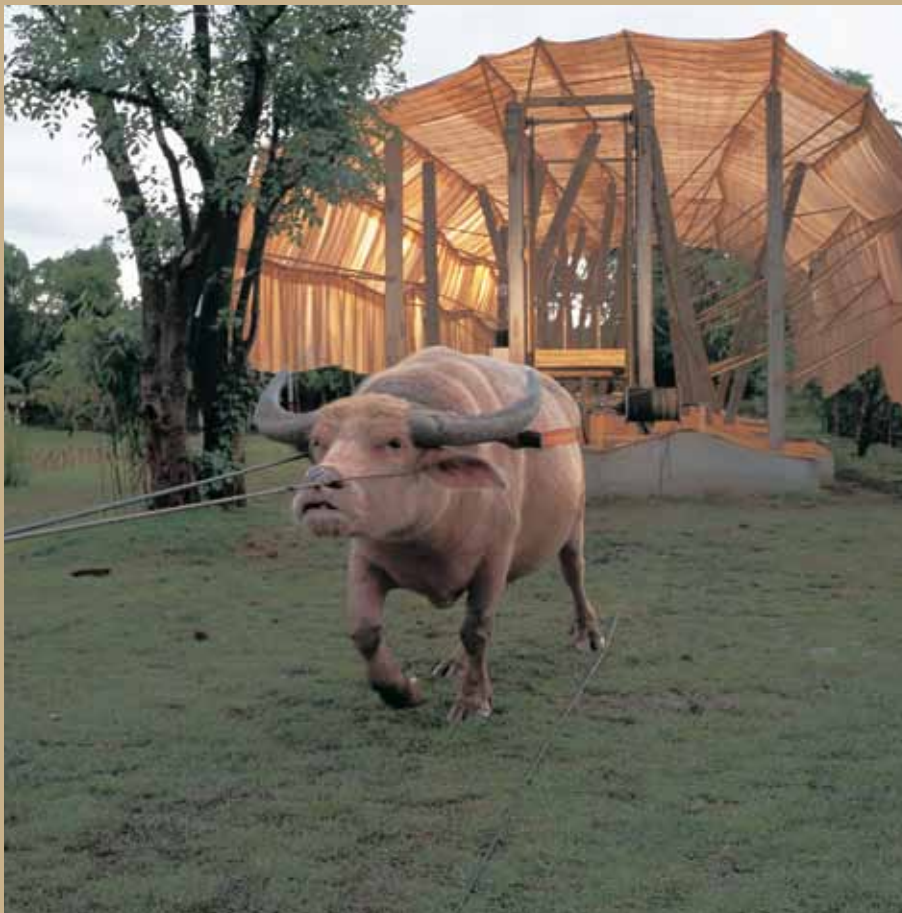# WHAT IS_
Participatory and Relational Art?

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THE *WHAT IS_*
IMMA Talks series *?*

There is a growing interest in contemporary art, yet the ideas and theoretical frameworks which inform its practice can be complex and difficult to access. By focusing on a number of key headings, such as participatory arts, installation art and performance art, this series of talks is intended to provide a broad overview of some of the central themes and directions in modern and contemporary art.

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This series represents a response to a number of challenges. Firstly, the inherent problems and contradictions that arise when attempting to outline or summarise the wide-ranging, constantly changing and contested spheres of both art theory and practice, and secondly, the use of summary terms to describe a range of practices, many of which emerged in opposition to such totalising tendencies.

Taking these challenges into account, this talks series offers a range of perspectives, drawing on expertise and experience from lecturers, artists, curators and critical writers and is neither definitive nor exhaustive. The intention is to provide background and contextual information about the art and artists featured in IMMA's exhibitions and collection in particular, and about Contemporary Art in general, to promote information sharing, and to encourage critical thinking, debate and discussion about art and artists. The talks series addresses aspects of Modern and Contemporary Art spanning the period from the 1940s to the present.

Each talk will be supported by an information leaflet which includes a summary, the presenter's essay, a reading list, a glossary of terms and a resources list. This information can also be found on IMMA's website along with more detailed information about artworks and artists featured in IMMA's Collection at www.imma.ie.

CONTENTS

IMAGE: Philippe Parreno,
The Boy from Mars, 2003.

WHAT IS_
Participatory and Relational Art ?

Introduction

As the national cultural institution responsible for the collection and presentation of Modern and Contemporary Art, the Irish Museum of Modern Art exhibits artworks by established and emerging artists who use media ranging from painting and sculpture to installation, photography, video and performance. IMMA's Collection comprises artworks by Irish and international artists acquired through purchase, donations, loans and commissions. Many artworks have also been acquired through IMMA's Temporary Exhibitions Programme and, on occasion, through IMMA's Education and Community Programmes and Artists' Residency Programme.

In this introductory text, we provide a brief overview of the context in which this evolving category of Participatory and Relational Arts has developed. Terms associated with Participatory and Relational Arts are indicated in CAPITALS and are elaborated on in the glossary on p. 19. We invited Brian Hand, artist, writer and lecturer, to respond to this subject. In his essay, *A struggle at the roots of the mind: service and solidarity in dialogical, relational and collaborative perspectives in art*, Hand focuses on three aspects of Participatory Arts: Dialogical Art, Relational Aesthetics and Collaborative/Collective Art Projects, as a means of exploring some of the key issues which inform and shape contemporary Participatory Arts practice. We hope these texts will contribute to the ongoing debate about Participatory Arts. We also hope to highlight the potential of IMMA and its programmes as a growing resource for further exploration and consideration of this subject.

what is participatory and Relational Art?

PARTICIPATORY ARTS refers to a range of arts practice, including RELATIONAL AESTHETICS, where emphasis is placed on the role of the viewer or spectator in the physical or conceptual realisation and reception of the artwork. The central component of Participatory Arts is the active participation of the viewer or spectator. Many forms of Participatory Arts practice foreground the role of collaboration in the realisation of an artwork, de-emphasising the role of the professional artist as sole creator or author of the artwork, while building social bonds through communal meaning and activity. The term Participatory Arts encompasses a range of arts practices informed by social, political, geographic, economic and cultural imperatives, such as COMMUNITY ARTS, ACTIVIST ART, NEW GENRE PUBLIC ART, SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART and DIALOGICAL ART.

Participatory Arts can be artform specific, such as visual arts, music or drama, or they can be INTERDISCIPLINARY involving COLLABORATION across a range of artforms. They can also involve collaboration with non-art agencies, such as social inclusion organisations, local authorities and community development groups. The artwork produced can take many forms and, due to the collaborative nature of Participatory Arts, this may comprise an event, a SITUATION or a PERFORMANCE, rather than the production of an object. The interactions that emerge from these encounters are often translated into DOCUMENTARY mediums, such as PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO or TEXT.

The emergence of Participatory Arts is informed by earlier AVANT-GARDE movements such as DADA, CONSTRUCTIVISM and SURREALISM, which raised questions with regard to notions of originality and authorship and challenged conventional assumptions about the passive role of the viewer or spectator. In doing so they adopted an anti-bourgeois position on the role and function of art.

The social, political and cultural upheavals of the 1960s and the perceived elitism, social disengagement and COMMODIFICATION of art associated with MODERNISM contributed to new forms of politicised, reactionary and socially engaged practice, such as CONCEPTUAL ART, FLUXUS and SITUATIONISM. The development of new technologies and improved mechanisms of communication and distribution, combined with the break down of medium-specific artforms, provided greater possibilities for artists to physically interact with the viewer. New forms of practice were developed by artists, who proactively sought out new artistic mediums to shape mutual exchange through open and inclusive practices. These new forms of practice appropriated non-hierarchical social forms and were informed by a range of theoretical and practical disciplines, such as FEMINISM, POSTCOLONIAL THEORY, PSYCHOANALYSIS, CRITICAL THEORY and LITERARY THEORY. While questions of authorship raised

Image: Women from the Family Resource Centre, Inchicore & Joe Lee, Open Season, 1998.

concerns about who participates in the definition and production of art, the relationship of the artwork to its audience became a central axis for these emerging forms of arts practice.

The presumed authorial control of the artist was challenged in particular by Conceptual artists who placed an emphasis on the idea or concept rather than a tangible art object. They created artworks which could be realised by others without the direct intervention of the artist. Artworks could take the form of a set of instructions, where participants were directly involved in the co-creation of the artwork. Instructions were communicated through a variety of media, such as photography, video, drawing, text, performance, SOUND, SCULPTURE and INSTALLATION.

Similarly, Fluxus artists rejected traditional principles of craftsmanship, permanency of the art object and the notion of the artist as specialist. Fluxus artists viewed art not as a finite object but as a time-based experience, employing performance and theatrical experiments. Fluxus artists were interested in the transformative potential of art through collaboration. Spectators were encouraged to interact with the performer, while plotless staged events left artworks open to artistic chance and interpretation. Artworks were realised in a range of media, including musical scores, performances, events, publications, MULTIPLES and assembled environments constructed to envelop the observer. These initiatives were often conceived with workshop characteristics, whereby the artist operated as facilitator, engaging the audience in philosophical discussions about the meaning of art. Artworks often took the form of meetings and public demonstrations, HAPPENINGS or SOCIAL SCULPTURE, whereby the meaning of the work was derived from the collective engagement of the participants. A common goal of Fluxus, Happenings and Situationist events was to develop a new synthesis between politics and art, where political activism was mirrored in street-based arts practice as a radical means to eliminate distinctions between art and life.

The development of Participatory Arts practice has also been informed and shaped by the development of PUBLIC ART programmes, many of which evolved in the context of large-scale urban renewal and regeneration initiatives. Participatory Arts programmes with their emphasis on public engagement and participation can be an important element in both the consensus-building process and critique of such regeneration initiatives.

The economic downturn and social political turmoil of the 1980s combined with the alienating effects of capitalism and its impact on community structures, resulted in an increasing awareness of the potential of the arts as a vehicle to address social issues, in particular issues of social inclusion. Influenced by earlier forms of socially-engaged and activist art, many Community Arts organisations and initiatives emerged during this period. Community Arts emphasised the role of art in bringing about social change and empowering community members, often from socially or economically marginalised communities. Community Arts projects often took place at a local level where community consultation and participation in all

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aspects of the art initiative were imperative. Dialogical Aesthetics is a term used to describe the active role of dialogue in such socially-engaged art.

During this period, state bodies funding the arts began to impose contingencies on their client organisations, such as MUSEUMS, GALLERIES, theatres and arts organisations, with regard to encouraging public participation in the arts, especially on the part of marginalised or socially excluded constituencies. The utilisation of the arts to address non-arts agendas contributed to an ongoing debate about the role of art and its relationship to its audience, which continues to inform consideration of Participatory Arts today.

In the late 1990s participatory concepts have been expanded upon by a new generation of artists identified under the heading of RELATIONAL ART or Relational Aesthetics. This is a term coined by the French curator Nicolas Bourriaud to describe a range of open-ended art practices, concerned with the network of human relations and the social context in which such relations arise. Relational Art also stresses the notion of artworks as gifts, taking multiple forms, such as meals, meetings, parties, posters, casting sessions, games, discussion platforms and other types of social events and cooperations. In this context, emphasis is placed on the use of the artwork. Art is regarded as information exchanged between the artist and the viewer which relies on the responses of others to make it relational.

In response to the rapid acceleration of real time communications in the twenty first century a new term, ALTERMODERN, also devised by Bourriaud, proposes an alternative to the conceptual lineage of POSTMODERNISM. According to Bourriaud, the opening of new market economies and the mobility of artist and audience has stimulated new models for political and cultural exchange and participation. Through global distribution systems, artists can cut across geographic and political boundaries. A new cultural framework consisting of diaspora, migration and exodus offers alternative modes of interpretation and understanding of the artwork. The decentralisation of global culture presents new formats for exchange between artist and audience, which are continually susceptible and adaptable to readily-available technologies. DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY and the INTERNET'S global social networks can promote a sense of participation without the physical gathering of people in any one location. This represents a fundamental shift in traditional notions of community and our experience of artworks.

Participatory and Relational Art raise important questions about the meaning and purpose of art in society, about the role of the artist and the experience of the audience as participant. Many arts organisations and museums and galleries, such as the Irish Museum of Modern Art, integrate the inclusive principles of Participatory Arts in their policy and practice, informing strategies for programming and audience development to provide opportunities for meaningful engagement with Contemporary Art.

Sophie Byrne, Assistant Curator
Talks and Lectures Programme

Lisa Moran, Curator
Education and Community Programmes

A struggle at the roots of the mind: service and solidarity in dialogical, relational and collaborative perspectives within contemporary art.

Brian Hand

Introduction

Raymond Williams in his definition of community offers the dialectic of solidarity and service (working with people or voluntary work sometimes paid), and sees this dialectic on a philosophical level as operating between idealism and sentimentality.[1] For Williams solidarity equals positive change whereas service equals the paternalistic status quo.[2] In this short essay I will explore how this dialectic between service and solidarity in relation to concepts and practices surrounding art forms that have prioritised an active social dimension has been conceptualised in recent art theory. A socially engaged or community based art practice is a current theme in discussions around contemporary art. This subject is very broad so to lessen the confusion I will look at just three distinct participatory approaches: dialogical art, relational aesthetics and collaborative/collective art projects.

In the past 50 years, community based visual arts have emerged within working class and marginal communities both here and elsewhere and are now a well established set of practices aligned with the broad principles of community development. While participatory arts in general are recognised as an important tool in a bigger scheme of grass roots social empowerment, a weakness in state supported community based arts activities, besides inadequate funding, has often been the top down approach of sponsoring agencies/institutions. In this familiar scenario artists are parachuted in and out and little attention is given to long term engagement. In our age of consumer orientated individualism, community, as Homi Bhabha reminds us, is something you develop out of.[3] Community can imply a herd like conformity, a suppression of difference, or simply the ideal of individual freedom. The Arts Council has dropped the once popular term 'community arts' for the more neutral and arms length term 'participatory arts'.

Community, Bhabha outlines, is synonymous with the territory of the minority and the discourses of community are themselves 'minority' discourses incommensurable with the discourse of civil society.[4] Community, he argues is the antagonist supplement of modernity. It becomes the border problem of the diasporic, the migrant, and the refugee. Community in this sense almost has an atavistic resonance because it predates capitalism and modern society and leads a "subterranean, potentially subversive life within [civil society] because it refuses to go away".[5] In this sense invoking community is at once to locate a togetherness and paradoxically an estrangement from or antagonism to the notion of a frame or limit to what constitutes a community. As Grant Kester argues:

> The community comes into existence [...] as a result of a complex process of political self-definition. This process often unfolds against the back drop of collective modes of oppression (racism, sexism, class oppression, etc.) but also within a set of shared cultural and discursive traditions. It takes place against the grain of a dominant culture that sustains itself by recording systematic forms of inequality (based on race, class, gender, and sexuality) as a product of individual failure or nonconformity.[6]

image: Tim Rollins & K.O.S., The Red Badge of Courage, 1988.

There is, to follow Bhabha, Nancy and Pontbriand, a contemporary value in the concept of community because it somehow evades the grasp of the bundle of discourses which describe it and remains opaque to itself.[7] As Douglas observes:

> In 'community' the personal relations of men and women appear in a special light. They form part of the ongoing process which is only partly organised in the wider social 'structure'. Whereas 'structure' is differentiated and channels authority through the system, in the context of 'community', roles are ambiguous, lacking hierarchy, disorganised. 'Community' in this sense has positive values associated with it; good fellowship, spontaneity, warm contact … Laughter and jokes, since they attack classification and hierarchy, are obviously apt symbols for expressing community in this sense of unhierarchised, undifferentiated social relations.[8]

Indeed, while the definition of community resists empirical study and interpretation there is something similar in the resistance to profit in the community artwork which, because of multiple authorship/ownership, remains unexchangeable and therefore economically unviable within the traditional art market and auction houses.

dialogical art

Dialogical art or aesthetics is an umbrella term borrowed from Bakhtin and Freire by Kester. Kester's work tries to give legitimacy and a sound theoretical grounding to the alternative practices of community arts, recognising them as new forms of cultural production. To paraphrase Kester's nuanced arguments: dialogical art aims to "replace the 'banking' style of art in which the artist deposits an expressive content into a physical object, to be withdrawn later by the viewer, with a process of dialogue and collaboration".[9] Community based participatory art is a process led, rather than a product led, dialogical encounter and participating entails sharing a desire to unveil or discover the power structures of reality with a view to creatively imagining a contestatory and oppositional platform where radical and plural democracy might take root. According to Kester, and borrowing from arguments by Walter Benjamin, art is not a fixed category/entity or thing, except that it reflects the values and interests of the dominant class. For a host of art movements, especially avant garde ones, their relationship with the dominant order is channelled through a dialectical and often contradictory relationship where a specific and important discursive system constructs art as a repository for values actively suppressed within the dominant culture. "There is nothing inherent in a given work of art that allows it to play this role; rather, particular formal arrangements take on meaning only in relationship to specific cultural moments, institutional frames, and preceding art works".[10]

So while the challenge art poses to fixed categorical systems and instrumentalising modes of thought is important, it is not necessarily simply located in the artwork itself as a discreet, bounded, formally innovative object. Rather Kester argues that the tendency to locate this principle of indeterminacy solely in the physical condition or form of the work of art prevents us from grasping an important act of performative, collaborative art practice. "An alternative approach would require us to locate the moment of indeterminateness, of open-ended and liberatory possibility, not in the perpetually changing form of the artwork qua object, but in the very process of communication and solidarity that the artwork catalyzes".[11] To uncouple the material form from social practice is not as straightforward as Kester makes out because both are overlayed and imbricated thoroughly in the history of Modernism.

For Kester, dialogical art is an approach that separates itself from both the traditional non-communicative, mute and hermetic abstract modernist art (Rothko, Pollock, Newman) and the more strident innovative heterogeneous forms of shock based avant garde work (such as the Futurists, Surrealists and Dada movements or the more recent examples of work such as Christoph Schlingensief's public art project *Foreigners Out!*) designed to jolt the hapless alienated viewer into a new awareness. Kester argues that both anti-discursive traditions hold in common a suspicion about shared community values and that 'art for the people' suggests an assault on artistic freedom, individualism or even worse raises the spectre of fascism and Stalinism.[12] While such fears are grounded in history, in many peaceful and settled democracies not under immediate threats from extreme ideology, the tradition of anti-discursivity, isolation and negation still resonates in mainstream aesthetic practices.

image: Paddy Jolley, Rebecca Trost & Inger Lise Hansen, Hereafter, 2004.

Dialogical art, or conversational art as Bhabha termed it, foregrounds the encounter and interpretation of the co-producers of the art work and as such is against the traditional scenario where a given object or artifact produced by an individual artist is offered to the viewer. Some examples for Kester of solidarity orientated dialogical art include some of the work of WochenKlausur, Suzanne Lacey, Hope Sandrow, Ne Pas Plier, Ultra Red, Maurice O'Connell and the ROUTES project in Belfast in 2002. Examples of work closer to the service or paternalistic end of the spectrum for Kester, include some of the work of Alfredo Jaar, Fred Wilson, and Dawn Dedeaux.

For Kester there are just too many examples of institutional led community based work by well known and established artists that reinforce the neo Victorian view of a given 'disadvantaged' "community or constituency as an instrumentalised and fictively monolithic entity to be 'serviced' by the visiting artist".[13] As Sholette has observed, "the avant garde promise to drag art out of the museums and into life is today remarkably visible in all the wrong places. Museums and foundations now claim to nurture art as social activism".[14]

12 Relational Aesthetics

The criticism that participatory projects in the art world can be toothless is clearly present in the critique of relational aesthetics by Bishop, Foster, and more recently Martin.[15] Relational aesthetics is a term coined by French curator and writer Nicolas Bourriaud and relates to a diverse body of work made by artists in the 1990s, such as Liam Gillick, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Vanessa Beecroft and Philippe Parreno, that foregrounds interactivity, conviviality and relationality as the subject of its artistic practice. This social rather than socialist turn is seen as a direct response from the privileged art world to the increasingly regimented and technologically administered society. Again like the theory of dialogical art there is little emphasis in relational aesthetics on the art object as such and what the artist "produces, first and foremost, is relations between people and the world by way of aesthetic objects".[16] There is a further similarity in that relational aesthetics rejects the non-communicative strategies of autonomous abstract art that avoided content like the plague. Bourriaud's argument is provocative and interesting in that it sees art from a Marxist perspective as an apparatus for reproducing the all encompassing hegemonic capitalist ideology, but due to the complexity of the cultural sphere in the age of information there are slips and gaps within the reproduction of the dominant ideology that can be exploited by certain artists as creative heteronomous interstices. Hence while acknowledging on the one hand institutionally supported contemporary art's complete immersion in capitalist relations and submission to capitalist imperatives, Bourriaud believes that relational art can, within this system:

> create free areas, and time spans whose rhythm contrasts with those structuring everyday life, and it encourages an inter-human commerce that differs from the 'communication zones' that are imposed on us.[17]
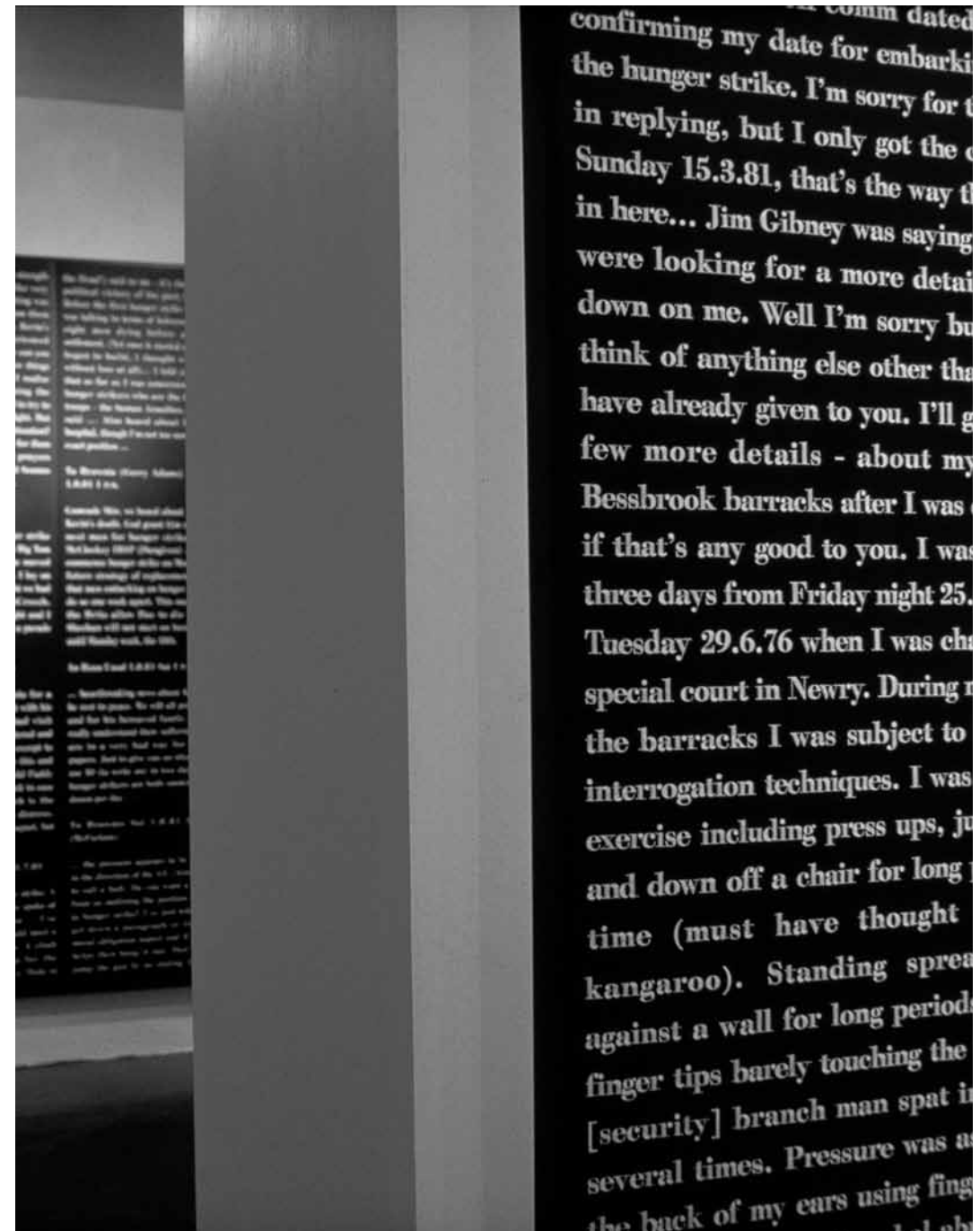

Image: Shane Cullen, Fragments sur les Institutions Républicaines IV, 1993 – 1997.

It is a French tradition to invest in art as a strategically resistant activity and Sartre viewed the primary aim of art to challenge the established interests within society, so Bourriaud's relational aesthetics sets itself in opposition to the culture of commodified individualism. As Liam Gillick claims: his object based work is only activated by an encounter with an audience. "My work is like the light in the fridge, it only works when there are people there to open the door. Without people, it's not art – it's something else stuff in a room".[18] This is a common perception of the experience of theatre, where the audience gathers and forms a body for the duration of the performed event. The limits of this interactive empowerment of an audience community can be seen in the marketable success of the individual signature of the international artists associated with relational aesthetics. As Adorno observed about the underlying use value of the exhibition, "the words museum and mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association. They testify to the neutralisation of culture".[19] Yet while Bourriaud celebrates the role of the artist as a service provider he does caution:

> Of course, one fears that these artists may have transformed themselves under the pressure of the market into a kind of merchandising of relations and experience. The question we might raise today is, connecting people, creating interactive, communicative experience: What for? What does the new kind of contact produce? If you forget the "what for?" I'm afraid you're left with simple Nokia art – producing interpersonal relations for their own sake and never addressing their political aspects.[20]

Our current era is characterised as the era of the service led consumer economy and many artists are now earning a modest income from the payment of fees from cultural institutions for participating in exhibitions and other activities including institution led participatory arts programmes like those at IMMA or indeed temporary public art programmes funded by percent for the arts schemes. As Sholette observes:

> cultural tourism and community-based art practice must be thought of as a local consequence of the move towards a privatized and global economy […] the remnants of public, civic culture aim to make art appear useful to the voting population as a form of social service and tourism.[21]

Solidarity implies a different kind of economic relationship, something more reciprocal and committed than financially dependent. Collaborative groups are the final approach that I wish to consider in this discussion on participation and the work they make "can raise complex questions about participation among artists - not just issues of process (Group Material and Tim Rollins

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+ K.O.S. operated by sometimes tortuously arrived-at consensus), but also of credit and ownership".[22] Celebrated art groups of more than two members in the past 100 years include the Omega workshop, The Russian Constructivists, Berlin Dada, the Situationists, Gutai, CoBrA, Fluxus, Art & Language, the Guerilla Girls, the Black Audio Film Collective, Act Up, Gran Fury, RTMark, Critical Art Ensemble, Paper Tiger and Temporary Services. With the exception of the writings of Sholette, Gablik and edited publications by Thompson and Sholette and Sholette and Stimson, contemporary work made by collaborative groups has often failed to merit serious critical attention.[23] Having co-founded and worked with the collaborative groups Blue Funk, The Fire Department and 147, as well as participating with the collective RepoHistory, I can speak from experience that there are multiple challenges in group art making and art activism. Art collectives are risky as sharing does not come easily to visual artists and the tacit knowledge of one's practice can be difficult to communicate. Group formation is interesting in terms of how a shared political position can motivate action and organise a group to tackle an issue. A transitive relationship is implied in making collaborative work and becoming engaged in the wider social and political arena. Conversely the lack of artists' groups signals a lack of problematic issues within the cultural/communal sphere or is it a sign of a more widespread inertness where we have become what Agamben sees as "the most docile and cowardly social body that has ever existed in human history?"[24]

Joining or forming a collaborative art group or collective may impoverish you, but it is paradoxically good for one's individual identity and at least your life expectancy. As our society dismantles most of the traditional groups like the nuclear family for example and replaces them with consumer orientated lifestyles, collective identity can re-value individual participation and self worth. As Habermas has argued "a person can constitute an inner centre only to the extent that he or she can find self expression in communicatively generated interpersonal relations".[25] In this sense, the agency to express solidarity or opposition with the other, is significantly different to the relentless mass organisation of our lives into stratified data banks, market segments, audiences, biometrics, google accounts and biological samples, what Deleuze calls the administered forms of collective control.

Judging work, be it dialogical, relational or collaborative on a scale from solidarity to service asks of the reader to reflect on the social dimension of participation and the material dimension of social practice from aesthetic/political perspectives. The future that is mapped out in phrases like the 'knowledge economy', 'virtual communities' and 'cultural industries' is a future that threatens solidarity through corporate control. I hope artists, students, and audiences at IMMA remain alive to dealing with these complex forces and engage with what Williams generously believed art could be: a struggle at the roots of mind to figure out an embodied sense of creative engagement with self-composition and social composition.[26]

1   Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, London: Fontana, 1988.

2   Virginia Nightingale, *Studying Audiences: The Shock of the New*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 14.

3   Homi Bhabha, 'Conversational Art' in Mary Jane Jacob and Michael Brenson (eds.), *Conversations at the Castle: Changing Audiences and Contemporary Art*, Cambridge, Mass and London: MIT Press, 1998, pp. 38-47.

4   Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, 1994.

5   Partha Chatterjee cited in Homi Bhabha, 1994, p. 230.

6   Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces*, California: University of California Press, 2004, p. 150.

7   For this broad discussion see Homi Bhabha, 1994; Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, Trans. Peter Connor, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991 and Chantal Pontbriand, 'Jean-Luc Nancy / Chantal Pontbriand: an exchange', *Parachute Contemporary Art Magazine*, October 01, 2000, pp. 14-30.

8   Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London: Routledge, 1991, p. 303.

9   Grant Kester, 2004, p. 10.

10   Ibid, p. 90.

11   Ibid, p. 90.

12   Grant Kester, 'Dialogical Aesthetics: A Critical Framework for Littoral Art' in *Variant 9*, 1999.

13   Grant Kester, 2004, p. 171.

14   Gregory Sholette, 'Some Call it Art: From Imaginary Autonomy to Autonomous Collectivity', www.gregorysholette.com/writings/writingpdfs/06_somecallit.pdf, 2001.

15   See Claire Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', in *October*, 110, 2004, pp. 51-80; Claire Bishop, *Installation: A Critical History*, London: Tate Publishing, 2005; Hal Foster, 'Arty Party', in *London Review of Books*, 25:23, 4, 2003 and Stewart Martin, 'Critique of Relational Aesthetics', *Third Text*, 21(4), 2007, pp. 369-386.

16   Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Dijon: Les Presses Du Réel, 2002, p. 42.

17   Ibid, p. 16.

18   Liam Gillick cited in Claire Bishop, 2004, p. 61.

19   Theodor Adorno quoted in Rubén Gallo, 'The Mexican Pentagon Adventures in Collectivism during the 1970s', in Blake Stimson, and Greg Sholette (eds.), *Collectivism After Modernism*, pp. 165-193, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007, p. 170.

20   Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Public Relations', Interview with Bennett Simpson, *Artforum*, April 2001.

21   Gregory Sholette, 2001.

22   Robert Atkins, 'Politics, Participation, and Meaning in the Age of Mass Media', in Rudolf Frieling (ed.), *The Art of Participation: 1950 to Now*, pp. 50-66, London: Thames and Hudson, 2008, p. 58.

23   See Gregory Sholette, 2001; Suzi Gablik, 'Connective Aesthetics: Art After Individualism', in Suzanne Lacy (ed.), *Mapping the New Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, Seattle: Bay Press, 1995, pp. 74-87; Nato Thompson and Gregory Sholette, (eds.), *The Interventionists: Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life*, Cambridge Mass and London: MIT Press, 2004 and Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette (eds.), 2007.

24   Giorgio Agamben, *What is an Apparatus?* California: Stanford University Press 2009, p. 10.

25   Jürgen Habermas quoted in Peter Dews (ed.), *Habermas Autonomy and Solidarity*, London: Verso, 1992, p. 38.

26   Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 206-212.

Brian Hand

Brian Hand is an artist and lecturer based in Carlow and Wexford. He is a graduate of NCAD, The Slade School of Art and DIT. Hand has lived and shown his work in Dublin, London, New York and Scotland. He is a former member of the art collectives Blue Funk and 147, and participated with the group Repohistory in their final show in 2000. Over the years he has been commissioned by a number of artists to write essays on their work including Anne Tallentire, the late Noel Sheridan, Daphne Wright, Shirley MacWilliam, Colin Darke, Anne Bevan, Sean O Flaithearta, Dennis McNulty, and Dorothy Cross. In 1999 Hand was awarded an Arts Council bursary in critical writing and contributed a series of essays to CIRCA on the discourses relating to the study of audiences. In 2003 he was curator of the Arts Council's 'critical voices', an interdisciplinary programme aimed at facilitating critical and creative exchanges, introductions and conversations in the arts. Hand has worked in third level education for many years and established a new undergraduate art degree for I.T. Carlow in Wexford. He was course director of the programme from 2003-2010. His most recent solo exhibition/project was 'little war', a site specific installation in the grounds of Kilkenny Castle during the arts festival in 2008.

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Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Trans. Lewis A. Coser, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Geoffrey Hendricks (ed.), *Critical Mass: Happenings, Fluxus, Performance, Intermedia, and Rutgers University, 1958-1972*, Rutgers University Press, 2003.

Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, Berkeley, CA and London University of California Press, 2004.

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Markus Miessen and Shumon Basar (eds.), *Did Someone Say Participate? – An Atlas of Spatial Practice*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.

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Ailbhe Murphy et al (eds.), *Unspoken Truths*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1996.

Frank Popper, *Art, Action and Participation*, London: Studio Vista, 1975.

Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, London: Verso, 2009.

Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette (eds.), *Collectivism after Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination after 1945*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, New York: Zone Books, 2002.

ACTIVIST ART
Art which employs collective action in the public domain, such as demonstrations, protests, banners, signs and leaflet distribution, informed by political and social injustice.

ALTERMODERN
A term coined by French curator Nicolas Bourriaud to describe arts practice in the twenty-first century which is concerned with globalised culture and communication and which is realised through social and technological networks.

ART MUSEUM
A venue for the collection, preservation, study, interpretation and display of significant cultural objects and artworks.

AVANT-GARDE
French for advance guard or 'vanguard', a military term to describe an advance army group. The term is used to describe innovative, experimental or cutting edge artists and practitioners.

COLLABORATION/ COLLABORATIVE ART
A form of arts practice where two or more artists, often from different disciplines, collaborate in the creation of an artwork.

COMMODITY
A product or article of trade which is marketed for a commercial exchange of equal value. The influence of the art market on the nature, production and distribution of art is often referred to in terms of commodification.

COMMUNITY ARTS
A form of Participatory Arts practice where emphasis is placed on the potential of art to bring about social change. Often involving collaboration between artists and specific communities or self-generated by communities where participants are involved in all aspects of the art making process.

CONCEPTUAL ART
Originating in the 1960s, Conceptual Art emphasises the idea or concept rather than the production of a tangible art object. The ideas and methodologies of Conceptual Art continue to inform Contemporary Art practice.

CONSTRUCTIVISM
An abstract art movement founded by Vladimir Tatlin and Alexander Rodchenko in Russia around 1915, which embraced developments in modern technology and industrialisation.

CRITICAL THEORY
A range of theories, drawn mainly from the social sciences and humanities, and associated with the Frankfurt School, which adopt a critical approach to understanding society and culture.

DADA
An Avant-Garde, anti-establishment art movement founded in 1916 which used abstraction, nonsense texts and absurd performances to protest against the social and political conditions prevailing in Europe during World War I. Associated with the work of Tristan Tzara, Hans Arp and Marcel Duchamp.

DIALOGICAL AESTHETICS
An umbrella term used to describe socially-engaged arts practice where the emphasis is placed on dialogue and communication rather than the production of an art object.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
Electronic data storage and transmission technology that enables immense amounts of information to be compressed on small storage devices, such as computers and telephones, that can easily be preserved, retrieved and transported.

DOCUMENTATION
The process of making records with the use of Photography, Film, Video, Audio or Text, in particular to record temporary or ephemeral forms of arts practice such as Performance and Installation.

FEMINISM
A social, political, intellectual and philosophical movement advocating equal rights and representation for women in all aspects of society.

FLUXUS
An international, avant-garde, art movement in the 1960s which included artists, writers, filmmakers and musicians creating experimental, Multi-media work in Film, Video and Performance, informed by social and political activism.

GALLERY

An internal space or series of spaces dedicated to the exhibition of artworks.

HAPPENINGS

A term which first emerged in the 1950s to describe time-based performances, events or situations which rely on artistic chance and improvisation to provoke interaction from the audience.

INSTALLATION

A broad term applied to a range of arts practice which involves the installation or configuration of objects in a space, where the totality of the objects and the space comprise the artwork.

INTERDISCIPLINARY

The combining of two or more artform specialisms, such as music, visual arts or dance.

INTERNET

A globalised system of computer networks linked by copper wire, fibre-optic cables and wireless connections, which provides services, resources and information, such as the hypertext of the World Wide Web, electronic mail, file sharing, online gaming and social networking sites.

LITERARY THEORY

Refers to ideas concerning the reception of literature and text and how the reader may receive and negotiate its meaning based on his/her cultural background and personal experience.

MEDIA

In general usage, media refers to forms of communication, such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the Internet. In the arts, media, the plural of medium, refers to the materials, methodologies, mechanisms, technologies or devices by which an artwork is realised. Traditional media include painting, sculpture and drawing and the specific materials used, such as paint, charcoal or marble, can also be referred to as media. In Contemporary Arts practice artists use a wide range of media, such as technology, found materials, the body, sound, etc.

MINIMALISM

An abstract art movement developed in the US in the 1960s which emphasised the use of simple, geometric forms and modern materials drawn from industry. It was an extension of abstraction, focusing on the properties of the materials used but also a rejection of the ideology and discourse of Abstract Expressionism.

MODERNISM

Refers to art theory and practice from the 1860s to the late 1960s and is defined in terms of a linear progression of styles, periods and schools, such as Impressionism, Cubism and Abstract Expressionism.

MULTIPLES

A term used to describe a limited edition of artworks produced in multiples, incorporating industrial methods of printmaking or sculpture while maintaining technical variations.

NEW GENRE PUBLIC ART

A term coined by American artist Suzanne Lacy to describe a form of socially-engaged Public Art practice which emphasises collectivity and engagement with the audience and the blurring of media boundaries.

PARTICIPATORY ART

An arts practice which places emphasis on the input and active reception of the audience for the physical or conceptual realisation of the work.

PERFORMANCE ART

Involves an artist undertaking an action or actions where the artist's body is the medium. Performance art evolved in the late 1950s and is closely associated with Video Art as this was the primary means of recording this ephemeral art form.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The process of recording an image – a photograph, on light-sensitive film or, in the case of digital photography, via a digital electronic or magnetic memory.

POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

An intellectual discourse of the late twentieth century drawing on theories from literature, film, philosophy and social and political science, concerned with the cultural legacy of colonialism in terms of national and cultural identity, race and ethnicity.

POSTMODERNISM

A social, cultural and intellectual movement characterised by a rejection of notions of linear progression, grand totalising narratives and critical consensus associated with Modernism. Characterised by an interdisciplinary approach, multiple narratives, fragmentation, relativity, contingency and irony.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

A theoretical paradigm for understanding human behaviour, and a form of intensive psychotherapeutic treatment in which free association, dream interpretation and consideration of resistance and transference are used to resolve psychological problems. Developed by Sigmund Freud in the late nineteenth century, there are many strands of psychoanalytic theory, including Object Relations Theory and Lacanian psychoanalysis.

RELATIONAL AESTHETICS

Term coined by the French curator Nicholas Bourriaud to describe a set of art practices which place an emphasis on the social context in which the work is created and/or presented, and on the role of the artist as facilitator, where art is information exchanged between the artist and viewer. He calls examples of this practice Relational Art.

PUBLIC ART

Artwork located outside a museum or gallery, usually sited in a public space and supported by public funding.

SCULPTURE

A three-dimensional art object which is either created or constructed by an artist. Includes constructions, assemblages, installations, sound, new media, etc.

SITUATIONISM

An open-ended term used to describe an event which is time-based and conditioned by a site or set of circumstances; commonly associated with the political actions of the artist collective Situationist International.

SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

Arts practice which is informed by a social agenda and created and realised through engagement, collaboration and/or participation between an artist or artists and a specific social constituency, such as a youth group.

SOCIAL SCULPTURE

Refers to a concept developed by German artist Joseph Beuys which describes art as a form of human activity in the transformation of politics and society, encompassing the famous declaration that 'everyone is an artist'.

SOUND ART

A form of art practice concerned with sound, listening and hearing, often involving an interdisciplinary approach. Sound Art encompasses acoustics, electronics, audio media and technology, the body, ambient sound, etc.

SURREALISM

An avant garde, literary and visual art movement founded in 1924 by André Breton and influenced by Dada, psychoanalysis and Sigmund Freud's theories of the unconscious.

TEXT BASED

Artwork created using written or printed words as the material and/or subject matter.

VIDEO ART

Artwork created using a video recording device. Video Art emerged as an art form in the 1960s and 1970s due to the development of new technology, and it is a prevalent medium in Contemporary Art practice.

The following is a select list of resources. A more detailed list can be found on IMMA's website www.imma.ie

Information Websites

Artcyclopedi
Internet encyclopedia on art and artists.
www.intute.ac.uk

The Artists
Database of Modern and Contemporary artists.
www.the-artists.org

Artworld Salon
An experimental discussion platform focused on issues concerning the globalised art world.
www.artworldsalon.com

Axis
Online resource for Contemporary Art.
www.axisweb.org

Collabarts.org
An information resource for collaborative art practice for artists, theorists and art students.
www.collabarts.org

Intute
Online service providing information about web resources for education and research.
www.intute.ac.uk

Public Art
www.publicart.ie

STOT
Platform providing online links relating to Contemporary Art.
www.stot.org

Ubu
An educational resource for Conceptual and Performance Art.
www.ubu.com

Place Programme
Promotes dialogue between faculty, students and community members that directly engage and address community needs.
www. place.unm.edu/service_relational_art.html

Organisations

Age and Opportunity
www.olderinireland.ie

Arts & Disability Directory
www.artsanddisability.com

Arts and Disability Forum
www.adf.ie

Arts and Disability Ireland
www.adiarts.ie

Artangel
www.artangel.org.uk

Arts Care
www.artscare.co.uk

Art Squad
www.artsquad.com

Action Factory
www.actionfactory.org

AREA
www.areachicago.org

The Art of Change
www.arte-ofchange.com

CAN
www.communityarts.net

Common Ground
www.commonground.ie

Cork Community Artlink
www.whatif.ie

CREATE
www.create-ireland.ie

Caf
www.caf.ie

Cityarts
www.cityarts.ie

Engage
www.engage.co.uk

Fire Station Artists Studios
www.firestation.ie

Furtherfield
www.furtherfield.org

KCAT Art & Study Centre
www.kcat.ie

Waterford Healing Arts Trust
www.waterfordhealingarts.com

Visual Artists Ireland
www.visualartists.ie

Projects, Collaborations and Artist-led Initiatives

16 Beaver, New York
www.16beavergroup.org

Black Audio Film Collective
www.blackaudiofilmcollective.com

Critical Art Ensemble
www.critical-art.net

Curating degree zero
www.curatingdegreezero.org

Cubitt, London
www.cubittartists.org

The International DADA archive
www.lib.uiowa.edu/dada

The Metropolitan Complex
www.metropolitancomplex.com

Minus Space, NewYork
www.minusspace.com

Paper Tiger Television
www.papertiger.org

REPOhistory
www.repohistory.org

Republicart
www.republicart.net

RTMark
www.rtmark.com

Temporary Services
www.temporaryservices.org

Transform
www.transform.eipcp.net

Sparwasser HQ, Berlin
www.sparwasserhq.de

Southern Exposure, San Francisco
soex.org/about.html

Studio Voltaire, London
www.studiovoltaire.org

Vitamin Creative Space, Beijing
www.vitamincreativespace.com

YYZ Artist Outlet, Toronto
www.yyzartistsoutlet.org

Museums and Galleries
International Museums and Galleries

Art Institute of Chicago,
www.artic.edu

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Victoria
www.accaonline.org.au

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead
www.balticmill.com

Camden Art Centre, London
www.camdenartscentre.org

Centres Georges Pompidou, Paris
www.cnac-gp.fr

Dia Art Foundation, New York
www.diacentre.org

Drawing Center, New York
www.drawingcentre.org

Gagosian Gallery, New York
www.gagosian.com

Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao
www.guggenheim-bilbao.es

Hayward Gallery, London
www.haywardgallery.org.uk

ICA - Institute of Contemporary Arts, London
www.ica.org.uk

Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin
www.kw-berlin.de

Maxxi, Rome
www.maxxi.parc.beniculturali.it/english/museo.htm

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
www.metmuseum.org

Moderna Museet, Stockholm
www.modernamuseet.se

MOMA - Museum of Modern Art, New York
www.moma.org

Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
www.mori.art.museum/eng

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
www.mcachicago.org

Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki
www.kiasma.fi

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
www.moca.org

Musee d'Orsay, Paris
www.musee-orsay.fr

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
www.mca.com.au

New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York
www.newmuseum.org

Palais de Tokyo, Paris
www.palaisdetokyo.com

Reina Sofia, Madrid
www.museoreinasofia.es

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art,
www.sfmoma.org

Saatchi Gallery, London
www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk

Serpentine Gallery, London
www.serpentinegallery.org

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
www.guggenheim.org

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
www.stedelijk.nl

Tate Modern, London
Tate Britain, London
Tate Liverpool
www.tate.org.uk

Whitechapel Gallery, London
www.whitechapel.org

White Cube, London
www.whitecube.com

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
www.whitney.org

Witte de With, Rotterdam
www.wdw.nl

Irish Museums and Galleries

Butler Gallery, Kilkenny
www.butlergallery.com

Catalyst Arts Gallery,
Belfast
www.catalystarts.org.uk

Context Gallery, Derry
www.contextgallery.co.uk

Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork
www.crawfordartgallery.com

Cross Gallery, Dublin
www.crossgallery.ie

Dock Arts Centre,
Carrick-on-Shannon
www.thedock.ie

Douglas Hyde Gallery,
Dublin
www.douglashydegallery.com

Draíocht, Dublin
www.draiocht.ie

Dublin City Gallery,
The Hugh Lane
www.hughlane.ie

Farmleigh Gallery, Dublin
www.farmleighgallery.ie

Fenton Gallery, Cork
www.artireland.net/systmpl/door

Gallery of Photography,
Dublin
www.galleryofphotography.ie

Galway Arts Centre
www.galwayartscentre.ie

Green On Red Gallery,
Dublin
www.greenonredgallery.com

Hallward Gallery, Dublin
www.hallwardgallery.com

Highlanes Gallery,
Drogheda
www.highlanes.ie

IMMA - Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin
www.imma.ie

Kerlin Gallery, Dublin
www.kerlin.ie

Kevin Kavanagh Gallery,
Dublin
www.kevinkavanaghgallery.ie

Lewis Glucksman Gallery,
Cork
www.glucksman.org

Limerick City Gallery of Art
www.limerickcitygallery.ie

Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo
www.modelart.ie

Project Arts Centre, Dublin
www.projectartscentre.ie

RHA The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin
www.royalhibernianacademy.com

Rubicon Gallery, Dublin
www.rubicongallery.ie

Temple Bar Gallery & Studios, Dublin
www.templebargallery.com

Mother's Tankstation,
Dublin
www.motherstankstation.com

Pallas Contemporary Projects, Dublin
www.pallasprojects.org

Taylor Galleries, Dublin
www.taylorgalleries.ie

126, Galway
www.126.ie

Biennials and Art Fairs

Art Basel, Switzerland
www.artbasel.com

Documenta, Kassel,
Germany
www.documenta.da

ev+a, Limerick, Ireland
www.eva.ie

Frieze Art Fair, London, UK
www.friezeartfair.com

Istanbul Biennial, Turkey
www.iksv.org/bienal11

Liverpool Biennial, UK
www.biennial.com/

Manifesta
www.manifesta.org

Moscow Biennale, Russia
www.2nd.moscowbiennale.ru

Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil
www.bienalsaopaulo.globo.com

Shanghai Biennale, China
www.shanghaibiennale.com

Skulptur Projekte Münster,
Germany
www.skulptur-projekte.de

Venice Biennale, Italy
www.labiennale.org

Journals and Magazines

Afterimage
Journal of Media Art and Cultural Criticism
www.vsw.org/afterimage

Art and Research
www.artandresearch.org.uk

Art Forum Magazine
www.artforum.com

Art Monthly
www.artmonthly.co.uk

Art Newspaper
www.theartnewspaper.com

Art Review
www.artreview.com

Cabinet cultural magazine
www.cabinetmagazine.org

Circa Art Magazine
www.recirca.com

Contemporary
www.contemporary-magazines.com

Contexts
www.create-ireland.ie

Critical Inquiry
www.criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu

E-flux
www.e-flux.com/journal

Flash Art
www.flashartonline.com

Frieze
www.frieze.com/magazine

Frieze Art Journal
www.frieze.com

Journal of Arts and Communities
www.intellectbooks.co.uk

Journal of Visual Culture
www.sagepub.com/journals

Printed Project
www.visualartists.ie

Springerin
www.springerin.at

The Visual Artists New Sheet
www.visualartists.ie

The International Journal of Cultural Policy
www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles

Third Text
www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles

The Vacuum
www.thevacuum.org.uk

Variant
www.variant.org.uk

Image: Antony Gormley, Field for the British Isles, 1993.

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what is series 1 ?

Judging work, be it dialogical, relational or collaborative, on a scale from solidarity to service asks of the reader to reflect on the social dimension of participation and the material dimension of social practice from aesthetic/ political perspectives.

Brian Hand

What is Participatory and Relational Art? is the fourth in a series of talks and booklets which aim to provide a general introduction to key concepts and themes in Contemporary Art. *What is Participatory and Relational Art?* provides an overview of the context in which this emerging category of arts practice has developed. This is accompanied by an essay by **Brian Hand**, titled *A struggle at the roots of the mind: service and solidarity in dialogical, relational and collaborative perspectives within contemporary art.*