct categories are explored: the first encompasses new media interactive immersive digital art, exemplified by teamLab, while the second category involves installation art that transforms everyday objects into playful and novel experiences, for example, Carsten Höller. The analysis also addresses the criticisms and shortcomings associated with these art forms.

With inspirations from *Socially Engaged Art History and Beyond: Alternative Approaches to the Theory and Practice of Art History* (2021) which is a co-edited volume by more than 20 scholars on socially engaged art history, chapter 3 delves into a different trajectory of participatory art that emerged in the 1990s, referred to as social engagement art. This part analyzed the interpretations provided by two important theorists in this field, Claire Bishop and Grant H. Kester. Building upon theories of Bourriaud and Joseph Beuys, these two theorists present new aesthetic criteria and incorporate strong sociological and anthropological perspectives. Bishop’s *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics* (2004), critically examined Bourriaud’s *Relational Aesthetics*, and instead argued that the aesthetic should rely on “discomfort”⁶, drawing on Jacques Rancière’s notion of “the aesthetic is the ability to think contradiction”⁷, asserting that the beauty of participatory art lies in the expression of conflict and opposition. However, she falls short of fully considering the audience as active participants, reducing them to mere actors within the artist’s vision. Meanwhile, Kester’s book, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in*

⁴ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (1998), Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Publisher Les Presses du Reel, 2002, p.16

⁵ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Publisher Les Presses du Reel, 2002, p.31

⁶ C.Bishop, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*, October press, Vol.110 (Autumn,2004), p.70

⁷ C.Bishop, *The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents*, February 2006, in “Artforum”, <https://www.artforum.com/print/200602/the-social-turn-collaboration-and-its-discontents-10274> [Last Access 10 June 2023]

Socially-Engaged Art (2004), extends the ideas of Beuys and draws upon Kant's aesthetic theory, emphasizing that participatory art should centre around the dialogue between diverse communities, with the aesthetic core residing in the "empathy"⁸ generated among the participants.

These key theoretical contributions have enriched our understanding of participatory art, shedding light on its aesthetic, social, and collaborative dimensions, but they all didn't put an address on each individual participant and their motivation for participating, their different identities, actions, and methods employed by participants are often overlooked. By critically examining these works with additional examples from Asian art, chapter 4 provides a more comprehensive and global overview of the evolution of participatory art practices within theoretical frameworks and a further speculation that these scholars didn't mention. Consequently, the author offers a future prospect for participatory art, envisioning a shift towards co-creation and decentralization. Drawing upon psychological frameworks, this new direction is termed the "realization of sense of self." The author argues that future participation will enable individuals to engage with the framework established by the artist, allowing for personal creative expression, the contribution of individual tastes, and unique behaviors to the artwork. Even the ownership of the artwork can be decentralized, enabling participants not only to experience the artwork but also to possess it, as a testament to their collaborative memories.

In conclusion, this paper provides an exploration of the history and evolution of participatory art from the late 1950s to the present day. It examines the origins of participatory art, the development of relational aesthetics, the emergence of digital and interactive forms, and the contributions of theorists in redefining the aesthetic standards and social engagement aspects of participatory art. However, it also acknowledges the limitations in the previous theoretical discussions that overlooked the individual participants themselves. As a result, this study proposes a future direction for participatory art, emphasizing co-creation and decentralization, where

⁸ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Edited by Zoya Kucor and Simon Leung, Blackwell, 2005, p.6

participants actively contribute to the artwork, express their unique perspectives, and even have a stake in its ownership. By embracing this vision of “realization of sense of self,” participatory art has the potential to transcend traditional boundaries, foster meaningful dialogues, and create a more inclusive and diverse artistic landscape.

Through this comprehensive investigation, a nuanced understanding of the history, current practices, and potential future trajectories of participatory art will be achieved, shedding light on its evolving nature and exploring the possibilities for its continued development in the years to come like cultural marketing strategies for art museums, potentially becoming a widely accessible and simplified method of artistic therapy or a primary means for artists to counter AI-generated creations.

Chapter 1 Participatory art between the 1950s to late 80s

1.1 The 1950s-1970s: From Early Happening Art to Fluxus

To start with any origin of modern art, Dadaism in the early 20th century should always be mentioned. It was a radical art movement that emerged in response to the horrors of World War I. Dada artists rejected traditional forms of art and embraced unconventional and often absurd techniques and subject matter such as readymades like Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917), a porcelain urinal signed with a pseudonym, exhibited in the inaugural exhibition by the Society to be staged at the Grand Central Palace in New York, challenges the very notion of what can be considered “art” . Also Francis Picabia’s *The Cacodylic Eye* (1921), a collage of an eye, signs, signatures, words that he initially invited his friends to contribute, to collaborate, to perform. Both works reflect the Dadaist sought to recontextualize ordinary objects as art that blur the boundaries between art and daily life, and they sought to have an unconventional way producing art that blurs the creators and viewers. These concepts had influenced many artists and movements through out 20 century. While Participatory art as a popular form of art that engages the viewer in a collaborative, interactive experience can be traced back to the 1950s to early 1960s, when artists continue to experiment with ways to break down the traditional boundaries between art and the audience.

Marshall McLuhan wrote in 1951 that “[the mass media] get inside the collective public mind in order to manipulate, exploit, control”⁹ it; the New York School painters started to express their rejection of commercialization by retreating into subjective experience, and this attitude continually changed how artists delegating their power to the spectators. McLuhan also suggested that “the very considerable currents and pressures set up around us today by the mechanical agencies of the press, radio, movies, and advertising . . . [are] full, not only of destructiveness but also of

⁹ M. McLuhan, *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of the Industrial Man*, New York: Vanguard Press, 1951, v.

promises of rich new developments.”¹⁰ He pointed out that “discontinuity is in different ways a basic concept of both quantum and relativity physics. It is the way in which a Toynbee looks at civilizations, or a Margaret Mead at human cultures. Notoriously, it is the visual technique of a Picasso, the literary technique of James Joyce.”¹¹ This “discontinuity” had shaped John Cage, the main figure who influenced Happening Art, into someone who create sound art pieces without perfect logic and preparation. He preached an aesthetic of inclusiveness, consciously embracing discontinuity, change, the arbitrary and unpredictable.

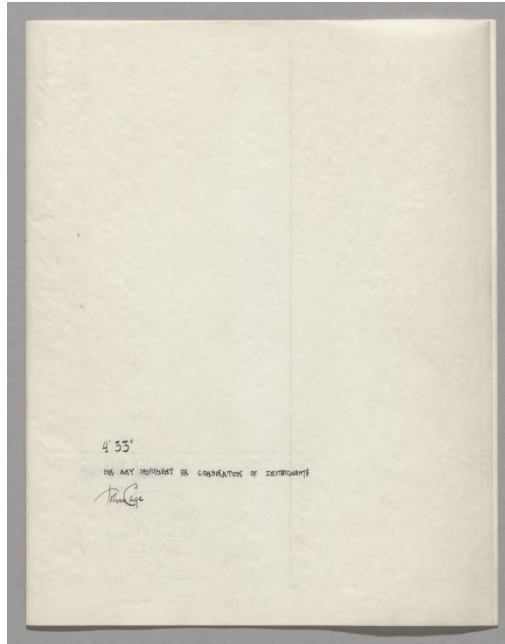
John Cage, born in Los Angeles in 1912, though being a sound composer, was inspired by Duchamp’s readymades, Cage regarded the everyday world as the source of art. He looked to the senses as Duchamp had looked to the intellect; both rejected expressionism. In 1950 Cage began to use chance, which he saw as nature’s central operating principle; in other words, he wanted to emulate the underlying process of nature without portraying its actual manifestations. As his theory of a “total sound space”, he asserted that music involves all sound, including non-musical sound and the absence of sound. Sound has four essential features: pitch, timbre, loudness, and duration; by contrast, silence, Cage observed, has only duration¹². A very related artwork is the silent “4’33”, a musical composition written by John Cage and first performed by the pianist David Tudor in Woodstock, New York, on August 29, 1952. The piece is typically performed by a solo pianist, but Tudor sat at the piano without playing any notes or any intentional sound for the duration of the performance, which is traditionally four minutes and thirty-three seconds (hence the title). The idea behind “4’33” was to encourage the listener to experience the environment in a new and more conscious way, as well as to challenge traditional notions of what music can be. Cage recounted, “You could hear the wind stirring outside during the first movement. During the second, raindrops began pattering the roof, and during the third people themselves made all kinds of interesting sounds as they talked or walked

¹⁰ Ibid.vi.

¹¹ Ibid., p.3.

¹² J.Cage, *Experimental Music*, 1957, Music Teachers National Association in Chicago, p.2

out”¹³. In the end, I consider this piece is one of the earliest contemporary artworks that consciously include the reactions of the audience as part of the work itself.



John Cage, 4'33" (In Proportional Notation), 1952/1953, Ink on paper, page (each): 11 x 8 1/2" (27.9 x 21.6 cm); sheet(each, unfolded): 11 x 16 15/16" (27.9 x 43.1 cm),

Acquired through the generosity of Henry Kravis in honor of Marie-Josée Kravis,1636.2012, © 2023 John Cage Trust

Rather than using Chance to bypass consciousness, as in Dada and Surrealism, Cage hoped to avoid personal determination. This attempt to annihilate the artistic ego as well as the distinction between art and the everyday experience was unprecedented and in direct contrast to the posture of his contemporaries in the New York School. Yet Cage resembled them in his emphasis on spontaneity and process and this deeply influenced the appearance of Happening Art, the very direct origin of Participatory art. As Cage was teaching a class at the New School for Social Research New York, Allan Kaprow, who is credited with creating the first happening artwork, had signed up for Cage’s course two years in a row.

¹³ Publication excerpt from *MoMA Highlights: 375 Works from The Museum of Modern Art, New York* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2019)

Around the late 1950s, after the strong influence of gesture painting led by Jackson Pollock and Neo-Dada¹⁴ led by Robert Rauschenberg, like many other artists at this time, Allan Kaprow felt the need to go beyond the conventions of both of them. In an article of 1958 entitled “The Legacy of Jackson Pollock” Kaprow explained as follows:

Pollock, as I see him, left us at the point where we must become preoccupied with and even dazzled by the space and objects of our everyday life. . . Not satisfied with the suggestion through paint of our other senses, we shall utilize the specific substances of sight, sound, movements, people, odors, touch. Objects of every sort are materials for the new art: paint, chairs, food, electric and neon lights, smoke, water, old socks, a dog, movies, a thousand other things¹⁵.

Kaprow’s first complete and public happening, titled *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, took place at the Reuben Gallery in New York City in October 1959. In contrast to Cage, whose encouragement of the participation of the audience was motivated by his desire to abandon authorial control, the audience in many of Kaprow’s Happenings became stage props through which the artist’s vision was executed. In the *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, the space is divided into three rooms formed by semitransparent plastic sheets painted and collaged with references to Kaprow’s earlier work. In each of them, a certain action took place: the musicians played toy instruments, the girl cut oranges, the artist lit matches and so on. Happening time was strictly limited, but there was no general meaning in the actions that took place. The audience was given programs and three stapled cards, which provided instructions for their participation:

The performance is divided into six parts [...] Each part contains three happenings which occur at once. The beginning and end of each will be signalled by a bell. At the end of the performance, two strokes of the bell will be heard [...] There will be no applause after each set, but you may applaud after the sixth set if you wish¹⁶.

¹⁴ Neo-Dada was a movement with audio, visual and literary manifestations that had similarities in method or intent with earlier Dada artwork. It sought to close the gap between art and daily life, and was a combination of playfulness, iconoclasm, and appropriation. From B.R.Collins, *Pop art : the independent group to Neo pop*, 1952, London: Phaidon.

¹⁵ A.Kaprow, *The Legacy of Jackson Pollock*, in “Artnews”, October 1958, <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/retrospective/archives-allan-kaprow-legacy-jackson-pollock-1958-9768/> [Last Access 10 June 2023]

¹⁶ P.Schimmel, *Leap into the Void: Performance and the Object*, in: *Out of Actions: between performance and the object, 1949–1979*, MoCA Los Angeles, New York/London, 1998, pp.61f.

These instructions also stipulated when audience members were required to change seats and move to the next of the three rooms. By these Kaprow created an interactive environment that manipulated the audience to a degree virtually unprecedented in 20th-century art.



Fred W. McDarrah

18 Happenings in 6 Parts, Reuben Gallery, New York, October 1959,1216.2013.4,©
2023 Estate of Fred W. McDarrah



Fred W. McDarrah

18 Happenings in 6 Parts, Reuben Gallery, New York, October 1959,1216.2013.9,©
2023 Estate of Fred W. McDarrah



Fred W. McDarrah

18 Happenings in 6 Parts, Reuben Gallery, New York, October 1959, 1216.2013.6, © 2023

Estate of Fred W. McDarrah

According to Kaprow: “A Happening is generated in action by a headful of ideas or a flimsily-jotted-down score of ‘root’ directions”¹⁷. Another well-known happening of Kaprow is *Fluids* (1967). He involved tasks executed at various locations around a city, as determined by the performers; the only audience was that which serendipitously passed by, thus rooting in the idea of breaking down barriers between art and life, creating art that was not just a static object but a dynamic experience, more important, in order to achieve the chance and uncertainty in Happening art, he is a pioneer on considering involvement of the Participation of the audience as an essential elements in the work.

Overall, Kaprow bombarded the viewer with sensations and the viewer had to make his or her own order out of the events. Often the action included the viewers, and their participation added an unpredictability that dramatized its similarity with real life. As the very beginning of participatory art, it developed the first step of

¹⁷ A.Kaprow, ‘Happenings’ in the New York Scene, in “Artnews”, May 1961, p. 59

environmental installation and legitimized the involvement of audience, however, audience is still as props for the artist who had build a kind of theatre or plot.

Step into the 60s, George Maciunas, an Lithuanian American artist, gave a very loose group of artists the name “Fluxus” in 1961, included Nam June Paik, Yoko Ono, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Emmett Williams, Ben Patterson, La Monte Young, Josef Beuys, Wolf Vostell and some others in this group. The origins of Fluxus can also be traced back to John Cage, it was characterized by its experimental and interdisciplinary approach, blending elements of performance, music, visual art, and literature. This approach is reflected in the movement's name, which derives from the Latin word “fluxus” meaning ‘flowing’ or “flux” . It was intended to flow freely and organically, without the constraints of conventional artistic or social structures. Also according to American curator Helen Molesworth, who hosted the podcast “Recording Artists” through the archives of the Getty Research Institute, indicated that “the Fluxus artists tended to be interested in the process of making an event rather than the production of a discrete art object”, and “Yoko Ono was one of the first artists to use an instruction-based method of making art”¹⁸.

In July 1961, George Maciunas, offered Ono her first solo show at AG Gallery, New York. Her work *Painting to be stepped on* was exhibited there. This piece consists of a white canvas that has been intentionally placed on the floor for the viewers to step on. Ono tried to challenged traditional art forms and the notion of the untouchable artwork, according to herself she said:

I went to an Army surplus shop. There was a rolled canvas – it was just in a corner. I said could I buy this? He said "sure." And I went home to the loft, and I started to cut pieces.

And I just felt so good about it because I never thought I wanted to do it, like, you know, stretch the canvas. I thought that was rather contrived, and everybody was doing that.

So I kept cutting, and, when I wanted to do *Painting to Be Stepped On*, I didn't have enough canvas. So then I realized that after I did *Water Painting*, and after cutting the circle, there was a kind of strange shape that was you know,

¹⁸ H.Molesworth, *Yoko Ono A Kind of Meeting Point*, Transcript from an episode in the podcast “Recording Artists”, © 2019 J. Paul Getty Trust

remaining there. I said, well, this will be a Painting to Be Stepped On, why not?¹⁹

By inviting the audience to step on the canvas, she questioned the idea of the artwork as an object of reverence and elevated the importance of the viewer's experience and interaction with the piece thus challenging the idea of ownership in the art world. Although this kind of “actional” use of paintings was earlier practiced by Jackson Pollock who was used to stand on his paintings to draw and drip, he remained the action only individually, the trace of the artist himself matters the most. Instead, Yoko Ono encouraged the public to step on the canvas and in the end left their marks and footprints, the artwork now became a collaborative effort, with each person leaving their different marks on the piece. This challenged the traditional notion of art as a product for elite culture and shifted the image of painting into something can be dirt or break by authorizing everyone to act to it. It remains a significant work in the history of contemporary art and serves as an inspiration for future artists to create unconventional and participatory works.

¹⁹ Y. Ono, *Yoko Ono: One Woman Show: 1960-1971*, in “The Museum of Modern Art”, <https://www.moma.org/audio/playlist/15/370> [last access 12 May 2023]



Yoko Ono. *Painting to Be Stepped On*. 1960/1961. Installation view, Paintings & Drawings by Yoko Ono, AG Gallery, New York, July 17–30, 1961. Photo: George Maciunas. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift, 2008. © 2015 George Maciunas

Cut Pieces is another piece created by Yoko Ono in 1964. The work involves the artist sitting still on a stage while members of the audience are invited to approach her and cut off a piece of her clothing with scissors. The performance ends when Ono is left completely exposed. Through this act of violence, Ono critiques gender and power relations, as well as exploring the idea of personal vulnerability. The piece was first performed in Yamaichi Concert Hall, Kyoto, Japan, and later in London and New York²⁰. No matter where, she always remained completely silent, which shifted the focus of the piece from the performer to the audience, the nuance relation

²⁰ A. Munroe; J. Hendricks, *Yes Yoko Ono*, October 2000. New York: Harry N. Abrams. p. 158

between the artist and audiences is described by the American artist and scholar Catherine Lord:

I think that what her silence does is foreground the audience's and the actors' perception of themselves. You see them sort of creating this kind of animal, which is an audience. And her silence foregrounds not only their few verbal remarks, but the choreography of their anxiety and their fluttering and whether they walk on or off the stage very quickly or not. I mean, I'm really fascinated by audiences being a sort of live creature, a collective creature that invent themselves before your eyes, by the fact of their own desires to sort of be in this collective, and to be an individual in this collective²¹.

Lord used “animal” to show the reaction of the audiences, this demonstrates how viewing without responsibility has the potential to harm or even destroy the object of perception. In one way, it was a new development of participatory art in sense that bring dynamic and reflective emotions to viewers through the participation, in another way, the participation still didn't lead to an open end since artist have planned the result and interpretation of the work in advance.



²¹ K. Lord, *Yoko Ono A Kind of Meeting Point*, Transcript from an episode in the podcast “Recording Artists”, © 2019 J. Paul Getty Trust

Yoko Ono. *Cut Piece* (1964) performed by Yoko Ono in New Works of Yoko Ono, Carnegie Recital Hall, New York, March 21, 1965. Photo: Minoru Niizuma. Courtesy of Yoko Ono. © Minoru Niizuma 2015

Through the cases above, we can see that the artists until the Fluxus, mostly have considered participants as a kind of artisan, to serve their personal theoretical purpose sometimes even with a nervous environment and a violent end. So what about the artwork itself? Can it involve audience with more emotion like, joy? Can it be automatically working so artist doesn't have to be present on site during the performance or event? Slightly after the Fluxus, another artist in North Europe, Jean Tinguely had gave us the answers.

Tinguely was a Swiss artist who was best known for his kinetic sculptures, installations, and performances. He evoked an aesthetic from an interest in motion and impermanence, accident, and indeterminacy. His works involved radios, lights, and motorized mechanisms that jerked this way and that in an energetic display of pointless activity. Often he invited the viewer to participate in his carnival-like contraptions.

One of his important works is *Meta-Matic No. 17 (1959)*, which was a machine that produced abstract drawings. The machine consisted of a box with a lever that visitors could pull to create a drawing. The drawing was produced by a set of rotating gears and other mechanical components inside the box. The Meta-Matic machines were important to Tinguely's work because they reflected his interest in the relationship between art and the viewer, indicating that it should be dynamic and playful instead of sacred and serious. Once he even wrote:

The real problem with art is not the artist, nor the work, nor the collector, nor the curator, nor the art dealer, nor the art critic, nor the historian. In fact, the only problem is the museum's janitor. Because [...] is too boring for him. So there must be an artist who creates art that he can be a part of²².

²² E.Wang, [Museum Summit] *Tinguely Museum: Moving Art to Diverse Communities*, 20, November, 2019, in "Orange News", <https://m.orangenews.hk/details?recommendId=49885> [last access 26 April 2023]



Jean Tinguely, *Meta-Matic No. 17*, 1959
Painted iron and wood, paper, ink, fuel engine, latex ballon
330 x 170 x 190 cm (129 15/16 x 66 15/16 x 74 13/16 in.)
Sculptures, NMSK 1895, © Jean Tinguely/Bildupphovsrätt 2023

In order to accomplish a Participatory art, apart from the artists and work itself, another factor in the art production is also significant - the curator, in this context also the museum director Pontus Hultén at Moderna Museet.

Pontus Hultén was a Swedish art collector and museum director and he is regarded as one of the most distinguished museum professionals of the twentieth century. He had a wide conception of the scope of exhibition programmes, combining various art forms — painting, happenings, dance, theatre, film and music — and organising

lectures and debates in the museum. In 1960, Hultén was appointed director of the Moderna Museet in Sweden, since then he had been developing projects together with artists such as Jean Tinguely and Per Olof Ultvedt that sought to transform a passive audience into a participative one. For example *Dylaby — dynamisch labyrint* (1962) at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, an exhibition comprising nine participative environments by Tinguely, Ultvedt, Niki de Saint Phalle, Martial Raysse, Daniel Spoerri and Robert Rauschenberg whose dissonance and joy experienced in the show were praised by Gerrit Kouwenaar's book for "empowering the museum visitor to participate"²³.

As a curator and museum director, he was always looking for an exhibition model that would appeal to large audiences, including child and working class, and to responded to general calls for more democratic and accessible institutions in the context of post-War social movements²⁴. Hultén's politics of inclusiveness was consistent with the Swedish welfare state, which sought "to eliminate the class distinctions that had segmented Swedish society for generations"²⁵. In the context of this shift in museum policies, *She—A Cathedral* (1966) was born. He commissioned Jean Tinguely, the other two artists Niki de Saint Phalle and Per Olof Ultvedtwork this environmental immersive installation. It was a spectacular and participatory work addressing ongoing social issues on women's liberation and sexual moral, which allows the viewer to enter a pregnant body and explore this new world.

This giant sculpture is a "cathedral" (23m wide and 6m tall) in the form of a pregnant woman lying on her back. *She* was pale, white, and dressed in painted, brightly colored underwear and stockings. Viewers were shown the way into the innards of *She*, where they encountered a dark space with stairs and ladders leading in different directions. In the right leg of this "woman" was a slide covered with a carpet of

²³ G.Kouwenaar, *Public is Co-Creator of Dylaby at the Stedelijk Museum, Vrije Volk*, no. 8 September 1962. Reprinted in Bruce Altshuler, ed., *Biennials and Beyond – Exhibitions That Made Art History, 1962–2002* (London and New York: Phaidon Press Limited, 2013), p.35–36.

²⁴ B.Antille, '*HON—en katedral*': *Behind Pontus Hultén's Theatre of Inclusiveness*, *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context, and Enquiry*, The University of Chicago Press, issue 32 (Spring 2013), pp. 72-81,

²⁵ F.D. Scott, *Sweden: The Nation's History*, Carbondale:Southern Illinois University Press, 1988, p.527.

imitation parquet, an aesthetic that recalls the slides of amusement parks at the time. In the left leg, the viewer could climb to a higher level through a ladder, where different services were offered, including an automat for food and a bottle crusher, giving the impression of a combination of a recycling machine that disposed of bottles from the bar above. Then there was a public telephone booth, and it was also possible to view a film, a clip from the silent movie *Luffär-Petter* (directed by Erik A. Petschler, 1922), in which Swedish beauties bathe in the countryside. In *She* there was a *Lover's Bench (Banc des amoureux)* (1966) realised by Tinguely and Ultvedt, designed for couples to sit and rest. They might have been unaware of the fact that their “love talk” was transferred through a hidden microphone and transmitted into the bar. In the belly of *She* was an aquarium with goldfish and at the apex of the belly was a peephole where visitors could stick their head out and have an overview of the entire exhibition space²⁶. As Hultén wrote in his book, “we imagined a form of theatre that would provoke the audience into taking part in the performance”²⁷. The project has been interpreted from a feminist perspective; as a happening with roots in the mediaeval carnivals; and as a type of performative exhibition, where visitors were invited to interact with art but in the end, this strategy proved successful in attracting audiences: at the beginning of his tenure, the museum counted 35,000 visitors per year; in 1966, that number increased to 235,000 for the first nine months of the year alone²⁸. In the history of participatory art, this was a milestone exhibition - for the art producing, it starts with a purpose that is not only generated from artists but also from the head of institution; it is not only for expressing artists' personal theory or concept but initially for engaging more viewers; it combines viewers multiple senses especially body movement with a critical and intellectual thinking.

²⁶ A.Tellgren, *REMEMBERING SHE – A CATHEDRAL*, March 2018, modernamuseet, <https://www.modernamuseet.se/stockholm/en/exhibitions/remembering-she-a-cathedral/> [last access 6 June 2023]

²⁷ P.Hultén, *Hon - en Historia: Hon, she, elle, sie, lei, zij* (exh. cat.), Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1967, p.32.

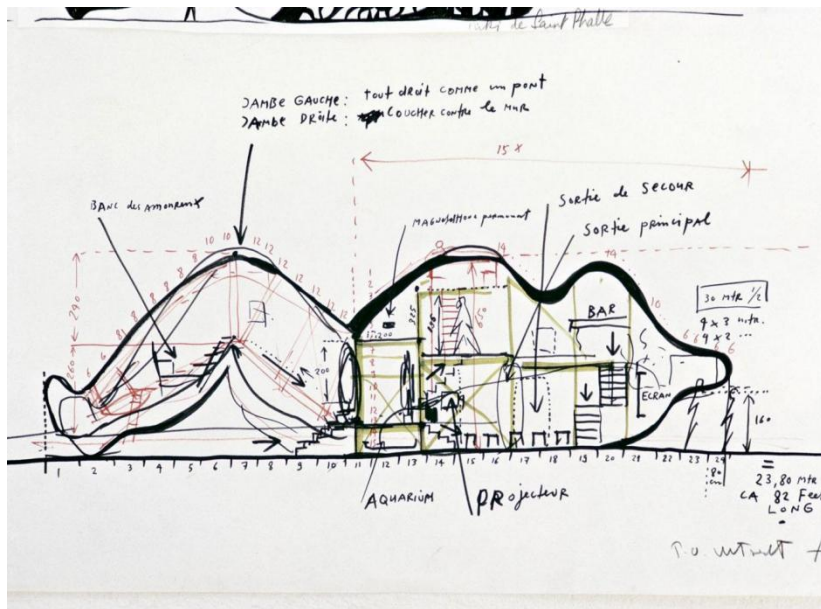
²⁸ B.Antille, *HON—en katedral: Behind Pontus Hultén's Theatre of Inclusiveness*, *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context, and Enquiry*, Issue 32 (Spring 2013), pp. 72-81, The University of Chicago Press



From the exhibition *She – A Cathedral*, Moderna Museet, 1966

Photo: Hans Hammarskiöld / Moderna Museet, Stockholm

© Niki de Saint Phalle, Jean Tinguely, Per Olof Ultvedt / Bildupphovsrätt 2018



Niki de Saint Phalle, Jean Tinguely, Per Olof Ultvedt, Sketch of *She – A cathedral*, Moderna Museet, 1966 © Niki de Saint Phalle, Jean Tinguely, Per Olof Ultvedt / Bildupphovsrätt 2017



Installation view, *'HON - en katedral'*, (*'She-a Cathedral'*), 1966, Moderna Museet, Stockholm. In the foreground, view of Ulf Linde's painting *Fake*, 1966. Photograph: Hans Hammarskiöld. Courtesy the artists and Moderna Museet

1.2 The 1970s to late 80s: Performance art and the early social engagement

After many performing practices by the Fluxus artists and the breakdown of traditional fine art forms, the terms 'performance' and 'performance art' became widely used in the 1970s. Performance art is artworks that are created through actions performed by the artist or other participants, which may be live or recorded, spontaneous or scripted²⁹.

Performance art broadens the definition of the term 'performance' to focus on the creative process of the artist or art itself, which is a temporal, behavioural form of art. Whereas in traditional conceptions and forms of art, the artist focuses on the result of

²⁹ Art terms, Tate Modern, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/performance-art> [Last access 26 April, 2023]

the creation, the final presentation of the artwork, performance art focuses on the process of creating art. Some artists started introducing participation thus interacting with the public into their works and allow them to understand more about the finished work of art, which is so high up in the hierarchy that the distance between art and the public is reduced, thus enhancing the public's understanding and recognition of art by transforming them into meaning-makers.

One of the most influential performance artists of the 1970s was Marina Abramović, who is known for her endurance-based performances that push the limits of the human body. In one of her most famous performances, *Rhythm 0* (1974), a six-hour work of performance art by in Naples in 1974. The work involved Abramović standing still while the audience was invited to do to her whatever they wished, using one of 72 objects she had placed on a table. These included a rose, feather, perfume, honey, bread, grapes, wine, scissors, a scalpel, nails, a metal bar, a gun, and a bullet. There were no separate stages. Abramović and the visitors stood in the same space, making it clear that the latter were part of the work. The purpose of the piece, she said, “was to find out how far the public would go if the artist himself doesn’t do anything [...] What is the public about and what are they going to do in this kind of situation?”³⁰ Her instructions were:

Instructions.

There are 72 objects on the table that one can use on me as desired.

Performance.

I am the object.

During this period I take full responsibility.

Duration: 6 hours (8 pm – 2 am)³¹.

Visitors were gentle to begin with, offering her a rose or a kiss. Art critic Thomas McEville, who was present, wrote:

It began tamely. Someone turned her around. Someone thrust her arms into the air. Someone touched her somewhat intimately. The Neapolitan night began to heat up. In the third hour all her clothes were cut from her with razor blades. In the fourth hour the same blades began to explore her

³⁰ Marina Abramovic Institute, Directed, Produced and Edited by Milica Zec
<https://vimeo.com/71952791>, c. 00:14 mins.

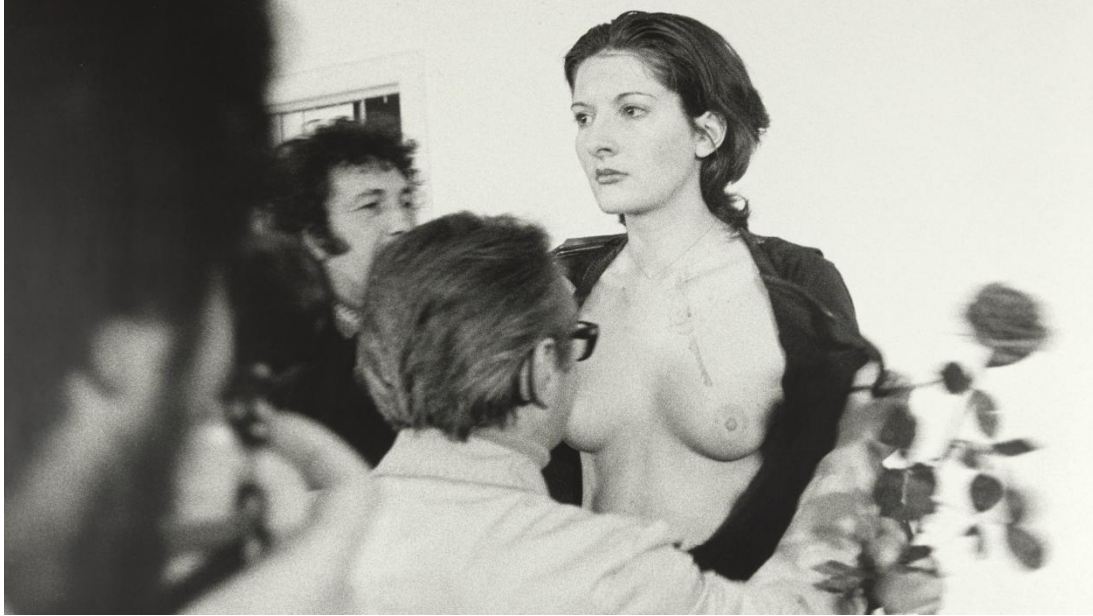
³¹ T.McEville, *Ward*, 2012, p. 119.

skin. Her throat was slashed so someone could suck her blood. Various minor sexual assaults were carried out on her body. She was so committed to the piece that she would not have resisted rape or murder. Faced with her abdication of will, with its implied collapse of human psychology, a protective group began to define itself in the audience. When a loaded gun was thrust to Marina's head and her own finger was being worked around the trigger, a fight broke out between the audience factions³².



Rhythm 0 by Marina Abramović, 1974, via The Telegraph

³²Ibid. p. 120



Marina Abramović, *Rhythm 0*, 1975 (published 1994) (detail). Gelatin silver print with inset letterpress panel frame, two parts, 98.1 x 100.7 x 2.5 cm and 25.9 x 18.3 x 2.5 cm, A.P. 1/3, edition of 16. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Gift, Willem Peppler 98.5211. © 2022 Marina Abramović, courtesy of Sean Kelly Gallery/(ARS), New York

From the perspective of participatory art, *Rhythm 0* is an effective work as it subverts the traditional relationship between artist and audience, allowing the latter to take an active role in the creation and experience of the artwork. During the performance, Abramovic places herself in a vulnerable position, and by doing so, she invites the audience to confront their own attitudes and behaviours. The absence of taking responsibility means that the audience has much more freedom than before to choose how to act as they wish in art practice. Compared to the *Cut Piece* by Yoko Ono, Abramovic provided more choices to audiences and created more sense of unpredictability which means each different action would lead to a different situation, it doesn't necessarily lead to only one result. This uncertainty challenged traditional notions of authorship and authorial control in art, as Abramovic relinquishes control of the artwork to the audience, allowing them actively participate to make decisions, and subverting the traditional relationship between artist and audience.

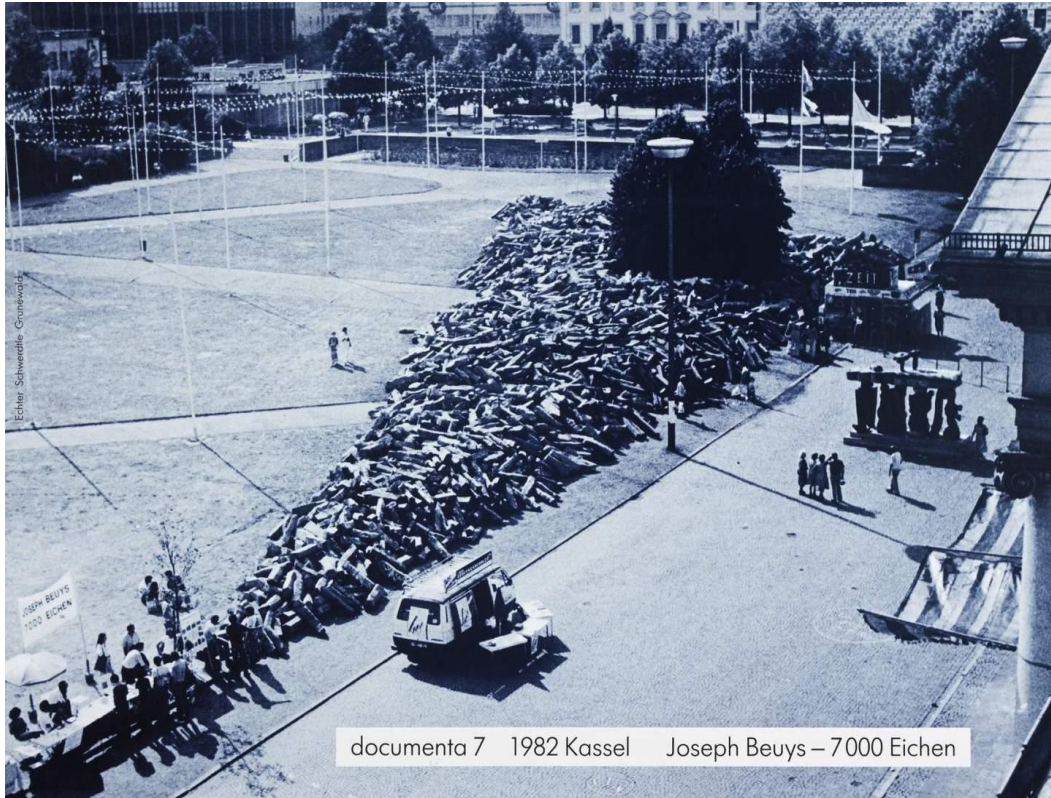
Apart from Performance art, German artist Joseph Beuys who started his practice from mid 60s but had a fundamental influence on the development of participation art that lead it into a social engaging direction in the 70s. His experiences during the second world war had turned his practice to a very political path-in 1970 he created the Organization for Direct Democracy, and after his dismissal from the Dusseldorf Art Academy in 1972 his art actions increasingly resembled eccentric lectures on social and political issues. At the international documenta 6 exhibition of 1977 he established a Free International University, with nonstop discussions on nuclear energy, equality for women, global politics, Northern Ireland, and other topical issues³³.

However, giving a solution to those social issues was not what Beuys was aiming at, instead, he cares more about calling people to be proactive about political and social issues. Since each individual can find the nature of existence within himself or herself by introspection—an idea Beuys took from the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer—each is therefore also capable of creating a revolutionary dialogue between art (creative thought) and real events. He stated that the spaces we live in are art; the work we do is art; the conversations we have are art; everything is art and everyone is an artist. He believed that society as a whole was one great big masterpiece that each person could contribute to individually. As he wrote in 1973:

Only on condition of a radical widening of definitions will it be possible for art and activities related to art [to] provide evidence that art is now the only evolutionary-revolutionary power. Only art is capable of dismantling the repressive effects of a senile social system that continues to totter along the deadline: to dismantle in order to build 'A SOCIAL ORGANISM AS A WORK OF ART'... EVERY HUMAN BEING IS AN ARTIST who – from his state of freedom – the position of freedom that he experiences at first-hand – learns to determine the other positions of the TOTAL ART WORK OF THE FUTURE SOCIAL ORDER³⁴.

³³ Guggenheim New York artists, *Joseph Beuys*, <https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/artist/joseph-beuys> [Last access 6 June, 2023]

³⁴ Beuys statement dated 1973, first published in English in Caroline Tisdall: *Art into Society, Society into Art* (ICA, London, 1974), p.48. Capitals in original.



Joseph Beuys, *7000 Oak Trees* (1982)

ARTIST ROOMS Tate and National Galleries of Scotland, © DACS, 2023

By declaring “everyone is an artist” and calling up everyone to practice art, Beuys also wanted to counteract the overbalance of rationality in contemporary society. He created the term “social sculpture” to describe the way art can transform society. Art isn’t merely for institutionalized curated work, but rather, it is everywhere and everyone is making it. We are all constantly shaping society and the environment with our words, actions, thoughts and objects we create, like his practice in the 7th documenta in 1982, Beuys planted 7,000 oak trees over five years in Kassel with the help of volunteers, each with an accompanying basalt stone, it was a project around his philosophy acknowledging the creativity inherent in volunteers planting trees on their own, thus extend the traditional role of the art gallery so the gallery extends out into the city.

The concept of Beuys and his practices had been ground-breaking since it stated art can take part in social intervention macroscopically. In this way, he has given a huge inspiration to future artists on shaping the society through engaging audiences. The value of his idea was unquestionable, as Fineberg mentioned in his book: “Thus art

serves as a politically liberating force [...] one of the only viable ones left in a media-dominated society”³⁵. However, at the same time, Beuys’ theory and his various practices appears that everyone has become a participant, and all forms of the world are artworks in themselves. He seems to support a very macro and abstract form of participatory art but he did not explicitly specify the methods of participation. How exactly to achieve what he supported? How can the public become “artists”? Or even, how can professionally trained artists help audiences to shape the “social sculpture”? His theory is more like a guiding direction for participatory art, remained as a stimulation and provocation. Especially when it comes to the 80s, the period that had many social changes, Beuys’ legacy became an important theory basis in socially engaging participatory artworks.

To fight against the backdrop of world wars, the US-Soviet Cold War and dramatic changes in the global economy, many artists started questioning more than just the structure of the art world; much of their work was also often strongly socio-political, reflecting widespread dissatisfaction with society and government policies and using various forms of art to intervene in social issues. And Participatory art becomes an effective way to involve the public, to gain the acceptance of the social group and thus to try to respond and solve social issues as a collective rather than an individual. In Adair Rounthwaite's book *Asking Audiences: Participatory Art in 1980s New York* (2017)³⁶, Dia Art Foundation commissioned two consecutive participatory art projects in its gallery space: Group Material's *Democracy*, and *If You Lived Here . . .* by Martha Rosler in 1989. Both Group Material and Rosler have chosen to organize a series of themed exhibitions around pressing social issues rather than more traditional object-based exhibitions: the former focuses on public education, electoral politics, the AIDS crisis and cultural engagement in politics, while the latter focused on homelessness and gentrification. Straddling the tail end of the Reagan era and the beginning of George H. W. Bush's first and only term, these projects not only bridge the gap between the two presidential administrations but also open in the context of major historical changes on the domestic and global fronts: the outbreak of the first

³⁵ J. Fineberg, *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being*-Harry N. Abrams, 1995, p. 235.

³⁶ A. Rounthwaite, *Audiences: Participatory Art in 1980s New York*, 2017, University of Minnesota Press

Gulf War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, as well as cultural wars meant to raise visibility of identity politics and alternative sexualities. In the face of this complex cultural and political landscape, *Democracy* and *If You Lived Here...* proposes a new strategy to bring art and political activism closer together. Their installations combined works of art by the featured artists with works by local schoolchildren and members of the community, in addition to a diverse range of found objects, printed ephemera and pedagogic displays. More importantly, both projects used hall style forums to engage the public on controversial topics that often became heated and confrontational.

The methods of participation for social engagement seem to be more clear than before - expand beyond the confines of the gallery into the public realm and build dialogue between diverse communities. They are not a single work of a performance that intends to present the idea of the artist, but a series of programs and projects, with different topics and audiences, with an open narrative and ending. But one question had remained - if all the existence of the work meant to solve a certain problem, does it still count as an artwork? Does it become an adjunct to politics? Where is the aesthetic element if it's still considered as an art? In one of the reviews for these works, Johanna Gosse has mentioned:

these were not simply instances of activist art, but attempts to fundamentally remap the relationship between the artist, the institution, and the public sphere. By adopting the processes of direct democracy as both form and content, these projects leveraged the social currency of art as a “public good” to engage in politically challenging discourse and oppositional actions that extended far beyond the realm of the aesthetic³⁷.

Socially engaged participation has been applied by various participatory artists and has been followed by new theorists who qualify the method as dialogical art and give evidence of its intrinsic aesthetic qualities, as we will discuss in Chapter 4.

³⁷ J.Gosse, review of *Asking the Audience: Participatory Art in 1980s New York*, by Adair Rounthwaite, 2018, *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art* 4, no. 1.



Group Material, *Democracy: Education* installation view at Dia Art Foundation, New York, 1988-1989, Courtesy: Dia Art Foundation, New York



Martha Rosler, *If You Lived Here*, 1989, Multi-part exhibition project
Dia Art Foundation, New York

To summarize the changes in participatory art from the 1950s to late 80s, we can see the origin of it came from Dadaist theory led by Duchamp, artists such as John Cage, Allan Kaprow, Yoko Ono and so on. They provided a theater-like environment, used "instructions" to direct the audience's behavior like directing actors, predetermined

the ending in the beginning, therefore audiences' role was more like a tool to assist the artist in expressing themselves in avant-garde and anti-traditional ways through art practices. Then participatory art practices had developed into two distinct paths. One of it focused the form, thus the method of its origin - involving audiences' actions, senses and emotions when presenting the work like Tinguely did; The other path, influenced by Joseph Beuys, focused on the democratic nature of participation, which is very useful for artists who attempted to promote social change. Their goal was to address specific social issues and achieve democracy in social decision-making, as seen in the works of Group Material, and Martha Rosler mentioned earlier.

When participatory art step into the 90s, it no longer follows a linear evolution. Therefore, in the following chapters, the examples do not occur in chronological order, but rather intersect and coexist. What we can see is that these two paths are not completely separated, but can exist in multiple overlapping forms by applying different level of use, thereby achieve different influence. Moreover, both paths have not completely changed or disappeared with the arrival of new theories and eras, but rather continuously transform and evolve into two novel participatory and interactive directions influenced by emerging technologies and new scholars. This include Nicolas Bourriaud who focused on Relational Aesthetics; Grant Kesper and Claire Bishop who address on the social engagement.

Chapter 2 Participatory art in Relational Aesthetics

2.1 Nicolas Bourriaud: Relational Aesthetics

2.1.1 Why relation matters?

Before introducing Relational Aesthetics, it is necessary to have a look at the social background to understand what is the "Relation" behind it. Starting from the late

1960s, large-scale social and cultural revolution involving issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, environmental protection and political protests spread around Europe and the United States, more and more people were dissatisfied with the capitalist system, consumerism, and the false reality created by the media³⁸. Problems had never stopped, in the 90s, the United States began to implement neoliberal policies that emphasized the role of market forces, and the market economy gradually replaced the role of government. At the same time, the wave of globalization swept over the United States - more multinational corporations entered the US market plus increasing immigrants particularly from Latin America and Asia had led to issues like economic inequality, polarization, and rising unemployment. In Europe, immigration also increased, but they were more refugees from conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East and this led to debates over issues of identity and security. In addition, the United States also faced problems such as rising crime rates, community violence, and gun violence. The relation between people at this moment had become much more fragile than before - the distrust between each other, the utilitarianism take over, the defensiveness toward others.

Another new issue aroused in 90s was the impact of digital technology and the Internet on society. The Internet began to popularize, which had a profound impact on traditional culture, interpersonal relationships, and economic systems. The cyberbullying, information leakage, fake information, together with the gap between generations...it seems internet linked us with each other, in a way, it separate and isolate users ideologically into different tags and groups which sometimes create a certain hatred between groups.

When all these problems of relation between people meet the system of intensive encounter in crampedness of dwelling spaces in this urban world, an artistic practice is tried to respond to this situation.

2.1.2 Traffic exhibition: what is Relational art?

³⁸ *Counterculture, POLSC301*. Saylor Academy Term Introduction.

French art critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud curated the very first exhibition that gathered many active participatory artists called *Traffic* (1996). *Traffic* took place at CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, it featured works by a diverse range of around 30 artists including Vanessa Beecroft, Henry Bond, Jes Brinch and Henrik Plenge Jakobsen, Angela Bulloch, Maurizio Cattelan, Andrea Clavadetscher and Eric Schumacher, Honoré d'O, Liam Gillick, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Douglas Gordon, Jens Haaning, Lothar Hempel, Christine Hill, Noritoshi Hiramawa, Carsten Höller, Pierre Huyghe, Peter Land, Miltos Manetas, Gabriel Orozco, Jorge Pardo, Philippe Parreno, Jason Rhoades, Christopher Sperandio and Simon Grennan, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Xavier Veilhan, Gillian Wearing and Kenji Yanobe³⁹.

Among them, Rirkrit Tiravanija, whom Bourriaud strongly supported with, provided simple, user-friendly arrangements of tables and chairs made from brown packaging cardboard around the second floor in the gallery, each with a free mini-bar of red wine and mineral water. Tiravanija is best known for his immersive, participatory installations that blur the lines between art, architecture, and everyday life. In one of his best-known series, begun with *pad thai* (1990) at the Paula Allen Gallery in New York, Tiravanija rejected traditional art objects altogether and instead cooked and served food for exhibition visitors. For his second solo exhibition *Untitled (Free)* in New York, held at 303 Gallery in 1992, Tiravanija filled the white rooms with stacks of cultural cast-offs, rendering the space into what seemed like a storage facility, demoting the primacy of the revered art object and inviting visitors to cook, eat, and socialize with one another. In 1995 he presented a similar untitled work at the Carnegie International exhibition at the Carnegie Museum of Art, where he included wall text that presented written instructions for cooking South-east Asian green curry, which was then prepared for visitors. Then he was invited to transform the main nave of the Grand Palais into a festive, large-scale, twelve-hour banquet composed of a single meal of Tom Kha soup (*Soup/No Soup*, 2012). This series of pieces not only highlighted the cultural exchange that takes place in urban centers like New York, but also imported another physical sense into Participatory art, which is Taste. He opened a new sensation and demonstrated that the process of eating as daily life and

³⁹ C.Freedman, *Traffic*, Review column in "Frieze", 5 September 1996
<https://www.frieze.com/article/traffic> [Last access on 5th May, 2023]

the space of appreciating art can be intertwined and put together because both of them simply achieved the same thing: gathering people and creating connections.



Guests interact with Tiravanija's 'Pad Thai' (1990) at Paula Allen Gallery, New York (Photo: courtesy of David Zwirner Hong Kong gallery)



Tiravanija, *Pad Thai*, 1990 (Photo: courtesy of David Zwirner Hong Kong gallery)

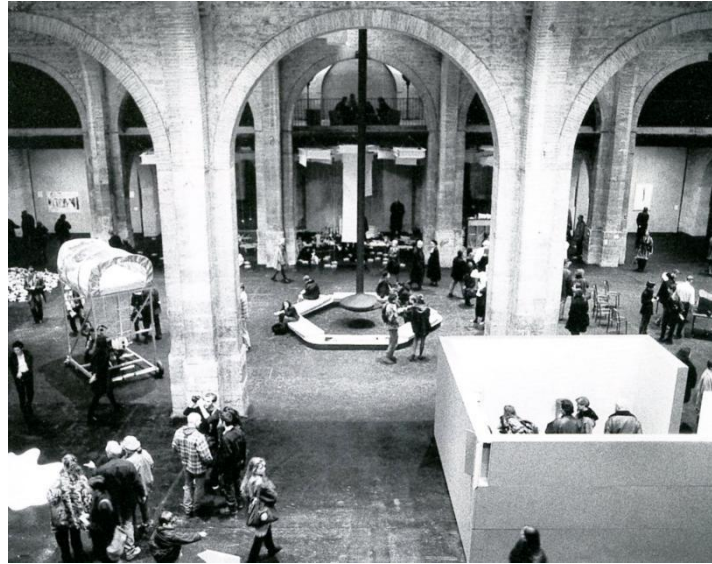
In *Traffic*, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's seance room where in collaboration with the artist, could make people recall early memories in an effort to draw a floor plan of their childhood home. Attendant thoughts and feelings swim up from the past and are added to the drawing as brief complementary notes, the finished plan joining others on the room's walls. Lothar Hempel expanded the constituency of the show by approaching local social groups. Producing an unassuming and quietly generous work, he knocked together a four-walled space, and on the inside sketched the facades of anonymous housing blocks, illuminating them with shadowy projections of silhouetted leafless trees. On the outside, he displayed information and educational material from several groups, including an open house for people with suicidal tendencies, an esoteric self-discovery dance school, and a support organisation for prostitutes. Danish artists Jes Brinch and Henrik Plenge Jakobsen, planned a pink lump of an alternative domestic habitat consisting of cave-like dwellings complete with wooden beds, a cooking area and communal seating, all atmospherically enhanced with taped nature noises. The artists wanted to have the round-the-clock occupation of the dwelling for the duration of the show, but were initially restricted to public opening hours by museum regulations. The Californian artist Jason Rhoades persuaded the museum to give him 51% of the money towards the cost of a brand new saloon car and showed some photographs of his new purchase parked at different locations in and around LA⁴⁰. Though the museum retains a majority share ownership, Rhoades gets to keep the car at home for his own use and pleasure.

Every artist participating in the *Traffic* exhibition has their own unique world of forms, set of problems, and personal trajectory, these artworks are not connected by a particular style, theme, or iconography, however, what unites these artists is their shared practical and theoretical approach to human relationships. This common ground is fundamental and central to their work within the exhibition, to do so, participation becomes the only medium. Bourriaud wrote this in the catalogue of the exhibition which is considered to be the prototype of *Relational Aesthetics*(1998):

Their works highlight social methods of exchange, interactivity with the onlooker within the aesthetic experience proposed to him/her, and communication processes, in their tangible dimension as tools for linking

⁴⁰ Ibid.

human beings and groups to one another. So they are all working within what we might call the relational realm. [...]The work of art of the 1990s turns the onlooker into a neighbor and interlocutor. It is precisely the attitude of this generation towards communications which helps to define it in relation to previous generations⁴¹.



Vue de l'exposition *Traffic*, CAPC-musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux, janvier-mars 1996, avec des œuvres de Liam Gillick, Carsten Höller, Xavier Veilhan (Le Feu, au centre) et Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (Hotel Color, Bordeaux, à droite)

Image: DR

According to Bourriaud, in the worlds constructed by these artists, objects and language are intertwined, representing a connection with others. The object is just as immaterial as a phone call, and a work consisting of a supper around a bowl of soup is as material as a statue. Objects, institutions, times, and works are all part of human relations, rendering social work tangible⁴². Indeed, the nature of present-day art lies in its approach to the relationship between space and time, and the connection with the world that is broadcast by an object, which determines the relationship we have with it. Ultimately, the relationship is with a relationship, and time is more significant than the space it occupies. The object of the work is not dictated by the artists, but rather by the connection it creates with the world.

⁴¹ N.Bourriaud, *Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange*, Translated from French by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods, in "May", 2012, <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/> [Last access on 5th May, 2023]

⁴² Ibid.

2.1.3 Critics towards Traffic and Relational art

Before *Traffic*, the relational art that Bourriaud mentioned such as Philippe Parreno invited people to pursue their favorite hobbies on May day on an industrial assembly line. Christine Hill landed a cashier's job in a supermarket and organized a weekly gym class in a gallery. Carsten Höller recreated the chemical formula of the molecules secreted by the human brain in love, built an inflatable plastic yacht, and bred finches so that he could teach them a new song...were only presented singly as one piece of art. While *Traffic* had gathered many of them in the same space and same time. However, as a pioneer to claim that the purpose of their art producing is to build connections and relations in a world that is *alienated*⁴³ as Marx described, there were some severe critics after the show.

Most of the comments were criticizing its two problems: First, 'Relational art' is a vague conception, it cannot be seen as a new kind of art. Second, the exhibition included artworks that interacted with viewers in presence, and the ones that were recorded as a video resulted in no consistency with the premise and the show appeared to be messy and chaotic⁴⁴. Private art dealer and advisor, former proprietor of Emily Tsingou Gallery Emily Tsingou commented: "To the casual visitor of the show, 'Traffic' seemed a bit confusing." For her,

the idea, though, of interactivity is not a very lucid one, especially if one considers that it could be stretched to such extent as to encompass any art work and the presence of a viewer (even in its traditional sense, art functions on that quality). Trapped in a need to claim a direct rapport with interactivity, some artworks (especially video work and painting) seemed forced to 'fit in' with the rest. This, resulting in a lack of concreteness, turned the plausibility of interactivity, on the whole, very slim on a visual level"⁴⁵.

Another critic, the gallerist Carl Freedman, shared the positive side:

the pleasure and enjoyment were not to be found in the exhibition itself but in the week-long gathering of the 30 artists involved. Under the auspices of an

⁴³ K.Axelos, *Alienation, Praxis, and Technē in the Thought of Karl Marx, 1976, University of Texas Press*

⁴⁴ E.Tsingou, *A critic's review about Traffic, 1996, <https://ciaocarla.wordpress.com/lateral/traffic-exhibition/> [Last access on 5th May, 2023]*

⁴⁵ Ibid.

'exchange of ideas', the artists talked, drank, dined and danced together whilst creating, preparing and installing their different works."⁴⁶

While in the same time, he also said:

'Traffic' and Bourriaud's concept of 'relationality' were just too unspecific to be capable of defining a new art, especially when so many of the works did little to support the exhibition's premise. This was an ambitiously funded exhibition which was only able to provide the viewer with a largely familiar array of objects and images. With the primary beneficiaries of 'Traffic' tending to be the participating artists and their associates, Bourriaud may need to look at what actually constitutes the socio-political determinants of his 'interhuman space'⁴⁷.

To respond to the critics and to elaborate his theory after the practice in 1996, Bourriaud published his first version of *Relational Aesthetics* in 1998, and this book became a foundational text for Participatory art.

2.1.4 Relational Aesthetics: A state of encounter

According to Bourriaud, the purpose of relational art is not to create beautiful objects or to express individual creativity, but to create social relations and exchange under the background of mass communications. Interactivity was not what he considered was new, since it has already been discussed by Marcel Duchamp's lecture *The Creative Process* in 1954. Therefore, his argue towards the former critics is: relational art is neither not the revival of any movement, the comeback of any style nor a completely new art that change art history. The novelties embodied in the assumption at the core of this approach, which uses human relationships as a framework for artwork that is issued from an observation of the present and from thinking about a lot of artistic activity; embodied in the artists viewing intersubjectivity and interaction as neither theoretical and trendy gadgets nor as alibis to traditional art practices, rather, they consider them to be the main drivers and the ultimate goals of their activity, the spaces in which their works are arranged are entirely interactive, characterized by openness fostered by any dialogue. Overall, they produce relational space-times—interhuman experiences that aim to break free

⁴⁶ C.Freedman, *Traffic*, Review column in "Frieze", 5 September 1996
<https://www.frieze.com/article/traffic> [Last access on 5th May, 2023]

⁴⁷ Ibid.

from the constraints of mass communication ideology. In some ways, these are spaces designed with critical models and moments of constructed conviviality. In other words, to understand and appreciate relational art, there is a need to change the old way of evaluating art, and instead start to consider the beauty of “time” and building connections in the art production, so Bourriaud called, the aesthetics toward relational art.

Bourriaud helped to set the position and interpreted the value of participatory art in art history and its impact on art practice. He argues that art should be seen as a form of communication between individuals. The role of the artist is not to create objects and convince viewer to like them but to create situations that foster people to express and judge them with interaction and dialogue. The artist becomes a facilitator, creating a space where people can come together and exchange ideas. For him, the artwork shall and has always evolved with urbanisation and participation is needed in the art process as “*a state of encounter*”⁴⁸:

it is no longer possible to regard the contemporary work as a space to be walked through (the ‘owner's tour’ is akin to the collector's). It is henceforth presented as a period of time to be lived through, like an opening to unlimited discussion. The city has ushered in and spread the hands-on experience.[...] Art (practices stemming from painting and sculpture which come across in the form of an exhibition) turns out to be particularly suitable when it comes to expressing this hands-on civilisation, because it *tightens the space of relations*, unlike TV and literature which refer each individual person to his or her space of private consumption, and also unlike theatre and cinema which bring small groups together before specific, unmistakable images. Actually, there is no live comment made about what is seen (the discussion time is put off until after the show). At an exhibition, on the other hand, even when inert forms are involved, there is the possibility of an immediate discussion, in both senses of the term. I see and perceive, I comment, and I evolve in a unique space and time. Art is the place that produces a specific sociability. It remains to be seen what the status of this is in the set of ‘states of encounter’ proposed by the City⁴⁹.

2.1.5 Relational Aesthetics: micro-utopias

⁴⁸ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics (1998)*, 2002, Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Publisher Les Presses du Reel, p.16

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.15-16

Moreover, as Gilbert Durand said that the modernist movement thrived on an “imagination of opposition”⁵⁰, since it relied on divisions and differences and often rejected the past in favor of the future. It was built on conflict, whereas the imagination of the 1990s prioritizes negotiation, connection, and forms of coexistence. The value of participatory art is also presented in, according to Relational Aesthetics, its less interest in advancing through confrontational clashes, and more focused on inventing new combinations, forging possible relationships between distinct entities, and constructing alliances between different subjects. Aesthetic and social contracts are viewed for what they are. As Bourriaud suggested “Social utopias and revolutionary hopes have given way to everyday micro-utopias and imitative strategies, any stance that is ‘directly’ critical of society is futile”⁵¹. Similarly, by participating in this micro-utopias, people have no longer a desire to establish a Golden Age on Earth, but rather a willingness to create various ways of living that encourage more equitable social relationships, fuller lifestyles, and productive combinations of negotiations, bonds and co-existences.

Felix Guattari who was advocating those hands-on strategies that underpin present-day artistic practices mentioned this already back in 80s: “Just as I think it is illusory to aim at a step-by-step transformation of society, so I think that microscopic attempts, of the community and neighbourhood committee type, the organisation of day-nurseries in the faculty, and the like, play an absolutely crucial role”⁵². Especially since these days, “utopia is being lived on a subjective, everyday basis, in the real time of concrete and intentionally fragmentary experiments”⁵³ therefore Bourriaud called up to “Rehabilitate experimentation” via art, thus create micro-utopias via relational art:

Who are we trying to kid that it might be helpful and beneficial to stage a return to aesthetic values based on tradition, mastery of technology, and respect for historical conventions? If there is an area where chance does not exist, it is indeed the realm of artistic creation: when we want to kill off democracy. we

⁵⁰ G.Durand, *The Anthropological Structures of the Imaginary*, translated by Magaret Sankey and Judith Hatten, 1999, Boomnana Publications

⁵¹ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 2002, Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Publisher Les Presses du Reel, p.31

⁵² F.Guattari, *Molectlar Revolution*, Penguin, 1984.

⁵³ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 2002, Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Publisher Les Presses du Reel, p.44

start with muzzling experiments, and we end up by accusing freedom of having rabies⁵⁴.

In 2003 at the 50th Venice Biennale, an exhibition made by those relational artists have practiced as a micro-utopia whose name is *Utopia Station* (2003), curated by Molly Nesbit, Hans Ulrich Obrist and Rirkrit Tiravanija. The concept of the station is an offshoot of Tiravanija's nomadic roaming around the world and is more a junction, or a meeting-place, than a stop en route to a predetermined destination. Works by more than 60 individual artists, architects and artists' groups, along with posters by another 100, are wrapped in and around a vast plywood platform designed by Liam Gillick and Tiravanija. This construction incorporates several rooms with video projections, areas for the visitors to lounge and hang out, and a small stage where talks and lectures are planned throughout the duration of the Biennale. *Utopia Station* presents itself as a functional neighbourhood open to social interaction, complete with a garden with funky communal showers designed by Tobias Rehberger, *Padre de la Fontana* (Father of the Fountain, 2003), ecological toilets designed by Atelier van Lieshout (Scatopia, 2002), its own web radio station *Zerynthia*, in collaboration with Franz West, and a stilted hut by Alicia Framis where one might take a quick nap should it all become too exhausting, *Billboardthailandhouse* (2000). The project here is not finished, but the interim culmination of a series of events and seminars, the Station itself will be filled with objects, part-objects, paintings, images, screens. Around them a variety of benches, tables and small structures take their place. It will be possible to bathe in the Station and powder one's nose. The Station in other words becomes a place for participants to stop, to contemplate, to listen and see, to rest and refresh, to talk and exchange. For it will be completed by the presence and participation of people and a program of events.

Curators explained the show in this way:

We use utopia as a catalyst, a concept most useful as fuel. We leave the complete definition of utopia to others. We meet to pool our efforts, motivated by a need to change the landscape outside and inside, a need to think, a need to integrate the work of the artist, the intellectual and manual laborers that we are

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.84

into a larger kind of community, another kind of economy, a bigger conversation, another state of being. You could call this need a hunger⁵⁵.

What we can see is that in the end this micro-utopia create a temporary and small-scale convivial moments and experiments in interpersonal relations. And the relational art works are providing participants an encounter and an experience of a micro-utopia, they do not establish any precedence or priority of the producer over the beholder, but rather negotiate open relationships with it, which are not resolved beforehand. This latter thus wavers between the status of passive consumer and the status of witness, associate, customer, guest, co-producer, and protagonist.



Utopia Station, 50th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, 2003

© Photo: Haupt & Binder

Overall, Nicolas Bourriaud's "relational aesthetics" theory rationalizes the method of participation itself in art process. Participation is no longer subordinate or in service to the artist, but existing as an aesthetic of interpersonal relationships. Like Rirkrit Tiravanija mentioned earlier, this theory has also inspired more other artists who turn art into an entertaining and enjoyable space, that people gathering together in the comfortable and peaceful way. In order to achieve this, artist intend to avoid specific controversial social problems that relates only to a small group, instead, artworks that have nothing to do with the viewer's identity, cultural background or class, but are related to bodily sensations and perceptual experiences, are more likely to meet the expectations of relational aesthetics. Therefore in the 21st century, with the

⁵⁵ M.Nesbit, H.U.Obrist, R.Tiravanija, *Utopia Station*, in "e-flux projects", 2003, <https://www.e-flux.com/projects/66652/utopia-station/> [Last access 7 June 2023]

development of new media technology, participatory art have developed from this relational aesthetics to a more playful state.

2.2 Perceptual experience through playful installation

2.2.1 Background

According to a British psychologist Richard Gregory, perceptual experience refers to an individual's conscious awareness and interpretation of sensory stimuli. It involves the subjective and direct sensory impressions and interpretations of the external world through the senses, including sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. It involves the processing, organisation and integration of sensory information by the brain, resulting in perception, sensation and feeling. Also, it works differently in that perceptual experiences are influenced by a variety of factors, including individual sensory abilities, prior knowledge, cultural background and personal biases⁵⁶. They play a key role in shaping our understanding of the world and constructing our subjective reality, so if an artwork stimulates the viewer's senses in multiple ways, his perceptual experience will vary greatly between individuals, leading to different interpretations and perspectives.

Since the 21st century, propelled by the popularization of relational aesthetics and digital technologies, participatory art has evolved into a realm focused on expanding perceptual experiences. Artists utilise digital technology and technological design as its means by employing elements such as light, form, texture, sound, smell and spatial arrangement to evoke specific sensory responses and emotional reactions from the viewer. With those interdisciplinary collaboration, artworks influence the perceptual systems through which people experience artworks, thereby affecting their emotional states and their understanding of the world and others.

⁵⁶R.Gregory;O. Zangwill, *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*, 1987, pp. 598–601.

With the emergence of the Web 2.0 opened up a vast virtual world - the Web 1.0 era, people could only passively view content, while web 2.0 sites allow users to interact and collaborate as creators of user-generated content in virtual communities and through social media conversations⁵⁷. This had lead to two motivations under the context of art practice: Firstly, there exists a group of artists who readily embrace emerging technologies, aspiring to engender expansive digital interactions. Their objective is to cultivate a diverse range of innovative technologies conducive to online dissemination. These artists endeavor to utilize sound, light, colors, and computer-based advancements to foster a heightened level of interactive engagement between humans and machines. Ultimately, their intention is to curate a visually striking panorama within an urban setting that delivers a holistic experience, resulting in both fascination and delight.

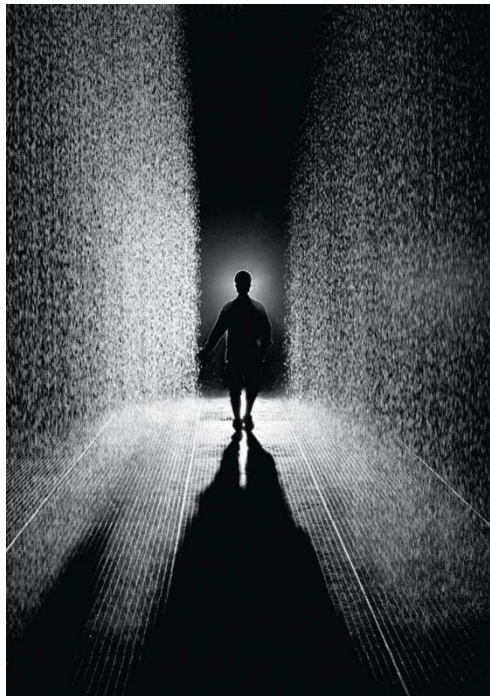
Another category of artists, emphasizing more on the experiential aspect within physical environments, aims to elicit new perceptual encounters by overlaying the viewer's sensory modalities, encompassing sight, touch, smell, taste, and bodily movements. Their artistic endeavors entail the creation of captivating amalgamations that enable observers to perceive mundane objects in a transformed manner, offering fresh perspectives on lived reality. The common thing is that, somehow they both tend to play with the perceptual experience of the viewers, and let's have a deep understanding of the both.

2.2.2 Participation with new media technologies: virtue and reality

Interestingly, when we try to analyze participatory artworks created using digital technology, we often find that their creators are usually an artistic collective. To accomplish such large-scale projects, collaboration within a team is required. These collectives often position themselves as “technology laboratory” or “art design

⁵⁷ O.Tim, *What Is Web 2.0*, in “O'Reilly media”, 30 September 2005, <https://www.oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html> [Last Access 10 June]

studio.” A prime example of this is Random International - a post-digital art group exploring the impact of technological development on the human condition. Best known for their large-scale interactive installations, the group works across an array of media including sculpture, light, kinetics, video, print, and sound.⁵⁸ Their largest and most ambitious work⁵⁹ *Rain Room* (2012) made them known by most of the public-an immersive field of perpetually falling water that pauses wherever a human body is detected. The installation offers visitors an opportunity to experience what is seemingly impossible: the ability to control rain. *Rain Room* presents a respite from everyday life and an opportunity for sensory reflection within a responsive relationship. Standing inside one can hear the heavy “rain” surround him while not getting drenched and when someone walks too fast, he might get some drops, in this dark space - visual, sound, tactility were well combined with the adrenalinic excitement, just like everyone who pass through a park with fountain, would like to challenge to go across it without getting wet.



Random International, *Rain Room*, 2012, Photo courtesy of the artist

⁵⁸Random International official website <https://www.random-international.com/biography> [Last access 16 May]

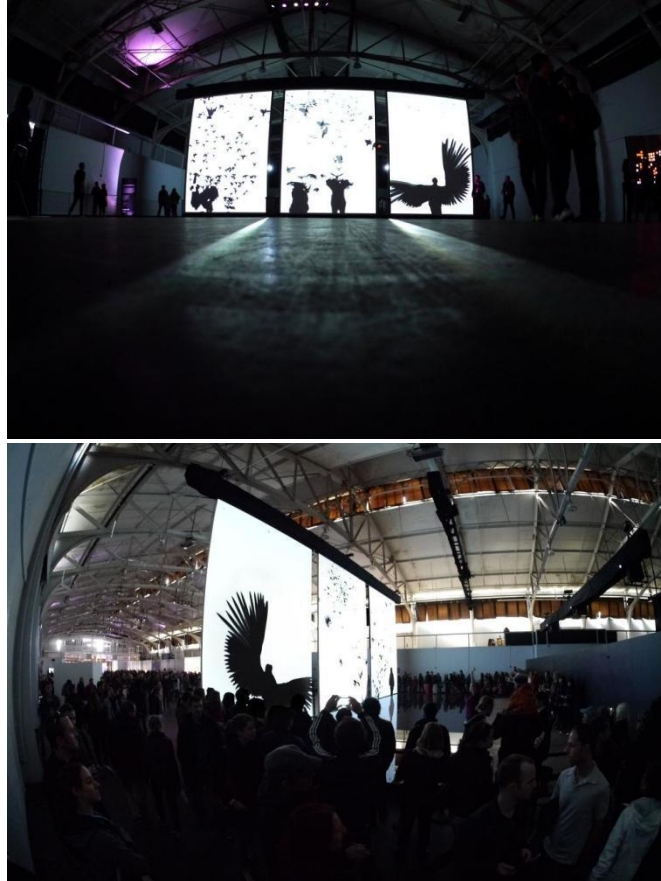
⁵⁹ MoMA exhibition introduction on official website <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1352> [Last access 16 May]

In the same year, another immersive artist Chris Milk, also the co-founder and CEO of a virtual reality technology company, together with The Creators Project and FakeLove two creative groups released the work called *The Treachery Of Sanctuary* (2012) exhibited in *Creators Project: San Francisco* which is still touring the world. The work consists of three 30-foot high white panel frames suspended from the ceiling on which digitally captured shadows are reprojected. A shallow reflecting pool sits between the viewers and the screens. In the background, an open Frameworks application utilizes the Microsoft Kinect SDK for Windows. This talks to a front end running Unity3D in which articulated 3D models of birds interact with the shadows captured by three hidden Kinects⁶⁰.

The story and visual ties of this piece are very well put together, upon entering the space in front of the pool, one notices their shadow appearing within the first frame, as if stepping in front of a bright light. A flock of birds swarms at the top of the panel. Reaching up to them, the shadow begins to dissolve, transforming into hundreds of small birds that flutter upwards to join the flock. Within just a few moments, the silhouette has completely disintegrated, leaving no trace. Moving to the second panel, the flock above becomes larger and more menacing. As one enters, the birds begin to swoop down, attacking the shadow and snatching away chunks of it in their claws. The onslaught continues until the shadow is almost completely devoured, leaving only a pair of stubby legs. Entering the third panel, the silhouette reappears. Upon swinging their arms up, they are bestowed with a massive pair of wings. The wings follow their gestures, swaying with the movement of their arms. “I was so interested to watch people go through it, I think it's something about the fact that you're looking at what you feel is your shadow-that's a very familiar construct to everyone,” Milk told this during the interview with Wired.co.uk at the Paris opening, “Everybody has made shadow puppets on the wall. People are familiar with the sight and accept it as truth, and then when things start to happen, they seem to get really excited about it.” What he was trying to do, was “to see if there's a way, as technology evolves, that it

⁶⁰ C.Milk, *The Treachery of Sanctuary*, artist's statement on his official profile website, <http://milk.co/treachery> [Last access 6 June 2023]

can be integrated into human experiences. Can you use technology to produce real human emotion in people”⁶¹.



Chris Milk, *The Treachery Of Sanctuary*, 2012, CREATORS PROJECT
Documentary

Although technologies brought some really amazing effect and attracted many audiences and engagement, this kind of single-installation work appear to be overcrowded. When *Rain Room* was shown in MoMA during May 12–Jul 28, 2013, the instruction given by the museum was : “In order for visitors to enjoy the sensory experience of *Rain Room*, capacity is limited to 10 people at a time. Entry is on a first-come, first-served basis and wait times are expected to be significant. Entry is not guaranteed. Please note that the queue for *Rain Room* is outside, so plan your visit accordingly. In response to extremely high demand, the Museum has instituted a

⁶¹ L.Clark, *Interactive installation features shadow-eating birds*, interview with Chris Milk in “Wired magazine”, 21 June 2012, <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/chris-milk-installation> [Last access on 18 May 2023]

viewing-only queue. Visitors can now move through the installation from the side, without walking directly below the rain area, and experience the installation at very close range with minimal wait times”⁶². Besides, when it was on show in Melbourne 2019, more than 20,000 tickets sold before the work even opened. The same happened to *The Treachery Of Sanctuary*, even from the images we see above, it’s almost impossible to make sure everyone can experience the artwork whenever they come. The queue might just frighten them away, and also being “participating” could have been a more private fun, but now their every movement is being watched by the queuing people like a performer under spotlight. However, this was not unsolvable. Another example that we can’t escape when talking about participatory art with new media technology, have found its way to expand their capacity by setting enormous and permanent venue and that is teamLab.

teamLab is an international art collective found in Japan. At the start of the new millennium in 2001, the widely anticipated “Millennium Bug”⁶³ did not bring about the collapse of the world. Instead, computer hardware and software complemented each other, leading to rapid advancements in computer technology. It was during this period that Inoko Toshiyuki, a student from the University of Tokyo's computer science department, chose a different path upon graduation. Rather than pursuing further studies in a specialized field, he embarked on a journey of exploration within the realm of digital imagery, aspiring to facilitate novel modes of self-expression through new media. In earlier time it was not in the present commercialized format. Operating without tangible products or a profit-oriented model, their approach relied on forming collaborative teams comprising educators and students, focusing on targeted development. This collaborative *modus operandi* has endured, reflected in the very name “teamLab.” Over the course of nearly two decades, teamLab has transformed into an art brand boasting close to 400 team members and global projects. The teamLab collective comprises artists, programmers, engineers, CG animators, mathematicians, architects, and other professionals spanning diverse

⁶² MoMA exhibition introduction on official website
<https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1352> [Last access 16 May 2023]

⁶³ *Millennium Bug*, in *Lessico del XXI secolo*, Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 2012-2013. URL consultato il 21 maggio 2021.

fields. Leveraging a blend of technological tools and boundless imagination, teamLab showcases new media art projects that transcend conventional sensory experiences⁶⁴, meanwhile, they produce not only short-time exhibitions, but also large-scale permanent exhibitions and museums.

The earlier digital interactive installations launched by teamLab started from *Sketch Aquarium* (2013), and *Hopscotch for Geniuses* (2013), they were both exhibited in Milan Salone 2014 and had toured in more than 7 countries. *Sketch Aquarium* is a work dedicated to Children. Each participant is invited to color a drawing of a sea creature of his or her preference. Once completed, the paper is scanned and the image is projected onto a giant virtual aquarium. Children will be able to see their creation come to life and swim with all of the other sea creatures. Children may also touch the fish to see them swim away, or touch the virtual food bag to feed the fish. This work had later on developed into *Sketch Town* (2014) that children can create their cities and buildings. The other game, *Hopscotch for Geniuses*, is not only Children-oriented and the interaction shows more the real-time detecting technology that teamLab is good at. It involves hopping on the circles, triangles, and squares in the water. When one lands on the same shape multiple times in a row, a fish, butterfly, or bird is born. Jumping on many of the same shapes consecutively will result in the appearance of even more animals. Moreover, if one consecutively jumps on shapes of the same color, that color will spread throughout the space. The fish, butterflies, or birds moving along the walls will dissolve into the world upon being touched. These two exhibitions basically shows the two types of interaction mechanism in all their future works, but they continuing to update them with better visual and sound effect in lager spaces.

⁶⁴ Biography on teamLab official website <https://futurepark.teamlab.art/en/about/#about> [Last access 16 May 2023]



teamLab, Photo of *Sketch Aquarium*, 2013 ©teamLab



teamLab, Photo of *Hopscotch for Geniuses*, 2013 ©teamLab

Later on, teamLab is officially presented by Pace Gallery worldwide from 2015 and had produced museums and large-scale permanent exhibitions include *teamLab Borderless* (2018), *teamLab Forest* (2020) and *teamLab SuperNature* (2020), the first one is around 10,000 square meter, visually consisting nature elements like lotus, rain, waterfull with accordinate sound with some traditional Japanese figures showing up, also some rooms equipped very futuristic endless digital lights and mirrors in all directions, when you enter the space, all the elements would change their shape depending on your steps and touches. This real-time interaction is very well used also in their *EN TEA HOUSE*, their tea house serve 4 kinds of traditional

Japanese tea and one green tea icecream, when a cup of tea is made, digital flowers appear and “bloom” inside the teacup; when the teacup is lifted, the flower petals scatter and spread outside of the cup; when the tea is gone, the artwork disappears with it. More interesting, the amount of tea in the cup will change the size of the tea’s surface, accordingly, it will also change the size of the flower. If tea is spilled from the cup, flowers will also bloom in the spilt liquid. Throughout the year, each month’s seasonal flowers will bloom. As teamLab always mention about their techonology: “Our artwork is not a pre-recorded image that is played back: it is created by a computer program that continuously renders the work in real time. The interaction between people and the installation causes continuous change in the artwork: previous visual states can never be replicated, and will never reoccur. The picture at this moment can never be seen again”⁶⁵.



teamLab, Photo of *Peace can be Realized Even without Order*, 2018, exhibited in
teamLab Borderless ©teamLab

⁶⁵Description on teamLab official website
https://www.teamlab.art/ew/flowersbloom_macao/macao/?autoplay=true [Last access 16 May 2023]



teamLab, Photo of *EN TEA HOUSE*, 2018 ©teamLab

The other one, *teamLab Forest*, consisting of a Catching and Collecting Forest and an Athletics Forest. The Catching and Collecting Forest allow people use their phone to scan the creatures on the wall and “catch” them, then the animal will disappear from the wall and show up in the phone with introduction of that creature, and then by choosing “release”, it will be back on the wall again. The Athletics Forest is relatively involved more body movement - trampoline, canoe, bouncing ball, slides... one can choose his way to pass through all the obstacles which accordinate different sound, by choosing different path, he generates his own music -this indeed made the space more challenging and dreamlike. But as an adult when I experienced it once in Shanghai, it's hard not to imagine that the space would actually be blank without the lights. My body still can feel the environment is empty in that huge place with only projected films.



teamLab, Photo of *Catching and Collecting Forest*, exhibited in *teamLab Forest*, 2020 ©teamLab



teamLab, Photo of *Athletics Forest*, exhibited in *teamLab Forest*, 2020 ©teamLab

Just short time later, in *teamLab SuperNature* opened in Macau, they have broaden “digital” installations into more “physical” ones: *Floating Flower Garden: Flowers and I are of the Same Root, the Garden and I are One* (2015) and *Massless Clouds Between Sculpture and Life* (2020), the former was produced in 2015 but never been

set up in a permanent venue. This floating flower garden space is completely filled with real orchids flowers rooting up from the roof, when someone continues to stand closely to the flowers, they will float up above people, to open a space for walkers. Comparing to *Rain Room*, they share similar technology and the idea of people meeting each other in a space surround with real nature element, but teamLab involved “the last bastions of materiality in an age of immaterial globalization”⁶⁶- Smell. The resistance of odor to electrification makes it one of the aspects of an artwork that still demands the physical presence of its audience in order to experience it. By using fresh flowers, teamLab addressed this :“Orchids are known to have co-evolved with certain pollen-carrying insects. The flowers’ aromas become stronger at the time of day when the partner insects are active. Because of this, the scent of the artwork space changes each moment between morning, day, evening, and night. Since many of the orchids in this work are partnered with nocturnal insects, the tightly-packed orchids produce a powerful fragrance at night”⁶⁷. *SuperNature*’s frontier also shows in *Massless Clouds Between Sculpture and Life*: In terms of material substance, the things that exist in this space are ordinary soap bubbles, water, and air. The bubbles form numerous floating “soft sculptures” above the ground, as people pass through them, affecting the airflow and altering the positions of these bubbles. Spectators can cut, pat, manipulate, and even crush these bubbles.

⁶⁶ A.Osman, *Historical Overview of Olfactory Art in the 20th Century*, 14 June 2013, p.2

⁶⁷ Description on teamLab official website https://www.teamlab.art/ew/ffgarden_macao/macao/ [Last access 16 May 2023]



teamLab, Photo of *Floating Flower Garden: Flowers and I are of the Same Root, the Garden and I are One*, 2015 ©teamLab



teamLab, Photo of *Massless Clouds Between Sculpture and Life*, 2020 ©teamLab

Since TeamLab is working on their new concept: “Learn and play! Future Park”, they are aiming to “Change the Relationships Among People: Making the Presence of

Others a Positive Experience”⁶⁸, and turn individual creative acts into co-creative activities in which people freely work together. They pointed out that:

Humans are naturally collaborative and creative. [...] Large numbers of people are addicted to smartphones. Their brains may be connected, but their bodies are isolated. As a result, opportunities for nurturing co-creative experiences are decreasing. Humans learn about the world through interaction with others and by sharing experiences. People think with their bodies as they move through the world, and society has developed through creative activities born from collaboration. [...] Hopefully through enjoying the experience of co-creation, people will be able to explore more shared creativity in their daily lives. It was from such a desire that the “Learn and Play! Future Park” project was born⁶⁹.

This idea echos to what Nicolas Bourriaud said in *Relational Aesthetic*: “In our post-industrial societies, the most pressing thing is no longer the emancipation of individuals, but the freeing-up of inter-human communications, the dimensional emancipation of existence”⁷⁰. To see its result on building this “dimensional emancipation of existence”, we could look at some numbers:

A newly awarded certificate from Guinness World Records officially makes it the most visited museum dedicated to a single group or artist in the world. This achievement was awarded based on the number of people visiting the museum between January 1 and December 31 2019. With a record total of 2,198,284 visitors, teamLab Borderless surpassed the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, which recorded 2,134,778 visitors in the same year, as well as Barcelona’s Picasso Museum with 1,072,887 visitors⁷¹.

However, some critics may say, “it’s simply a technological display with no depth of thought, and definitely not in keeping with the reputation of a top-tier international gallery”⁷² indeed, if someone use the standard narratives of Modernism to measure these works, from the view of their approach of practicing participatory art - using projected graffiti artworks and simple human-computer interaction- they might seem too “childish” or “shallow”, but just like what has been mentioned before about Bourriaud’s word, this new form of art isn’t born to rebel or confront with the

⁶⁸ Description on teamLab official website <https://futurepark.teamlab.art/en/about/> [Last access 16 May 2023]

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ N.Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 2002, Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Publisher Les Presses du Reel, P.60

⁷¹ E.Steen, *teamLab Borderless takes Guinness World Record for the world’s most visited museum*, in “TimeOut” , 21 July 2021 <https://www.timeout.com/tokyo/news/teamlab-borderless-takes-guinness-world-record-for-the-worlds-most-visited-museum-071421> [Last access 22 May 2023]

⁷² Liu Chinchin, *teamLab Research*, Sotheby’s institute of art thesis.29, 2019, p.4

existing problems instead it looks for a peaceful solution, balanced coexistence between human and their concerns, which means the point of the works are aiming to bring out the playfulness and wonderland for citizens who are rushing and living in those huge modern cities doing repeat work and being isolated from everyday life, so the “playfulness” is one side a perfect method to learn things, the other side, a candle to light up the imaginations from the repetitive norms. They let everyone extend their sensories through participatory art in a playful way and develop a special perceptual experience that help people to think with more possibilities and imaginations while delivered a broader definition of “where and what can art be? ” Overall, teamLab has provided a very typical interdisciplinary example for the development of participatory art.

2.2.3 Participation with material installation: art and daily life

In Bourriaud’s book *Postproduction* (2002), he pointed out that: “Artists today program forms more than they compose them: rather than transfigure a raw element (blank canvas, clay, etc.), they remix available forms and make use of data”⁷³. For him, art after the 90s has reached the tertiary sector—the service industry—and that art’s current function is to deal with things that were already created elsewhere, in his words art is “to recycle and duplicate culture”⁷⁴. Art production now indexes the service industry and immaterial economy more than heavy industry (as it did with Minimalism). Artists no longer consider the artistic field a museum containing works that must be cited or surpassed, as the modernist ideology of originality would have it, but so many storehouses filled with tools that should be used, stockpiles of data to manipulate and present. Another word, “they don’t really ‘create’ anymore, they reorganize”⁷⁵ what we have seen and experienced. From participatory point of view, artists started to redefine what we considered as daily - the social spaces, images,

⁷³ N.Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: how Art Reprograms the World*, 2002, Translated by Jeanine Herman, New York: Lukas & Sternberg, p.5

⁷⁴ Ibid,p.5

⁷⁵ B.Simpson, *Curator: Nicolas Bourriaud*, interview in “Artforum”, April 2001, <https://www.artforum.com/print/200104/nicolas-bourriaud-516> [Last access 8 June 2023]

household items...by imitating their forms and materiality and push participants to “re-experience” them, thus, building a new relations out of norms.

Carsten Höller, a German artist who lives and works in Stockholm uses his training as a biological scientist in his work as an artist. His major installations include *Flying Machine* (1996), a work which hoists the viewer through the air, *Upside-Down Goggles*, an experiment with goggles which modify vision; *Test Site* (2006), a series of giant slides for Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall that people can slide down; *Amusement Park* (2006) – five full-sized amusement park rides familiar from childhood a Gravitron, bumper cars, a Twister, and more at MASS MoCA; *The Double Club* (2008-2009) in London, which took the form of a bar, restaurant and nightclub designed to create a dialogue between Congolese and Western culture. His *Revolving Hotel Room* (2008), a rotating art installation which becomes a fully operational hotel room at night, was shown as part of *theanyspacewhatever* exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in 2009. In 2011 he had a huge solo show *Carsten Höller: Experience* (2011-2012) in New Museum New York, which gathered together almost all his signature works, including *Giant Psycho Tank* (1999) that allow Up to six people, wearing either their own bathing suits or nothing at all, fit inside the enclosed pool of body-temperature water filled with Epsom salts; *Love Drug (PEA)* (1993/2011), a glass vial containing the mood-enhancing chemical found in chocolate, phenylethylamine. This exhibition is an arrangement that alter the audience’s physical and psychological sensations, expand haptics from texture of materials to temperature, inspiring doubt and uncertainty about the world around them.



Carsten Höller, *Untitled(Slide)*, 2011, A 102-foot slide that corkscrews from the fourth floor down to the second at the New Museum.
Credit. Chang W. Lee/The New York Times



View of Carsten Höller: *Experience*, 2011, New Museum, New York.
From left: *Minor Carousel*, 2005; *Singing Canaries Mobile*, 2009; *Untitled (Slide)*, 2011. Photo: Benoit Pailley.



Carsten Höller, *Giant Psycho Tank*, 1999. Photograph: Jens Ziehe

© Carsten Höller / Bildrecht Wien 2014, Sketch: © Carsten Höller

Meanwhile, Carsten Höller is not the only one who play with idea of an amusement park, Argentinian artist Leandro Erlich who is well-known by *The Swimming Pool* (2004) which underneath there is an aqua room that viewers can enter, inviting a shared experience of wonder at the constructed space both from above and below, also created a work called *Carrousel* (2008) that he mounts a typical one bedroom apartment complete with bathroom, kitchen and dining area - onto a real time carousel. This work marries the architecture of the playground with that of settled domesticity to playfully re-enact the daily grind, capturing us in an endless series of transitions from lobby to kitchen to dining room to bathroom to bedroom to the living room to lobby and so on, with some daily object moving up-down like the horses on a carousel. Together with *Changing Rooms* (2008), a kind of labyrinth which challenges the viewer to get in and get lost in a maze of fitting rooms, whose mirrors - in some cases - have been removed; and the *Dalston House* (2013) on Ashwin Street London, as a homage to the actual architecture that once lined the street before it was bombed out in World War II, his practices emphasize more on new perspectives of daily-life spaces comparing to Höller. By juxtaposing a larger-than-life reflective mirror over an actual-sized multimedia house, he positioned on the floor below that jut out at a 45-degree angle above the horizontal home, it

captured visitors at seemingly weightless play as they crawl across the facade. Looking up at the reflection, the visitors, seem to hang from window ledges, sit effortlessly on panes, dangle from strings, and strut up and down the facade like Spiderman in zero gravity. The result is as someone does cross a border and he would enter a space where reality and fiction are mixed and his perception is undermined and no longer certain.

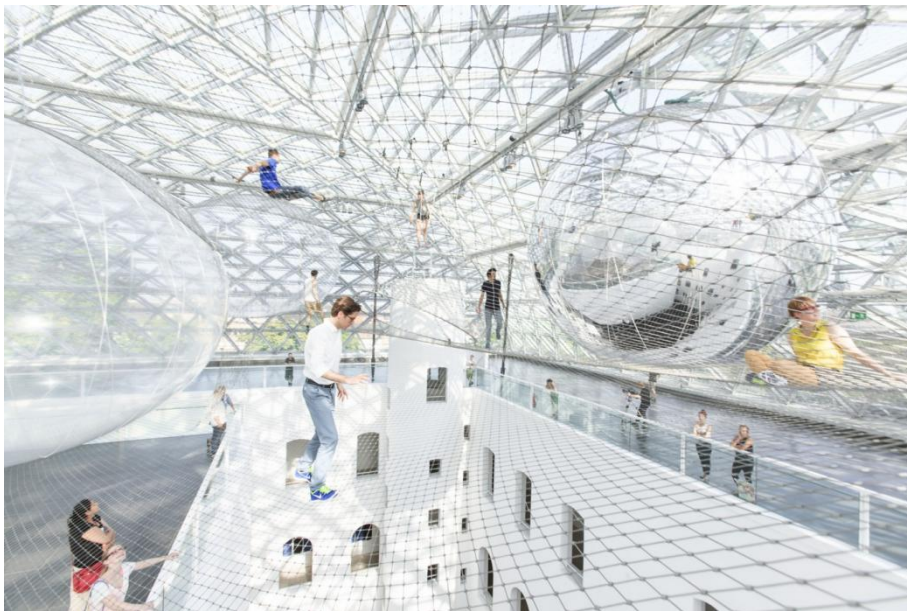


Leandro Erlich, *Carrousel*, 2008, mixed media, 157 1/2 x 393 3/5 inches (400 x 1000 cm) © SEANKELLY, LE-9



Leandro Erlich, *Dalston House*, 2013, © Gar Powell-Evans

Apart from visual and sound that can be replaced in normal form of art like theatre or paintings, the perception that a normal easel artwork could not involve in Participatory art, are haptics and whole body movement, so more artists continued the playful and child-like inspirations and created works that participants can even move themselves like doing a sport. Tomás Saraceno's *In Orbit* (2013) - 25 meters above the atrium of K21 in Düsseldorf that invites visitors to climb inside like spiders on one net, since the height and instability due to other players' movement, participants have to use both hands and legs to move advance; *The Event of a Thread* (2012) in Park Avenue Armory, by Ann Hamilton who placed 42 large wood-plank swings, suspended from hall's elaborately trussed ceiling beams by heavy chains that are also tied to the rope-and-pulley system that holds up the curtain, when they are in action, the curtain, made of a lightweight silk twill, rises and dips, and the air is stirred, causing further billowing and fluttering.



Tomás Saraceno, *In Orbit*, 2013 - Ongoing, Kunstsammlung (K21), Düsseldorf, Germany, Curated by Marion Ackermann and Susanne Meyer-Büser



Ann Hamilton, *The Event of a Thread*, 2012, Park Avenue Armory

Photography: Donny Tsang

2.2.4 Critics of perceptual experience oriented participatory art

From the aforementioned artworks, artists employ the following practices to further liberate themselves from conventional art on the wall and profoundly alter the viewers' perceptual experiences. Firstly, they break down the barrier between virtual and reality by utilizing interdisciplinary interactive technologies that integrate the variations of natural elements into the technology. This allows the presentation state of the artwork to change based on the participants' bodily movements. Secondly, they redefine everyday objects in daily life. Artists appropriate daily life objects into artistic spaces or alter the perspectives of viewing the mundane, endowing them with perspectives that transcend their original functions. Among these practices, "playability" and "participating in 'impossibility'" provide dual-layer effects on viewers' physical sensations and cerebral perceptions.

However, as mentioned earlier, participatory art of this nature also often presents challenges in terms of technology, space, and the duration of the experience. Participants may frequently encounter long queues and wait times, be required to pay

high rental and compensation fees for equipment, or have to sign various safety and liability waivers before engaging in the experience. Art historian in Yale, David Joselit, commented this on *Carsten Höller: Experience* exhibition:

To experience both pieces, you have to stand in a long queue to prove that you won't sue the museum for possible harm; then there's another long queue to get a set of bulky goggles that you'll see heaven and earth upside down when you wear them, and you have to pledge your credit card as security (if the goggles are damaged, you'll have to pay US\$1,500) [...] Some may think that this 'experience' sounds like military training or an airport security, rather than a visit to an art gallery⁷⁶.

For this, on one hand, teamLab offered a way to expand spaces and using technology to transfer the whole space into an experience field instead of one installation that allow only one participant each time, on the other hand, these checks and regulations somehow could also be considered as an un-normal experience and excitement of expecting part during a participating process. To break the image of museum as an isolated ivory tower far from the real life and public, first we should break with some naive ideas of a utopian-like experience. However, there is another problem remained as Joselit also pointed out:

(the slides) only made me feel as if I might as well have gone to Disneyland or the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Höller's play is indeed not about art (after all, what else would make us go into a museum without being able to see it?) He refuses to give us anything other than an 'experience'⁷⁷.

"Only experience, nothing else to take away" seems to be a very important thing to concern when we need to figure out what is the difference between perceptual-experience oriented participatory art and amusement park like Disneyland. We can perhaps sense in the above examples the limitations of Bourriaud's interpretation of participatory art in terms of relational aesthetics, which advocates a more face-to-face activities between the viewer and the author, who doesn't aim to change their environment, but spontaneously creates just structures-micro-utopias and harmonious scenes which for Bourriaud, the most important. But the biggest problem with this exposure is that the process is an artist-led mode of behaviour, which is in fact a one-way cultural export, the participants are considered as one group, as long as the group exist, no matter who is in the group and how have they acted, the work

⁷⁶ D.Joselit, *Carsten Höller*, exhibition review in "Artforum" printed in 2012, February

⁷⁷ Ibid.

completes anyway. It is therefore only superficially structured in terms of both the choice of viewers and the choice of works-that is, a form of engagement with performance that lacks direct engagement with socio-political issues especially they are still set mainly in traditional gallery and museum settings, it is often even possible to undertake a global tour and result in the same effect.

Chapter 3 Participatory art in social engagement

3.1 Claire Bishop: Antagonism and relational aesthetics

3.1.1 Antagonism as the “right relation” within relational aesthetics

British art historian Claire Bishop made a significant critic to Bourriaud’s *Relational Aesthetics*. In 2004, Bishop comprehensively criticized relational aesthetics in her article *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics* (2004). She doesn’t oppose the participatory approach employed by relational art, but questions the specific characteristics of the “relationships” within relational aesthetics. As mentioned earlier, the core of relational art is to involve the audience in the artwork, replacing individual contemplation in traditional exhibition spaces with collective experiences. Bourriaud summarizes the relations generated through audience participation as negotiation, bonds, and co-existence⁷⁸. Bishop argues that the specific relations involved in relational aesthetics are a misguided response by Bourriaud to the political realities of the real world.

Bishop views artworks as miniature social structures, and her ideal democracy is not about reaching consensus through negotiation, as it would inadvertently suppress differences and result in false unanimity. As Bishop wrote in her book summing up

⁷⁸ C.Bishop, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*, October press, Vol.110 (Autumn,2004) p.67

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's concept from *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985):

Laclau and Mouffe argue that a fully functioning democratic society is not one in which all antagonisms have disappeared, but one in which new political frontiers are constantly being drawn and brought into debate—in other words, a democratic society is one in which relations of conflict are sustained, not erased. Without antagonism there is only the imposed consensus of authoritarian order—a total suppression of debate and discussion, which is inimical to democracy⁷⁹.

According to Bishop, democracy is the coexistence of endless differences, the manifestation of conflicts rather than its disappearance. Based on this democratic concept, artworks in Bishop's perspective inevitably differ from relational art. Their differences lie in the content of the artwork rather than the methods of creation, as public participation is their fundamental common ground. If the political attitude reflected in the artwork is not about negotiation, association, and coexistence, then what should it be? Bishop firmly provides the answer—antagonism⁸⁰.

The work made by Spanish artist Santiago Sierra at the 2001 Venice Biennale can demonstrate her idea. Sierra exhibited *Persons Paid to Have Their Hair Dyed Blond* (2001), he invited 133 illegal street vendors, mostly from southern Italy or immigrants from China or Africa, to participate in the work, all with the common denominator of black hair colour. On the exhibition in Arsenale, Serra dyed their hair blonde and offered \$60 for per person. Here we find a group of illegal vendors, previously excluded from the art exhibition system entering the exhibition and their blonde hair shining brightly to emphasise their membership of the city's social group. Thus, what had been defined as a refined cultural venue was intermingled with a city atmosphere. This is the kind of work that Bishop would recognise as confrontational, and we can see that it does not hide or eliminate conflict, but rather exposes the punchlines. Sierra also has some other extreme actions, such as *160 cm Line Tattooed on Four People* (2000), *Person Remunerated for a Period of 360 Consecutive Hours* (2000), and *Ten People Paid to Masturbate* (2000). Casual black-and-white photographs, along with sporadic videos and a brief textual account, serve as records for these transient endeavors. The approach to documenting these

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 65

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 65

activities seems to draw inspiration from Performance artists of the 1970s like Marina Abramovic. However, Sierra's works distinguishes themselves within this lineage by incorporating individuals as active participants and placing a notable emphasis on their compensation. In one way Bishop underlines that these works “embed themselves into other ‘institutions’ (e.g., immigration, the minimum wage, traffic congestion, illegal street commerce, homelessness) in order to highlight the divisions enforced by these context”⁸¹. In the other way, she states:

The relations produced by their performances and installations are marked by sensations of unease and discomfort rather than belonging, because the work acknowledges the impossibility of a “micro-utopia” and instead sustains a tension among viewers, participants and context⁸².



Santiago Sierra, *133 persons paid to have their hair dyed*, 2000, 62 min, Copyright Sammlung Haubrok.

3.1.2 The aesthetic is the ability to think contradiction

Rather than eliminating conflict, Claire Bishop embraces its manifestation as a crucial aspect of relationships. However, when she argues that relational art places excessive emphasis on the ethical relationship between the artist and participants,

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 72

⁸² Ibid. p. 70

overlooking the impact of the artwork on the audience's consciousness as art, she also confronts a question-does antagonism necessarily make the relational work better as an artwork? Therefore, the key to analyzing participatory art, for her, lies in aesthetics rather than the ethical relationships between individuals involved in the process. In 2006, in her article titled *The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents* published in "Artforum", Bishop finds a perfect solution by adopting French philosopher Jacques Rancière's theory of aesthetic:

Since the aesthetic is, according to Rancière, the ability to think contradiction: the productive contradiction of art's relationship to social change, characterized precisely by that tension between faith in art's autonomy and belief in art as inextricably bound to the promise of a better world to come. For Rancière the aesthetic doesn't need to be sacrificed at the altar of social change, as it already inherently contains this ameliorative promise⁸³.

This reframing clarifies the operational mechanism of dissonance in participatory art. Artists generate contradictions, artworks manifest contradictions, and viewers perceive contradictions. Aesthetic experiences occur when viewers encounter artworks, and what they perceive is not harmony and ease but rather conflict and discomfort. Through artworks, artists continually stimulate viewers' capacity to contemplate contradictions - the confrontational elements embedded within participatory artworks, such as the difference in identity between the immigrant traders and the contemporary inhabitants of *Persons Paid to Have Their Hair Dyed Blond*, the conflict between the commercial activities of the traders and the institution of the Venice Biennale, and the racial difference symbolised by black hair and blonde hair.

3.1.3 The shortcomings of Bishop's theory

However, Bishop might have given a social and artistic value to the concept and motivation of participatory art but if we considered the creating process and methods, I think the art works listed by Bishop, still shows a theatrical logic where the artist

⁸³ C.Bishop, *The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents*, February 2006, in "Artforum", <https://www.artforum.com/print/200602/the-social-turn-collaboration-and-its-discontents-10274> [Last access 10 June 2023]

does not let the participants take control of the artwork, because his focus is not on the audiences and participants. Instead, the artist assumes the role of a director, and the participants merely serve as actors in the performance. The “performance” space remains within the traditional authoritative art spaces such as galleries, museums, and biennials. Even these “actors” are carefully selected prior to the exhibition, rather than being random visitors afterwards. In essence, the artist remains the sole creator of the artwork, and the participants are fundamentally no different from pigments in a painting or readymade objects in an installation. The outcome and concept of the artwork are predetermined during the creation stage, sacrificing the spontaneity and openness of the work in the pursuit of “antagonism.” From my perspective, these practices only perpetuate the critical tradition of avant-garde art, under a very abstract touches of political and social topic and did not bring significant innovation to the artistic practices of participatory art.

3.2 Grant Kester: Dialogical art

3.2.1 What is dialogical art?

Grant Kester is another significant scholar who extended the path of Participatory art after Joseph Beuys, therefore put participatory art in another context rather than Borriaud did with relational aesthetics. In 2004 this American art historian published a book *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (2004/2013) and explained that “dialogue” here does not refer to the communication that exists between the artist and the viewer, or between the viewer and the work, but rather to the fact that the artist creates such works with the intention of facilitating dialogue between different communities⁸⁴. Kester argues that this type of artwork is firstly able to transcend the boundaries of the gallery and museum system, meaning that it mostly takes place outside of the exhibition space, which is the same Beuys had suggested. Secondly, although the dialogues initiated by the different works have

⁸⁴ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Edited by Zoya Kucor and Simon Leung, Blackwell, 2005, p.1

different contents and purposes, he believes that they all share a common feature, namely that “they are intended to create a creative space for dialogue and exchange”⁸⁵ and that the dialogue is “part of the work itself, which is re-framed as an active and generative process”⁸⁶. Ultimately, in the context of dialogic art, the work of art becomes a process of communication, a field in which different meanings, interpretations and perspectives are presented. Compared to Beuys who called up people for participating in art to fight against the overbalance of rationality, Kester provided a clear structure and method of how to achieve it. Also, he selected two artworks in the 90s as examples which were not included by Bourriaud in *Relational Aesthetics*, to suggest his another interpretation of participatory art.

The first example is drawn from the work of the Austrian arts collective Wochenklausur. In 1994, the art collective gathered a group of journalists, political and sex workers from Zurich (nearly 60 of Zurich's leading political and media figures) on a small yacht for several weeks to have a conversation about the homelessness of drug-addicted prostitutes in Zurich. They are subjected to the indignities of Swiss society, the violent attacks of others and the humiliation of the police. Normally many of the participants in these boat talks would position themselves on opposite sides of the highly charged debate over drug use and prostitution, attacking and counter-attacking with statistics and moral invective. But for a short period of time, with their statements insulated from direct media scrutiny, they were able to forge a consensus of support for this problem: the creation of a pension or boarding house in which drug-addicted sex workers could have a safe haven, access to services and a place to sleep (eight years later it continues to house twenty women a day)⁸⁷.

At around the same time, over 200 high school students in downtown Oakland, California had unscripted dialogues on the challenges faced by young people of color in California: media stereotypes, racial profiling, under-funded public schools and so

⁸⁵ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, University of San Diego, California, 2004, p.22

⁸⁶ Ibid, p.25

⁸⁷ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Edited by Zoya Kucor and Simon Leung, Blackwell, 2005, p.1

on. *The Roof is on Fire* (1994) organized by California artist Suzanne Lacy, along with Annice Jacoby, and Chris Johnson, Latino and African American teenagers were able to take control of their self-image and to transcend the one-dimensional clichés promulgated by mainstream news and entertainment media (e.g., the young person of color as sullen, inarticulate gang-banger). These dialogues led to collaborations, including a series of discussions between students and the Oakland Police Department (OPD), resulting in a video for the OPD's community policing training⁸⁸.



Wochenklausur, Shelter for Drug-Addicted Women, Zurich (CH) , 1994, Shedhalle

⁸⁸ S.Lacy, personal online profile, <https://www.suzannelacy.com/the-oakland-projects> [Last access 30 May 2023]



Suzanne Lacy, Annice Jacoby, and Chris Johnson, *The Roof is on Fire*, 1993-1994

Similar to the fifth edition of Kassel Documenta (1972) when Beuys undertook a 100-day project called *Boxing Match for Direct Democracy* (1972)⁸⁹, in which he set up a dialogue with visitors to the exhibition to explore the possibility of direct democracy, in which they discussed the relationship between art and politics, people and freedom, educational reform, racial issues, the possibility of direct democracy, and a range of other issues, however, Beuys neither didn't draw importance on the specific method-having dialogues between communities, nor respond to the question-where is the aesthetic element if those dialogues were considered as an art? Grant Kester provided answers to both. He values much these dialogues, and argues that these self-reflexive forms of interaction are not intended to result in universally binding decisions, but simply to create a provisional understanding among the members of a given community when normal social or political consensus breaks down. Thus their legitimacy is not based on the universality of the knowledge produced through discursive interaction, but on the perceived universality of the

⁸⁹ D.Lempesis, *ART-PRESENTATION: Joseph Beuys-Boxing Match for Direct Democracy*, 2018, in "Dreamideamachine", <http://www.dreamideamachine.com/?p=43716> [Last access 30 May 2023]

process of discourse itself, and thus produced Dialogical art⁹⁰. But how to argue that these dialogical creations which do not appear to be art, can be called art? What is the aesthetic dimension to events such as "Wochenklausur"? Also, how is it different from the relational one?

3.2.2 The aesthetic of dialogical art: empathy

Instead of completely redefine the concept of aesthetics like Bourriaud, Kester rather returned to Kant, transferring the classical aesthetic concepts into dialogical art. Kant proposed one of the important moment to achieve aesthetics, the subject must adopt a transcendent attitude towards the object in order to transcend utilitarianism⁹¹. Kant believed that aesthetics is not merely subjective taste judgments but possesses universally valid characteristics. To achieve universality in aesthetics, relying solely on a personal transcendent attitude is insufficient because universality involves the relationship of recognition among different subjects. In other words, why should others recognize your judgment? Kant's answer to this is "common sense"⁹². Common sense is the core mechanism through which aesthetic judgments can be valid. Kester grasped this point, leading him to believe that aesthetic exist in dialogical art. Kant's aesthetic judgments are based on the unique emotions evoked when the subject contemplates external objects, while dialogic art is based on the actual effects generated through communication between subjects. Then how do artworks in contemporary art, which emphasize subject communication and collaboration, produce aesthetics? Kester's answer is "empathy"⁹³. Similar to how common sense triggers universally valid aesthetic judgments among different subjects, Kester believes that empathy allows different subjects in dialogical art to achieve universal recognition beyond utilitarianism. Empathy is the ability to

⁹⁰ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Edited by Zoya Kucor and Simon Leung, Blackwell, 2005, p.4

⁹¹ I.Kant, *Critique of Judgment*. Translated by Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1987, pp.55-60 (Cited by Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: community and communication in modern art*, University of California Press, 2013)

⁹² Ibid, p.58

⁹³ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, in *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Edited by Zoya Kucor and Simon Leung, Blackwell, 2005, p.6

imagine oneself in another's situation. He believes that dialogical art can generate empathy on three levels: harmonious dialogue between artists and collaborators, solidarity among collaborators, and the artwork's ability to trigger empathy in the viewing audience⁹⁴. Following this logic, the artwork by "Wochenklausur" is not just a social work; when this event enters the realm of art and undergoes discussion, it acquires aesthetic characteristics. The floating boats on the lake create an ideal setting where participants can abandon their preconceptions, engage in negotiated dialogue, and temporarily reach consensus on a specific issue. As participants listen to one another, they begin to disregard their own interests, sympathize with the situations of others, and ultimately agree with their perspectives. The non-utilitarian, universal emotional connection that emerges from dialogues between individuals is the process of aesthetics. Further, Kester also answered to those who may doubt if these dialogues are really helpful for a concrete solution or improvement: "there is no guarantee that these interactions will result in a consensus we nonetheless endow them with a provisional authority that influences us towards mutual understanding and reconciliation"⁹⁵.

To concretize this theory, Kester also took inspiration from the concept of the "public sphere" as defined by Habermas. Habermas believes that to protect the public sphere from the constraints of coercion and inequality in everyday life, participants must abide by rules that ensure a discursive space free from such influences⁹⁶. Thus, according to Habermas, "every subject with the competence to speak is allowed to take part in discourse," "everyone is allowed to question any assertion whatsoever," "everyone is allowed to introduce any assertion whatsoever," and "everyone is allowed to express his or her attitudes, desires and needs"⁹⁷, as Kester comments, "this egalitarian interaction cultivates a sense of "solidarity" among discursive co-

⁹⁴ Ibid, p.7

⁹⁵ Ibid, p.4

⁹⁶ J.Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, 1989, Translated by Thomas Burger. Cambridge Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989, p. 52

⁹⁷ Cited by Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, University of San Diego, California, 2004

participants”⁹⁸. Indeed, the key difference between the works like "Wochenklausur" and those of Tiravanija is that they create a real social event outside the art institution (biennales, galleries, etc.), and sometimes it would even have a real social impact. Besides, compare to Bourriaud's theory emphasizing on "gathering", Kester's dialogical art has a greater emphasis on collaboration and cooperation, with artists playing a role in facilitating dialogues, which seems to be a further enlightenment after the awakening of individual consciousness, as Beuys mentioned in the interview by Achille Bonito Oliva: "The concept of man's self-determination makes sense only as part of the concept of freedom. The individual feels isolated at first, then he senses the need, as a human being, to communicate, live, and talk"⁹⁹.

3.2.3 The legacy of dialogical art

Overall, Bishop and Kester share common ground in their recognition of the necessity for socially engaging in participatory art which inherently carries political implications. While Kester does not explicitly describe "dialogue" as a method for artistic intervention in society and addressing social issues, a more comprehensive approach gradually emerges within the realm of participatory art. This approach includes two steps. Firstly, as proposed by Bishop, it involves artists and art collectives keenly observing and presenting social contradictions. Secondly, it combines with Kester's proposition that artists engage in dialogue or debate with specific communities within a particular region on issues related to their lives.

Developing on this path, participatory art not only fulfills its internal aesthetic values but also fosters interdisciplinary collaboration with sociology and anthropology and really started turning into a participants-oriented direction, which I will explain more in the next chapter. Therefore, artists go beyond mere dialogue and discussion,

⁹⁸ G.Kester, *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially-Engaged Art*, University of San Diego, California, 2004

⁹⁹ A.Olivia, *Joseph Beuys Interview: Achille Bonito Oliva*, conducted in Naples, Italy in 1971, originally published in Achille Bonito Oliva's *Dialoghi d'artista, Incontri con L'arte contemporanea 1970-1984* (Electa, 1984). <http://www.neugraphic.com/beuys/beuys-text3.html> [Last access May 28 2023]

extending the outcomes and information generated from these discussions. For example, in recent years, numerous artists and groups worldwide have embarked on projects that engage with society. French photographic and public artist JR visited favelas and slums in Rio, Africa, establishing deep dialogues with local residents, earning their trust, and leaving traces like the large-scale photography project for individuals, *Women Are Heroes* (2008-2014) in various cities, subsequently prompting extensive media discussions on women's issues. In Japan, curator Fram Kitagawa led the Setouchi Triennale (2010-ongoing), bringing art to rural areas and proposing art-centered solutions for local challenges such as economic decline, depopulation, aging populations, and brain drain. Artists worked with island fishermen to weave nets and engaged in discussions with local parents on repurposing abandoned schools, among other initiatives¹⁰⁰. In China in 2012, a group of artist arrived in Yangdeng, an impoverished mountainous region and built Yangdeng Art Cooperative which collaborated local carpenters discussed and created innovative and intriguing furniture. Artists worked alongside merchants and vendors to transform restaurants into temporary art galleries, while local children invented legends and depicted famous landmarks, ultimately allowing the entire village to vote on a classic portrayal to serve as the village's promotional advertisement.¹⁰¹ These projects brought attention to issues faced by marginalized locations and communities, using a gentle and indirect approach of participatory art to foster a sense of belonging and identity among the local population. This emotional approach generates rational outcomes that direct political reforms alone may fail to achieve.

¹⁰⁰ F.Kitagawa, 直島から瀬戸内海国際芸術祭へ —美術が地域を変えた (*From Naoshima to the Setouchi Triennale-Art has changed the region*), Published by 現代企画室(Gendai kikakushitsu), 2016, p.1-15

¹⁰¹ Deng Rong, Lu Houjian, 羊磴艺术合作社: 乡村艺术家的理想国(*Shepherd's Ridge Art Cooperative: The Ideal Land for Rural Artists*), 14 April 2018, published on CCTV Cultural column https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzI2MTU4MzkwOA==&mid=2247496201&idx=1&sn=938849beadbba8cf6adf6f82fa8ca6cf&chksm=ea5a9742dd2d1e54be10b4eec10e84ab999c92df7149096d928625802b233473e1572e3e8948 [Last access 29 May 2023]



JR, 28 Millimeters, *Women Are Heroes*, Action dans la Favela Morro da Providéncia, Stairs, a Few Days Later, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2008. Color lithograph. © JR-ART.NET



Local residents see off the visitors at a pier of Awashima Island as Setouchi Triennale 2013 concludes on November 4, 2013 in Mitoyo, Kagawa, Japan. The art festival, held once in three year, attracted more than one million visitors across islands in Setonaikai. Photo by The Asahi Shimbun via Getty Images



Yangdeng Art Cooperative, carpenters group and their works, 2012, © Guangdong Museum of Art

Chapter 4 Participatory art from now on

4.1 Background for a current new trend

Before we start discussing a current new trend of participatory art, we need to be aware of the fact that, as I mentioned above, the “participant” is in fact quietly absent

from the discourse on participatory art of the three theorists we have focused on. Bourriaud talks about micro-utopias in relational art, but never discusses the identity of the participants in the utopia, or their relationship to the work. Relational aesthetics is concerned with participants who come and go in the gallery, who meet each other by chance and leave in a hurry, with no relation to the substance of the work. Bishop repeatedly emphasises the relationship between participants and social contexts in participatory art, issues such as the cultural identity of participants, but she never fully examines the experience and feedback of participants, who are effectively reduced to employed tools for the artist to complete the work, becoming discursive absentees apart from the formal participation of the body. Kester argues that the participants and collaborators are the subjects of the artwork, although he has this inclination, but for him, these subjects are specific communities based on a background or locality rather than individual with unique personalities, as he cares more on the process of the dialogue and collaboration, and does not elaborate on the feedback from the participants. Theorists discussed the rationale of participatory art and the measures taken by artists, the participants are absent in the research process. So, what can the participant's role be? When an artwork can be collected by a collector, at least he can take away and own it as property, but what can a participant really get after a visit to a participatory work?

In fact, in the early 2000s, there were already some artists who started to answer these questions and create “participants-centered” art works but they were not included by any of those theories above.

French artist Chrisian Blotanski has been working on a project *Les Archives du Coeur - The Heart Archive* (2005-ongoing) that engages viewers in registering their heartbeats to create a very intimate library of sound since 2005 until now. The project is made up of three rooms: Listening Room provides with information about the heartbeats that are being recorded and played in surrounding hallway rooms through computer screens, allow users to search through the database holding all the archives of heartbeats; Heart Room, plays heartbeats from different people, with a light beaming in synchronization with the heartbeats, visitors' reflection show up in

the mirrors on the wall in the flickering light; the last, Recording Room is allocated to invite visitors to have their own heartbeat recorded and subsequently become part of the exhibition. These spaces are only illuminated by a single light source, while the walls are covered with framed black panels of various sizes. Each recording is saved in three copies. One of them is sent to an uninhabited Teshima Island in the Seto Inland Sea Japan, where the artist is gradually building up his unique collection since 2008. The second copy is to be stored in the archives of the Centre for Contemporary Art at Ujazdowski Castle, in Warsaw. The third recording will be available to its owner on a CD that he can keep for him and bring it home¹⁰². This project has already been exhibited in galleries around the world: Paris, London, Stockholm, Milan, Japan and so on, so the project right now showcases his collection of heartbeat recordings captured more than 35 thousands items from people who have previously visited these exhibitions¹⁰³.

Heartbeat is one of the basic expressions of the body's vital activity and each person has a different frequency and rhythm of heartbeat in different physical states, situations and ages. This gathering of heartbeats discussed the issues of death, memory, disappearance and loss. People leave their heart beat here as a part of exhibiting object, then their heartbeatings are played by strangers, or be searched out from the database by their families and friends. At the moment of hearing the record, they may feel that they are inside someone's heart, this "someone" might be their lover, their parent who visited here before. In the moment that record is saved into a physical CD and played over and over again, it's like this person embodied immortality.

¹⁰² D.Fiona, *christian boltanski: the heart archive*, in "designboom", 08 Aug 2010

<https://www.designboom.com/art/christian-boltanski-the-heart-archive/> [Last Access 10 June 2023]

¹⁰³ Withrefdeath, *Boltanski, Christian – Les Archives du coeurs (Archive of Hearts, ongoing)*, 27 May 2015, <https://withreferencetodeath.philippocock.net/blog/boltanski-christian-les-archives-du-coeurs-archive-of-hearts-ongoing-2008/> [Last access May 26 2023]



Christian Boltanski, *The heart archive* (2005-ongoing), 2010 image © yasuhide kuge

Another example is from the renowned Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's *The obliteration room* (2002) sponsored by Santos GLNG is an interactive work initially developed in collaboration with the Queensland Art Gallery as a children's project for "APT2002: Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art". Then it was reworked and enlarged in 2011 for the Gallery's *Yayoi Kusama: Look Now, See Forever* exhibition at GOMA. While in 2022, Tate hosted *UNIQLO Tate Play: The obliteration room* sponsored by UNIQLO, and it became a social media phenomenon when images of the progressive installation were uploaded to a popular visual culture blog. This work consists of a domestic environment recreated in the gallery space, complete with locally sourced furniture and ornamentation, all of which are painted completely white functioning as a blank canvas to be invigorated — or, in Kusama's vocabulary, "obliterated" — through the application to every available surface of brightly coloured stickers in the shape of dots. Visitors are given a sheet of colourful "dot" stickers and are invited to transform this completely white domestic apartment into a space of colourful dots. The choice of a domestic environment with specifically local characteristics is intended to create an air of familiarity that makes participants comfortable enough to engage with the work with little or no prompting, the settings include almost all house object like bed, wardrobe, desk and chair, toys, vase, frames, tablewears, clothes and so on that participants can really touch and use. Although the project was initially designed for Children but then we see people of all age came to participate in this work and showing their creativity: people stick an

aesthetically pleasing collage within a blank frame; they use circular stickers to create animals, faces, clowns, strange creatures, symbols, logos, numbers, letters, or tear circular stickers into desired shapes for multiple shape combinations; they overlap dots into lines, suspending them between cabinets; if someone chooses to start sticking a rainbow on the wall or create a dense explosion of colorful large circles on the floor or in a corner, subsequent participants spontaneously expand on these rainbows and extend the large circles to create radiating lines of colorful dots; some reuse the leftover stickers to create hollow colorful “bubbles”; and many others stick the stickers on their clothes and faces, merging with the environment and wearing them even after they leave the museum.



Yayoi Kusama, *The obliteration room*, Tate modern, 2022, @Lisa Lucas

These two projects had given us a clue: there should be a way to let the participant not only experience as a passerby, but also “create” something to leave their own trace, contribution and value to the artwork, meanwhile, have a chance to “collect” something both material, memorable and valuable, therefore we shall introduce the co-created and decentralized participatory art.

4.2 Co-creation in participatory art

Over the past few years participatory artists have gradually begun to open up their creative processes more and more and developed into a co-create status. This change has been fuelled not only by an internal upgrade in artistic expression, but also by the dialogic opportunities offered by Web 2.0, social media and digital communications technologies that allow users to contribute content equally like we pointed out in the last part.

To understand this new trend of Participatory art we need to discuss first what is co-creation. Start from the art practice of co-create, people working together as team on an art work already appeared from Renaissance period, the artisans follow a certain instruction to complete the paintings or sculpture, but in the end it is important that the work should not present their individual style, also if we consider the team work is done not only by artisans but also by random visitors like most of the cases we have mentioned above, that audiences are given a certain instruction to act in order to complete the meaning, indeed, this action is a necessary part in all participatory artworks, but this is still not considered as co-creation but as co-production, according to a Finnish scholar Christian Grönroos, who forged a clear distinction between these two words, “co-production implies art consumers participating in the production phases of the creative process whereas co-creation is linked to the creation of consumer value”¹⁰⁴. This separation between active involvement in the creative process and decoding or meaning-making activities is a useful one for Ben Walmsley: “these are clearly two different modes of audience engagement that are likely to appeal to different kinds of participant at different phases of the production cycle”¹⁰⁵. In this sense, our understanding of co-creation involves the collaborative creation between artists and the audience. The impact of participants’ actions on the visual and conceptual aspects of the artwork is not determined by whether they “create” or “not create”. Instead, it depends on “how” they create and the quantity of

¹⁰⁴ C.Grönroos, *Value co-creation in service logic: A critical analysis. Marketing Theory*, C. 2011.11(3), pp. 279–301.

¹⁰⁵ B. Walmsley, *Audience Engagement in the Performing Arts*, Chapter 7: *Co-creating Art, Meaning, and Value*, 2019, New Directions in Cultural Policy Research, Springer International Publishing, pp.166-167

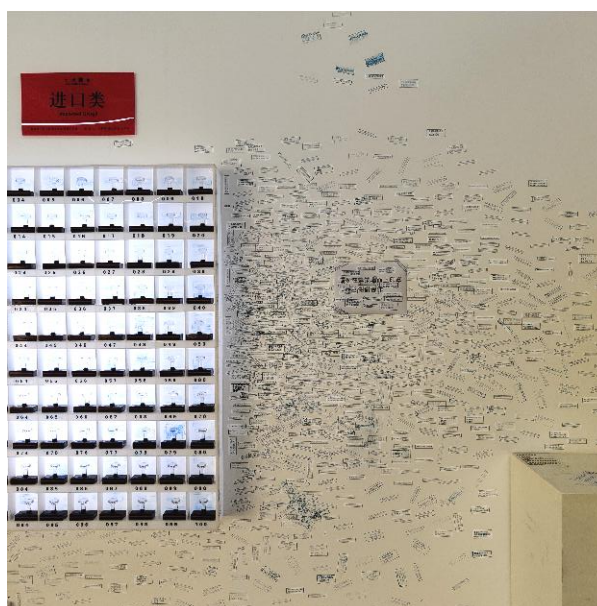
their contributions, this means that in the process of co-creation, the content created by the participants will become an integral part of the artwork to be objectively appreciated, extending beyond the realm of perceptual experience or merely assisting the artist in realizing their artistic concept. The artist provides a harmonized medium for the creating process, while the audience can engage their individual characteristics or subjective imagination to leave their own imprint for the result of the co-creation.

The Chinese poet and artist Ding Cheng¹⁰⁶ caught my attention. In his solo exhibition *Ding Cheng Yao Dian (Ding Cheng's Pharmacy)* (2020), in XPM museum in Chang Sha, China- he found that apart from muscular illnesses, more and more people are in a state of mental sub-health. Therefore, he researched and found many popular terms on the internet under Chinese language context, such as “cancer of being single”(indicating that being single is seen like a cancer in secular concepts), “disease of princess”(indicating under one-child policy the only kid is spoiled too much as a disease), “Worrying disease”, “Intensive phobia”, “Escape paranoia”, “Cancer of idealism”, “Perfectionist OCD”, “Procrastination”, “Monday syndrome” and so on. Then Ding Cheng hopes to use poetry, which he is good at, as a creative material to make a piece of work, and use it as drugs and medicine for the public- to heal the soul. Thus, the *Ding Cheng's Pharmacy* was born. Curator Lin Shuchuan together with Ding Cheng had set an on-site self-diagnosis system, visitors can create and input their own modern “disease” in a prescription paper which is predesigned with artist’ signature on it, then their prescriptions will directly be printed out and visitors can collect them to the “medicine counter”. At the “medicine counter”, visitors can choose the stamps written with poem pieces to be their “prescription drugs”. Later, they can either bring this home, or stick this on the wall in the exhibition, to contribute another “disease” sample and interestingly matched poetic “drug”.

¹⁰⁶ C.Ding, a multi-hyphenate artist spanning the fields of poetry, painting, film, installation, born on in 1981 in Binhai, Jiangsu Province, China. His *Ding Cheng Pharmacy*(2020) was invited to participate in the Macau International Art Biennale 2021.



Ding Cheng, *Ding Cheng Pharmacy*, the prescription papers created by visitors be presented on a wall, 2020, ©YangZi Night news



Ding Cheng, *Ding Cheng Pharmacy*, the stamps with poems(left) being stamped by visitors also on the wall(right), 2020, ©FEI XU

Another more recent work of him, in 2023, Ding Cheng, who has been writing poetry for over twenty years and painting for a few years made another experimental project *Game of Thrones* in Nanjing's Atmosphere Space with Fang Kai, who has been painting for over twenty years and writing poetry for a few years. Curator Lin Shuchuan gave them six days staying together in the Gallery to prepare their works, during the staying, Ding Cheng and Fang Kai went to the gallery and decided to win or lose by rolling the dice. The result was that Ding Cheng won Fang Kai seven

times and received seven of Fang Kai's poems, and Fang Kai won Ding Cheng five times and received five of Ding Cheng's paintings. Then Ding Cheng painted Fang Kai's poem so darkly that only one word remained on each page, in total only ten Chinese characters of Fang Kai's seven poems survived, reassembled by Ding Cheng into five words (installed separately): "Love, Dream, Surprise, Good luck and Life". Then he used different colored threads with 120 meters long each, suspended by pulleys and transformed into 10 Chinese characters through PVC pipes. Visitors can cut the desired length from the bottom of the pipe to collect the character they want and pay a collection price of 10 RMB (1.3 Euro) per centimeter¹⁰⁷. The artist and gallery provided an official collection certificate with the artist's signature, allowing visitors to creatively assemble and re-create their cut threads. For example, a viewer cut 9 centimeters from the thread representing "Love" and horizontally places it on the collection certificate, it becomes a Möbius strip, the symbol of limitless; or they cut 1cm from each different characters and to combine them into a new word. Ding Cheng said to me: "When the wool of dreams, love and good fortune is torn out of the pipe, the audience can only see the transparent, empty pipe of love, dreams, good fortune, wonder and life, a metaphor for the fact that these concepts are empty containers shaped by human perception, knowledge, background and experience. It is only when it is filled with human relevance, delightful colour and content that it comes to life." This idea of "collecting woolen thread" went popular soon in the city through TV and social media.

¹⁰⁷ C.Ding, *搞个毛线的艺术 (What the hell is the art of)*, 05 May 2023, https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/JXItXShduz5YeJIB_2TnWw [Last Access 10 June 2023]



Ding Cheng, *Dream*, 2023, Poetry in Ready-made Form, Wool-Acrylic Blend Yarn, Mixed Media, Variable Dimensions, ©Ding Cheng

大气层空间
ATMOSPHERE

4/10/2023 17:35
先生/女士

INVOICE #007

INVOICE

10cm

Total etuis **CHY 0.00**

BANK INFO

银行户名: 赵佳鑫
银行: 招商银行股份有限公司南京城头支行
银行账号: 6214 8328 4723 8769

所有款项请在开票日期起30天内支付,逾期恕不受理。
如有任何疑问,请随时与我们联系。

大气层空间
ATMOSPHERE

大气层空间
ATMOSPHERE

COLLECTION CERTIFICATE

The following is original work by Chinese artist Ding Cheng

好运

Artist: Ding Cheng
Category: Poetic ready-made
Size: 10cm
Collection time: 2023
Artist's name: 丁成

signed by Atmosphere Space
made by Atmosphere Space

大气层空间
ATMOSPHERE

Ding Cheng, 10cm of *Good Luck*, Collecting certification in printed with collector's name, paper, 2023



Ding Cheng, 9cm of *Love*, Collecting certification in printed with collector's name and presented as a Möbius strip, paper, 2023

In both of these works, we can see participants providing their unique contributions to the exhibition through the mediums provided by the artists, directly becoming part of the artwork. Lin Shuchuan, the curator, describes this type of public co-creation art as follows in his article:

The purpose is not only to give the audience limited ‘viewing’ rights but to grant them the freedom to intervene in the subject of the artwork. This intervention goes beyond the audience’s role as objects; instead, they become the stage of the artwork, engaging in a reverse intervention of the self and showcasing it to others. The artist’s focus shifts from being a content provider to being a platform builder, creating the necessary conditions for the social public to actively participate in content production by constructing corresponding infrastructure and production materials. This further guides and triggers the social public to enter a track of equal dialogue with the artist, rather than remaining mere observers or appendages to the artist¹⁰⁸.

In the same time, by incorporating a very affordable material feedback in the art exhibition for participants’ as rewards, or collections, it not only challenges the current unequal “art collecting privilege,” providing motivation for participants’ involvement, but also extends the impact of their participation over time and space. Moreover, if artists can utilize such an approach, it can help reduce material waste in exhibitions and contribute to environmental friendliness.

¹⁰⁸ S.C.Lin, 艺术项目介入公共社会的两条路径(*Two paths for art projects to engage with public society*), 1st March 2022, China academic journal electronic publishing house

However, we can also observe that both works involve individual participation of the audience, where each person's creation is independent and unrelated to others, similar to Boltanski's *The heart archive*. It resembles individual co-creation between each audience member and the artist, without simultaneous collaborative relationships among the participants. There are no differences in the artworks resulting from variances in participants' visitation times. From this perspective, we can identify another level of co-creation, which is more like Kusama's *The obliteration room* that the co-creation among the participant themselves.

Another Chinese artist Wang Guangle's¹⁰⁹ solo exhibition *Red phosphorus* (2022) is an example. He painted the material used in matchboxes-red phosphorus-all over the canvas. On one hand, it gives the image the appearance of an abstract work covered in ochre; on the other hand, the sulphur contained in the match head rubs against the phosphorus on the canvas, burning and creating sparks and leaving traces on the canvas. One of the work is called *221122* (2022), 146x965cm, a thin rectangle shaped like an enlarged version of an old matchbox. Wang invited every visitors to draw anything on this phosphorus canvas with matches, some people leave a line, some people draw circles, some continued with what other people have drawn, especially when a match is struck across the screen, the fire ignites and the smell of sulphur is diffused, which mobilises not only the visual but also the olfactory and other sensory stimuli. Wang Guangle notes that almost every person who strikes a match on the screen and see the fire starts in their hand, is met with a surprise and unexpectedness: "The pleasure that comes from that moment is just like the most intuitive relationship between the viewer and the work. When a person sees a particularly good piece of work that generates a sense of pleasure, we would describe a spark between him and the work"¹¹⁰. In the end the work is like an abstract co-created painting of Cy Twombly.

¹⁰⁹G.L.Wang, b. 1976, Fujian, China, is recognized as a pioneer of conceptual painting in China according to Pace Gallery <https://www.pacegallery.com/artists/wang-guangle/> [Last Access 10 June 2023]

¹¹⁰ S.Y.Luo, *Yachang Feature | Wang Guangle: A Match and an Act of Warmth*, 21 November 2022, <https://news.artron.net/19700101/n1116705.html> [Last access May 26 2023]



Wang Guangle, *221122*, 2022, Cai Jin Space

In this collaborative participatory artworks, each person's creation is placed on a medium where people can build upon, overlap, intersect, modify, and expand on the creative outcomes of previous participants, much like a chain reaction. The creations of individuals are interconnected and interrelated. In the same time, we can observe that with the co-creation by the audiences, although participatory art diversifies the interpretations of the artist's sole creative rights and the collector's exclusive ownership, but it didn't really subvert and dismantle them, the decentralization of creation is still at the beginning, however, around 2020, when blockchain and programmable crypto art technology show up into art industry, it took "decentralization" characteristic to new heights.

4.3 Decentralization in participatory art

Decentralization was firstly indicted to political structure, symbolizes "the process by which the activities of an organization, particularly those regarding planning and decision-making, are distributed or delegated away from a central, authoritative location or group and given to smaller factions within it"¹¹¹. When it comes to art practice, in earlier time, artist is the only one who plans the work, owns the

¹¹¹ Definition of decentralisation. Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Archived from the original on 26 January 2013. Retrieved 5 March 2013.

authorship and the right to interpret it, even when public are involved into co-creation, the authorship will not expose any name of the co-creators. But programmable crypto art gave us a new idea: a landmark piece of programmable crypto art, *First Supper*(2020), which completes its auction in March 2020, is not a simple static image, but a programmable artwork consisting of 22 layers, presented by crypto art platform AsyncArt in association with thirteen crypto artists. The main body of *First Supper* is a Master (main canvas), which is made up of 22 Layers created by different artists, the Master not only refers to the entire work but also equipped with recorded information such as the image whose Layer it contains and the Layer's position in the Master. Each Layer is a specific, visible layer of the work and has several parameters: the artist, the owner, the Master to which it belongs, and the Layer parameters. Each Layer of *First Supper* can be independently owned and controlled, with the Master and each of the 22 Layers being tokenized(the process of converting something of value into a digital token that's usable on a blockchain application¹¹²) on the Ethereum(a decentralized blockchain with smart contract functionality that is second only to bitcoin in market capitalization¹¹³), meaning that for the painting *First Supper*, there is one Master NFT and 22 different Layer NFTs.

Since the work is programmable, once live on the Ethereum platform, the Master NFT continually checks it's Layer tokens and updates it's look based on the Layer owners input. This means when a collector purchases a Layer they have the opportunity to influence the artists' work. Layers are endowed with special abilities decided by the artist. When a collector changes something on a Layer, the Master image will reflect this regardless of who owns it. By now it allows the owner to adjust rotation, grayscale, RBG, and the most powerful of which is the "state change" function - change the layer into an alternate version, for example, the artist can create three states of sky for a painting, such as sunny, raining or snowing. When

¹¹² Cryptopedia Staff, *What Is Tokenization in Blockchain?*, published on Cryptopedia, 11 August 2021 <https://www.gemini.com/cryptopedia/what-is-tokenization-definition-crypto-token> [Last access on 26 May 2023]

¹¹³E.Szalay;S.Venkataramakrishnan, *What are cryptocurrencies and stablecoins and how do they work?*, 28 May 2021, in "Financial Times" <https://www.ft.com/content/424b29c4-07bf-4612-b7d6-76aecf8e1528> [Last access on 26 May 2023]

the collector buys the work, he can change the layer of the sky at any time, and the change will be immediately applied to the work, so that a work can change from sunny to stormy at any time. Predicted by professionalist, in the future, the new programmable crypto artwork might support user-defined Layer settings¹¹⁴, which means the alternative status in the layers can be created by its owners, and the final work can constantly changing, transforming and moving, most importantly, the role of artist, viewer, and owner are getting overlapped instead of separated.



¹¹⁴ NFT Labs' Interview x Async Art Founder Conlan Rio, *NFT Labs Talk x Async.Art: How The Programmable NFT Platform Reforms NFTs' Real-world Utilities*, 17 December 2021, in "Medium" <https://nftlabs.medium.com/nft-labs-talks-series-x-async-art-4c01e758a903> [Last access on 26 May 2023]

Artwork NFT 23 - Master (in different version modified by owners), *First Supper*,
2020, Async Art

4.4 Facing problems

Technologically speaking, programmable crypto art achieved a larger scale of Decentralized creation than any time before, while the remaining problem lies in the fact that there is certain barriers to entry, for example not everyone understands how to create and purchase crypto art, and cryptocurrency remains a questionable investment area for many. Therefore, if the creative and purchasing rights of the audience are bundled together in programmable crypto art, even though it decentralized a certain level of authorship, and enables participants to engage in collaborative art creation and leave their own choices and names in the artwork, it still fails to provide equal opportunities for participation across different social classes, cultural backgrounds, and age groups.

4.5 A speculation on the future participatory art: realization of sense of self

The greatest innovation brought by decentralization and co-creation is, in fact, its challenge to the important interpretive theory of “aesthetics of relations” in participatory art. The relational aspect proposed by Bourriaud established through “encounter” might remain a necessary condition in the perceptual experience phase, however, in the process of co-creation, the aggregation of individuals is no longer a necessary condition, and establishing negotiated relationships becomes subsidiary rather than the primary objective. People’s participation in co-creation lies in their desire to leave their creative mark and personal imprint on this collectively valued artwork. It is about seeking a sense of presence and accomplishment through the

process of participating- contributing- acquiring, and also through sharing on social media to gain a further attention and recognition. Consequently, in the realm of co-creative and decentralized participatory art, aesthetics of relations no longer holds its primary aesthetic value. I would rather refer to it as an “Realization of self-presence”, which focuses on the ability of individuals in the realm of art and creativity to showcase their unique imagination within an open structure made by artists, as well as the ways in which they convey emotions, thoughts, and meanings through personal expression and creation. In this way, participatory art can arrive much nearer to its original goal: make people feel related in art.

“Realization of sense of self” here indicates a sense of self-value are achieved individually in certain participatory artworks, it meant to clarify the difference between it and the theory of participatory art that sees the audience as a whole, but it does not mean narcissism and selfishness. According to American Psychological Association Dictionary, “sense of self is an individual’s feeling of identity, uniqueness, and self-direction”¹¹⁵ The aesthetic of individual sense of self within participatory art revolves around the concept of personal identity and its expression within the artistic process. It examines how participation in artistic endeavors can evoke a sense of belonging and personal fulfillment, resulting in an aesthetic experience that transcends the collective.

We can get inspiration from a psychology term “self-determination theory”(SDT). SDT is a macro theory of human motivation and personality that concerns people’s innate growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. One mini-theory of SDT includes basic psychological needs theory which proposes three basic psychological needs that must be satisfied to foster well-being and optimal growth which are: “Autonomy”, “Competence” and “Relatedness”.

¹¹⁵ APA Dictionary of Psychology, <https://dictionary.apa.org/sense-of-self> [Last access on 2nd June 2023]

Among them, Relatedness, also can be seen as sense of belonging, is the will to interact with, be connected to, and experience caring for others¹¹⁶. Very importantly, this means achieving a sense of self has to rely on a good relation with the environment and people surrounding it. In a participatory art process, audiences share similar actions and experiences in the same space and time with each other. It is also what relational art have always provided - the fulfillment of making relations with others to put oneself into a social position.

Autonomy refers to the longing to be in control of our own lives and make choices that align with our true selves. When individuals are motivated by autonomy, they tend to experience enhanced performance, well-being, and engagement, compared to when they are simply instructed on what to do. However, this does not mean to be independent of others, but rather constitutes a feeling of overall psychological liberty and freedom of internal will¹¹⁷. By participating in an art work that is open-end, audiences are free to decide what to create and how to involve, and can keep their autonomy within the context of collaboration.

Finally, competence symbolizes someone seek to control the outcome and experience mastery¹¹⁸. Edward L. Deci, a psychologist, found that giving people unexpected positive feedback on a task increases their intrinsic motivation to do it, meaning that this was because positive feedback fulfilled people's need for competence¹¹⁹. Through our cases mentioned before, a co-create process either allow their contribution to be chosen by the artist and to be presented to the public (like in the *Ding Cheng's Pharmacy*), or allow people to leave their own traces in a public artwork that could be seen by everyone. Besides, a contribution can mean also to exchange a small physical collecting pieces which give a feeling of reward. In this way, by identifying, participating, contributing and rewarding, the participatory art

¹¹⁶ R. Baumeister ; M. R. Leary, *The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation*, 1995, Psychological Bulletin. 117 (3): 497–529.

¹¹⁷ E.L. Deci ; M. Vansteenkiste, *Self-determination theory and basic need satisfaction: Understanding human development in positive psychology*, 2004, Ricerche di Psicologia. 27: 17–34.

¹¹⁸ R. W. White, *Motivation reconsidered: The concept of competence*, 1959, Psychological Review. 66 (5): 297–333.

¹¹⁹ E. L. Deci, *Effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic motivation*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1971, 18: 105–115.

that realized a “sense of self” can achieve all three intrinsic needs which strongly affect one’s confidence, determination and then influence positively on the “sense of self”, and when individuals feel autonomous and competent, their motivation and creativity flourish within creating a life of art.

In conclusion, the direction that participatory art can go- “realization of sense of self”, acknowledges that personal experiences and expressions intertwine with the communal context. While individual exploration and expression are encouraged, it is essential to maintain a balance between personal creativity and collective coherence, this is why the professional guidance made by artist in the beginning ensures that participants navigate the artistic journey within a supportive and cohesive environment.

Over all in the future participatory art may emphasize the unique qualities that emerge when individuals engage fully and authentically. Rooted in theoretical perspectives from aesthetics and psychology, it stands as a legitimate form of aesthetics. By emphasizing the importance of professional guidance and fostering a sense of belonging, the aesthetic of individual presence facilitates personal exploration and expression within a collective framework. It is through this framework that individuals can experience a heightened sense of presence and connect with their own creativity, ultimately enriching the participatory art experience for all.

Conclusion

In conclusion, through the exploration of participatory art, we have identified three key developments in this field. Firstly, there has been a continuous shift in the freedom of artistic creation, moving from artists treating audiences as their actors or engaging in simple actions that do not influence the outcome or concept of the artwork, to artists providing frameworks within which participants use their subjective imagination to create. This evolution reflects the progressive transition of artistic authority from artists to participants, bringing participatory art closer to an ideal form of democracy.

Secondly, the significance of participatory art has evolved. Initially, it aimed to expand and redefine the forms of art, but it has now centred around Bourriaud's *relational aesthetics*, aiming to establish harmonious interpersonal relationships, perceptual experiences, and micro-utopian artistic practices. Scholars such as Beuys, Bishop, and Kester have emphasized the interventionist nature of socially engaged art, which seeks to influence and transform society and public life.

The third aspect involves the often subtle and dispersed innovations in the practical implementation of participatory art. These innovations include the transition from traditional art spaces to any living space, from artist-dependent theatre forms to installations where audiences can participate autonomously, and the adoption of interdisciplinary methods that incorporate new media technologies. Furthermore, participatory art has evolved from single works that require complex procedures and queues to shared exhibition spaces, from individual participant creations to mutual influences between participants, and from purely experiential encounters to the atomization of collecting rights, allowing audiences to possess material artifacts.

Ultimately, we have witnessed a more comprehensive transformation, leading to a new understanding of the existence of participatory art as the "realization of sense of self." This concept supplements participatory art from a psychological perspective and enhances its appeal to participants. However, it is necessary to further investigate

whether this “realization of sense of self” can be considered an aesthetic form and whether it may emphasize self to the point of exclusivity. Additionally, if this concept proves valid, its future applications could extend beyond cultural marketing strategies for art museums, potentially becoming a widely accessible and simplified method of artistic therapy or a primary means for artists to counter AI-generated creations.

Due to a great interest in participatory art, in September 2021, I collaborated with Chinese illustrator Wuhe Qilin in a 3-day public participatory art project at the exhibition of curatorial outcomes at the School for Curatorial Studies Venice. Just as the pandemic was beginning to ease, we showcased an artwork titled *Armor* (2020) showing the collaboration between the public and medical practitioners, at the centre of Campo Santa Margherita in Venice. Passersby were invited to sit down and contribute an object that represented their memories during the pandemic, along with a written story related to the object or their experiences. Within 3 days, we received various submissions, including a cigarette butt from a philosophy professor, a pencil that an artist had used up during a year of lockdown, a pack of cigarettes that could never be given away due to families' passing, a blue paint used by a boy to alleviate suppressed emotions, a gummy bear symbolizing his love relationship during the pandemic, stories left by nurses, spontaneously created poems, a rapper and singer live-drawing all the keywords from their pandemic memories, coloured paper from the last concert before the outbreak, and drawings by children depicting how they attended online classes at home without being able to hold hands with their best friends. In total, we collected over 50 messages and objects, with some expressing sadness, some finding blessings in disguise, and others reflecting a shift in their values regarding how life should be lived. We preserved these materials through visual and audiovisual means and it was highly commended by all the participants. In the future, I'm aiming for it to become an art form that breaks boundaries and becomes an important lifestyle for people. Therefore I hope to deepen my research on the identity and behaviour of participants in participatory art, as well as explore how participatory art can be applied within the entire art ecosystem.

Bibliography

- [1] C. Bishop, *ARTIFICIAL HELLS : participatory art and the politics of spectatorship*. S.L.: Verso Books, 2012.
- [2] C. Bishop, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*, vol. Vol.110. Cambridge: October press, 2004.
- [3] R. Frieling and F. Museum, *The Art of Participation*. San Francisco: Thames and Hudson, 2008.
- [4] N. Bourriaud, *Postproduction : culture as screenplay ; how art reprograms the world*. New York: Lukas Et Sternberg, 2002.
- [5] N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland. Paris: Les Presses Du Réel, 2002.
- [6] C. Bishop, "THE SOCIAL TURN: COLLABORATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS," *Artforum.com*, Feb. 2006.
<https://www.artforum.com/print/200602/the-social-turn-collaboration-and-its-discontents-10274>
- [7] G. H. Kester, *Conversation pieces : community and communication in modern art*. Berkeley: University Of California Press, 2013.
- [8] M. McLuhan, *The Mechanical Bride*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1967.
- [9] J. Cage, "Experimental Music John Cage," 1957. Available:
https://www.robertspahr.com/teaching/cpro/john_cage-Experimental-Music.pdf

- [10] R. Roberts, D. Chan, K. Foreman, E. Hall, D. C. Stoll, and A. New, *MoMA highlights : 375 works from the Museum of Modern Art, New York*. New York: Museum Of Modern Art, 2019.
- [11] T. E. of ARTnews, "From the Archives: Allan Kaprow on the Legacy of Jackson Pollock, in 1958," *ARTnews.com*, Feb. 09, 2018.
<https://www.artnews.com/art-news/retrospective/archives-allan-kaprow-legacy-jackson-pollock-1958-9768/> (accessed Nov. 21, 2020).
- [12] P. Schimmel, K. Stiles, C. Schneemann, G. Brus, and J. Pollock, *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object, 1949-1979*. MoCA Los Angeles, 1998.
- [13] A. Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," *Artnews*, May 1961, doi: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203083741-45>.
- [14] H. Molesworth and K. Lord, "Yoko Ono A Kind of Meeting Point," 2019. Available: <https://www.getty.edu/recordingartists/downloads/transcripts/ono.pdf>
- [15] J. Hendricks and Y. Ono, *Yoko Ono: One Woman Show, 1960-1971*. The Museum of Modern Art, 2015.
- [16] A. Munroe, J. Hendricks, B. Altshuler, and D. A. Ross, *Yes Yoko Ono*. New York: Japan Society, 2000.
- [17] E. Wang, "Tinguely Museum: Moving Art to Diverse Communities," *m.orangenews.hk*, 2019. <https://m.orangenews.hk/details?recommendId=49885> (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).
- [18] B. Altshuler and G. Kouwenaar, *Biennials and beyond - exhibitions that made art history : 1962-2002*. London: Phaidon, 2013.

- [19] Benoît Antille, “‘HON—en katedral’: Behind Pontus Hultén’s Theatre of Inclusiveness,” *The University of Chicago Press*, vol. 32, no. 32, pp. 72–81, Mar. 2013, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1086/670183>.
- [20] F. D. Scott, *Sweden : the nation’s history*. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1988.
- [21] A. Tellgren, “Remembering She – A Cathedral,” *Moderna Museet i Stockholm*, 2018.
<https://www.modernamuseet.se/stockholm/en/exhibitions/remembering-she-a-cathedral/>
- [22] P. Hultén, *Hon-en historia: hon - she - elle - sie - lei - zij*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1967.
- [23] Marina Abramovic Institute, “Marina Abramovic on Rhythm 0 (1974),” *Vimeo*, Jun. 02, 2019. <https://vimeo.com/71952791>
- [24] J. Beuys, *Art Into Society, Society Into Art*. London: ICA, 1974.
- [25] C. Freedman, “Traffic,” *Frieze*, Sep. 05, 1996.
<https://www.frieze.com/article/traffic>
- [26] N. Bourriaud, “MAY, Quarterly Journal» Traffic: Space-times of the Exchange,” *www.mayrevue.com*, 2012. <https://www.mayrevue.com/en/traffic-espaces-temps-de-lechange/>
- [27] K. Axelos, *Alienation, Praxis, and Technē in the Thought of Karl Marx*. Austin : University of Texas Press, 1976.
- [28] E. Tsingou, “‘Traffic’ Exhibition,” *ciaocarla.com*, May 06, 1996.
<https://ciaocarla.wordpress.com/lateral/traffic-exhibition/> (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).

- [29] G. Durand, *The anthropological structures of the imaginary*. Brisbane: Boombana Publications, 1999.
- [30] Félix Guattari, *Molecular Revolution*. Puffin Books, 1984.
- [31] M. Nesbit, H. U. Obrist, and R. Tiravanija, “Utopia Station - Projects - e-flux,” *www.e-flux.com*, 2003. <https://www.e-flux.com/projects/66652/utopia-station/>
- [32] Richard Langton Gregory and Oliver Louis Zangwill, *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1987, p. pp. 598–601.
- [33] T. O’Reilly, “What Is Web 2.0,” *Oreilly.com*, Sep. 30, 2005. <https://www.oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html>
- [34] RANDOM INTERNATIONAL, “RANDOM INTERNATIONAL,” *RANDOM INTERNATIONAL*, 2019. <https://www.random-international.com/biography>
- [35] MoMA, “Rain Room | MoMA,” *The Museum of Modern Art*. <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1352>
- [36] C. Milk, “The Treachery of Sanctuary - CHRIS MILK,” *Milk.co*, 2012. <http://milk.co/treachery>
- [37] C. Nast, “Interactive installation features shadow-eating birds,” *Wired UK*, Jun. 21, 2012. <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/chris-milk-installation>
- [38] teamLab, “About Future Park | teamLab Learn and Play! Future Park,” *teamLab Learn and Play! Future Park*. <https://futurepark.teamlab.art/en/about/#about>

- [39] A. Osman, “Historical Overview of Olfactory Art in the 20th Century,” *www.academia.edu*, Jun. 2013, Available:
https://www.academia.edu/4608919/Historical_Overview_of_Olfactory_Art_in_the_20th_Century
- [40] E. Steen, “teamLab Borderless takes Guinness World Record for the world’s most visited museum,” *Time Out Tokyo*, Jun. 21, 2021.
<https://www.timeout.com/tokyo/news/teamlab-borderless-takes-guinness-world-record-for-the-worlds-most-visited-museum-071421>
- [41] L. Chinchén, “teamLab Research,” Sotheby’s institute of art thesis, 2019.
- [42] B. Simpson, “Curator: Nicolas Bourriaud,” *www.artforum.com*, 2001.
Accessed: Jun. 18, 2023. [Online]. Available:
<https://www.artforum.com/print/200104/nicolas-bourriaud-516>
- [43] D. Joselit, “Carsten Höller: Experience exhibition,” *Artforum*. 2012.
- [44] Zoya Kocur and S. Leung, *Theory in contemporary art since 1985*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.
- [45] S. Lacy, “The Oakland Projects (1991-2001),” *SUZANNE LACY*.
<https://www.suzannelacy.com/the-oakland-projects>
- [46] D. Lempešis, “ART-PRESENTATION: Joseph Beuys-Boxing Match for Direct Democracy – dreamideamachine ART VIEW,” *Dreamideamachine*, 2018.
<http://www.dreamideamachine.com/?p=43716> (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).
- [47] I. Kant and W. S. Pluhar, *Critique of judgment, including the first introduction*. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Pub. Co, 1987.

[48] J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge Polity, 1989.

[49] A. Olivia, “Joseph Beuys Interview: Achille Bonito Oliva,” *www.neugraphic.com*, 1984. <http://www.neugraphic.com/beuys/beuys-text3.html> (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).

[50] 福武總一郎 and 北川フラム, *直島から瀬戸内国際芸術祭へ(From Naoshima to the Setouchi Triennale-Art has changed the region)*. 現代企画室 (Gendai kikakushitsu), 2016.

[51] D. Rong and L. Houjian, “羊磴艺术合作社：乡村艺术家的理想国,” *Weixin Official Accounts Platform*, Apr. 14, 2018. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzI2MTU4MzkwOA==&mid=2247496201&idx=1&sn=938849beadbba8cf6adf6f82fa8ca6cf&chksm=ea5a9742dd2d1e54be10b4eec10e84ab999c92df7149096d928625802b233473e1572e3e8948 (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).

[52] D. Fiona, “christian boltanski: the heart archive,” *designboom / architecture & design magazine*, Aug. 08, 2010. <https://www.designboom.com/art/christian-boltanski-the-heart-archive/>

[53] Withrefdeath, “Boltanski, Christian – Les Archives du coeurs (Archive of Hearts, ongoing) 2008 – with reference to death,” *withreferencetodeath*, May 27, 2015. <https://withreferencetodeath.philippocock.net/blog/boltanski-christian-les-archives-du-coeurs-archive-of-hearts-ongoing-2008/>

[53] C. Grönroos, “Value co-creation in service logic: A critical analysis,” *Marketing Theory*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 279–301, Sep. 2011, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593111408177>.

- [54] B. Walmsley, *Audience engagement in the performing arts : a critical analysis*. Springer International Publishing, 2019.
- [55] C. Ding, “搞个毛线的艺术(What the hell is the art of) ,” *Weixin Official Accounts Platform*, May 05, 2023.
https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/JXltXShduz5YeJlB_2TnWw (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).
- [56] S. C. Lin, “艺术项目介入公共社会的两条路径(Two paths for art projects to engage with public society),” *China academic journal electronic publishing house*, 2022.
- [57] Pace Gallery, “Wang Guangle | Pace Gallery,” www.pacegallery.com.
<https://www.pacegallery.com/artists/wang-guangle/> (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).
- [58] Yachang Feature, “雅昌专稿 | 王光乐：一根火柴与一次温暖的行动_展览现场_雅昌新闻,” *news.artron.net*, Nov. 21, 2022.
<https://news.artron.net/19700101/n1116705.html> (accessed Jun. 18, 2023).
- [59] E. Szalay and S. Venkataramakrishnan, “What Is Tokenization? Blockchain Token Types,” *Gemini*, May 28, 2021. <https://www.gemini.com/cryptopedia/what-is-tokenization-definition-crypto-token>
- [60] Async Art Founder Conlan Rio, “NFT Labs Talk x Async.Art: How The Programmable NFT Platform Reforms NFTs’ Real-world Utilities?,” *Medium*, Dec. 21, 2021. Accessed: Jun. 18, 2023. [Online]. Available:
<https://nftlabs.medium.com/nft-labs-talks-series-x-async-art-4c01e758a903>
- [61] R. Baumeister and M. R. Leary, *he need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation*, vol. 117 (3): 497–529. *Psychological Bulletin*, 1995.

[62] E. L. Deci and M. Vansteenkiste, *Self-determination theory and basic need satisfaction: Understanding human development in positive psychology*, vol. 27: 17–34. *Ricerche di Psicologia*, 2004.

[63] R. W. White, “Motivation reconsidered: The concept of competence.,” *Psychological Review*, vol. 66, no. 5, pp. 297–333, 1959, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0040934>.

[65] E. L. Deci, *Effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic satisfaction*, vol. 18: 105–115. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1971.

[66] C. Persinger and A. Rejaie, *Socially engaged art history and beyond : alternative approaches to the theory and practice of art history*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

