

Visual Enquiry 2

Research Proposal

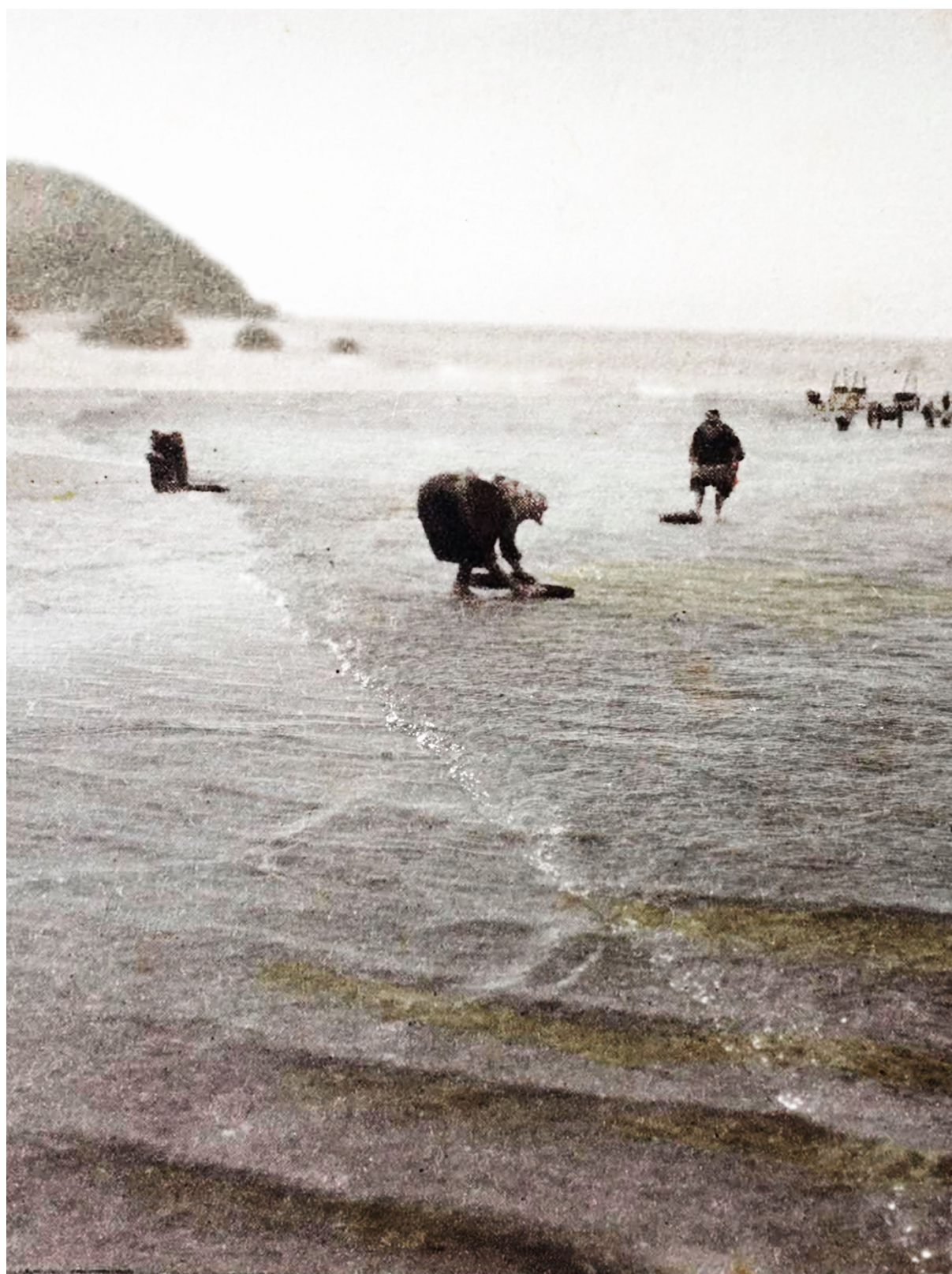
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BA Documentary Photography & Visual Activism

What I would like to propose as my major project research area is continuation of the work I have done throughout the last academic year. I wish to take the notion of '*Inheritance*' and use it as an area of research, combining my work through *Developing a Unique Voice, Visual Enquiry 1 and Contemporary Narratives* and aim to progress it further into one broader body of work. I feel as though it offers room for experimentation into a developing final outcome, with emphasis on potential installation exhibition ideas.

In relation to my work for *Contextual Studies* and my *Dissertation Proposal*, I think this plays a larger role in the development for this body of work, as it will be and has been directly led by research. What I wish to proceed to explore through my dissertation, is within the current situation, we have developed a reliance and relationship with the image and the landscape, which is unhealthy, unjust and defective. How do we as creative practitioners redefine the means in which the image is perceived and provide 'an alternative to the dominant culture's view of nature and expose social agenda's in order for us to become conscious of the ideological relationships and historical constructions of place.' (Lippard, 1995) What would be able not just inspire, but pressure neoliberal social and political transformations have put upon communal and artistic life, capture it and turn it into a form of visual activism? What type of photography, art and activism in the face of capital-induced ecological catastrophe and social disintegration, would create effective change?

These questions act as a purpose and driving force in my creative practise, I intend to pursue a project guided by this. My aim for the next year is to improve and harness my writing skills, experiment with different exhibition spaces and curatorial practises whilst working with different mediums; sculpture and moving image. As a starting point, I intend to look closely at my work for the Photobook and the ideas surrounding it and try to progress it further.





'INHERITANCE'

AREAS OF RESEARCH-

LANDSCAPE, PLACE, 'HOME', SOCIAL HISTORY, CULTURE, HERITAGE, FAMILY, TRADITION, THE FAMILY MEAL, THE KITCHEN TABLE, CULTURAL COOKING, COMMUNITY, FOOD HISTORY, FOOD SYSTEMS, FOOD AS ACTIVISM, VISUAL ACTIVISM, ART AS PROTEST, CURATORIAL ACTIVISM, DISCOURSE, PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY, INDUSTRIALIZATION, COLONIALISM, CAPITALISM, CONSUMERISM, SOCIO-CULTURAL BARRIERS, EDUCATION, SUSTAINABILITY, NATURAL-CULTURAL, REGENERATIVE, ENVIRONMENTAL, CLIMATE CHANGE, AFFECT, PSYCHOLOGICAL, MEMORY, INDEXICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, EXISTENTIALISM...

[THE POETIC IMAGE, MOVING IMAGE, SCULPTURE, LAND ART, EXHIBITION SPACE, INSTALLATION (AS ACTIVISM?), COLLECTIVE, COLLABORATION, SENSORY EXPERIENCE, SURREALISM, REVOLUTIONARY ART, IMAGE AND TEXT]

TARGET AUDIENCE- ENVIRONMENTALLY CONCERNED, ACTIVISTS, CREATIVES, CHANGEMAKERS?

HABITAT

A habitat is a place where an organism makes its home. A habitat meets all the environmental conditions an organism needs to survive. For an animal, that means everything it needs to find and gather food, select a mate, and successfully reproduce.

For a plant, a good habitat must provide the right combination of light, air, water, and soil.

The main components of a habitat are shelter, water, food, and space. A habitat is said to have a suitable arrangement when it has the correct amount of all of these. Sometimes, a habitat can meet some components of a suitable arrangement, but not all.

The amount of space an organism needs to thrive varies widely from species to species. For example, the common carpenter ant needs only a few square inches for an entire colony to develop tunnels, find food, and complete all the activities it needs to survive. In contrast, cougars are very solitary, territorial animals that need a large amount of space. Cougars can cover 455 square kilometres (175 square miles) of land to hunt and find a mate. A cougar could not survive in the same amount of space that a carpenter ant needs.

Plants need space, too. Coast redwood trees, like the ones in Redwood National Park in the U.S. state of California, can reach more than 4.5 meters (15 feet) in diameter and 106 meters (350 feet) in height. A tree that massive would not have enough space to grow and thrive in a typical community park or yard.

Space is not the same as range; the range of an animal is the part of the world it inhabits. Grassland, for example, is the habitat of the giraffe, but the animal's range is central, eastern, and southern Africa.

The availability of food is a crucial part of a habitat's suitable arrangement. For example, in the northern part of the U.S. state of Minnesota, black bears eat mostly plants, like clover, dandelions, and blueberries. If there were a drought, plants would become scarce. Even though the habitat would still have space (large forest), shelter (caves, forest floor), water (streams and lakes), and some food, it wouldn't have enough to eat. It would no longer be a suitable arrangement.

Too much food can also disrupt a habitat. Algae is a microscopic aquatic organism that makes its own food through the process of photosynthesis. Nutrients like phosphorous contribute to the spread of algae. When a freshwater habitat has a sharp increase in phosphorous, algae "blooms," or reproduces quickly. Algae also dies very quickly, and the decaying algae produces an algal bloom. The algal bloom can discolour the water, turning it green, red, or brown. Algal blooms can also absorb oxygen from the water, destroying the habitat of organisms like fish and plants. Excess nutrients for algae can destroy the habitat's food chain.

Water is essential to all forms of life. Every habitat must have some form of a water supply. Some organisms need a lot of water, while others need very little. For example, dromedary camels are known for their ability to carry goods and people for long distances without needing much water. Dromedary camels, which have one hump, can travel 161 kilometres (100 miles) without a drink of water. Even with very little access to water in a hot, dry climate, dromedary camels have a suitable arrangement in northern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

Cattails, on the other hand, are plants that grow best in wet areas, like marshes and swamps. Dense colonies of these tall, spiky plants grow directly in the mud beneath lakes, stream banks, and even neighbourhood ponds. A cattail habitat's suitable arrangement depends on water. Imagine a pond at the bottom of a dirt-covered cliff. If enough loose dirt slid down into the pond, it could fill up the pond and absorb the water, not leaving enough for the cattails to grow.

An organism's shelter protects it from predators and weather. Shelter also provides a space for eating, sleeping, hunting, and raising a family. Shelters come in many forms. A single tree, for example, can provide sheltered habitats for many different organisms. For a caterpillar, shelter might be the underside of a leaf. For a mushroom fungus, shelter might be the cool, damp area near tree roots. For a bald eagle, shelter may be a high perch to make a nest and watch for food.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/habitat/>

For ecologies

The time for modernism is over, in today's global conditions, it has become essential for us as a society to start looking at the bigger picture, and to start taking action.

Sustainism includes every aspect that we as social beings deal with, from food to social media. In this new style of culture complex and diverse connections between local communities are formed to create an interwoven 'web' of humanity. The term, introduced by Joost Elffers and Michiel Schwarz, is represented by a trefoil knot, a knot created by tying the loose ends of a common knot together, a sign of interconnectedness. This symbol explains how in sustainism everything is connected and loops together, a circle of life.



Sustainism

A New Modernism

Local produce will become more accessible and sustainable lifestyles will become the new norm. Sustainism is built on the 4 principles of sharing, localism, connectedness and proportionality. The term sustainism already suggests a connection to the word 'sustainability', however, sustainism adds the layer of global and local connections to each other as humans by utilizing and sharing the technological advancements we have made over the decades. Proportionality comes in when sustainist design takes into consideration the broader picture, but knows how to scale their work in order for it to serve the greater good in the long run. For sustainist design, artists should initiate ideas and concepts that evoke human emotion, ideas that are shareable and scaled to be manageable within the designated community. (Schwarz & Diana, 2013) The concept of sustainism challenges innovators and creators to find creative solutions to link everything in our communities together and close the circularity gap in our economy.

Think of a local approach to living in a global world. Information and technology is open source and accessible for everyone, but the physical materials you need to survive are sourced locally. Regressive, since living in a community that is self-sufficient seems almost ancient, while being progressive by including our technological advances as human beings to connect ourselves intellectually and combine our knowledge. (Elffers & Schwarz, 2010)

Challenges

Though this new ideology sounds like a very logical way of living in this new age, it obviously comes with its challenges. With population growing consistently and overproduction is exhausting natural resources, materials have become scarce. To create self-sufficient local communities with the capabilities of the earth and technology in this age is something that would take years, maybe even decades to develop and innovate as well as be viable with the climate's current state. (Verschuuren, Subramanian, & Hiemstra, 2014) The practical issues aside, to adapt this new model is not only a shift in the economic environment, it is also a social adaptation. Humans are social beings, through the course of history we have been conditioned to

expand our presence over the entire world and focus on what makes us individuals. Early in history, human existence was built on hierarchy and who was the strongest, though throughout time this idea switched by introducing personal freedom and equality between all lives. Obviously there is still a long way to go, for human equality to be recognized worldwide, it does seem like humans are evolving to not rely on a social scale, but rather to have freedom of expression.

Sustainism would require humans to act in favour of the greater good, rather than putting themselves first as it is accustomed today. (COMPAS, 2007)

Examples

An example of emerging sustainism is a platform called Amsterdam Smart City, an online platform connecting the citizens of the Dutch capital. Inhabitants can share their opinions on regulations, services etc. Municipalities and partners such as electricity providers can learn and network to optimize every resident's lifestyle. This shows a balance between locality, being that the app concerns the city of Amsterdam, and the global possibilities of the digital sphere. (Amsterdam Smart City, n.d.)

Another sustainist concept emerged in 2001 in Washington D.C., a program titled 'FabLab'. This initiative was introduced to research how information could be spread physically in underrepresented communities. A 'FabLab' is a small physical workspace that offers tools to create and learn. While the information and instructions to operate the machinery and tools in the workspace are shared within the online global community, the execution remains local and small scale. This open source program shows how communities can benefit from local spaces to produce small scale needs, while obtaining the knowledge from a global source. (Menichinelli, 2011)

Reflection

Taking everything into consideration, sustainism seems to be a quite simple approach to modern problems. However, it would take a lot of human adjusting and resource planning, for which, you need to have humanity on your side. In the examples mentioned, it shows that communities are still alive and actively looking for connections to optimize the collective lifestyle. Sustainism pushes for sustainability in a progressive way. It builds on our nature as social beings and our ability to share and innovate. Sustainism does challenge the current consumerist society, which is so ingrained in humans nowadays that it would be difficult to offer up an alternative that may seem more simplistic. Ultimately, sustainism is a term that was not 'invented' as much as it was given a name, as the balance between locality and global seems to be quite alive but in need of a collective boost. Reflecting on the term through the lens of my own life and the New Earth project, I learned that design does not always have to be artistic and ambitious in order to be effective. Solutions to modern problems can be very simple and accessible, it can actually be quite beneficial if it is. It is still important to try to evoke a sense of community with the design, to touch on what connects us as humans in order to inspire and motivate others. I think the principles of sharing, localism, connectedness and proportionality are aspects that I will often take into consideration in the future when I am thinking about design or other initiatives.

References

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- Verschuuren, B., Subramanian, S. M., & Hiemstra, W. (2014). Community Well-being in Biocultural Landscapes Are We Living Well? Practical Action Publication.

In last century, our world was designed around modernist ideas and values. This could be seen in our architecture, product design, business models, urban planning, and much more. With modernism came a fascination with technology, modes of industrial production, a focus on material goods, underpinned by a particular idea of progress. But the twenty-first century heralds a cultural shift. Sustainism, in our view, represents a new mind-set that, like modernism before it, will turn out to define how we see our world, what we value, and how we shape our living environment. It will become the new "operating context" for all of us. Our new culture.



ABOVE: Trefoil knot, the symbol for sustainism, expressing the cycle of life and interconnectedness.

Sustainism is much more than "going green," though it has some of its roots in the sustainability movement. It's as much concerned with our the internet, social media and open-source information. Amidst these global trends, we see a growing interest in what's local, for example in our food (think of the 6,000-plus farmers' markets in the U.S. alone, and growing). To put it simply, sustainism is where connectivity, new forms of localism and sustainable life styles meet.

The transition from modernism to sustainism also involves a shift in how we frame problems and look for solutions. Where modernism failed to account for complexity and diversity, sustainism takes them as its very premise. In the sustainist era everything is interconnected and interdependent. Our visual symbol for sustainism, the trefoil knot, expresses this idea. (It can be seen on the cover of our book.) The trefoil symbolizes the endless cycle of life and an interrelated world.

The metaphor for the new culture is the web; whether we speak about cities, food, production, media, knowledge or sustainable development, in sustainism, everyone and everything is linked. This is the culture of networks, sharing, borrowing and open exchange.



ABOVE: Cradle-to-cradle sustainist symbol.

It is also the culture of sustainable lifestyles. To preempt a frequently asked question: sustainability refers to the movement, sustainism denotes the new culture. By naming the emerging cultural era, we make it visible, we make it happen.

There are some fundamental shifts that we associate with sustainism, for example, how our shift in our perceptions space and time have changed. The internet in particular has given a new meaning to the local: almost every place in the world is globally connected, 24/7. We live in local worlds, but we are also global citizens. We see the emergence of a new type of "localism" as one of the hallmarks of sustainism. In the experience of many of us, global and local are no longer in opposition. The sustainist world is the world of the local farmer's market and Twitter, the pub and Facebook, the neighborhood and CNN. And "local" is no longer just a geographic marker; it has become a quality, a value in itself.

In the new era we also witness other shifts across many domains of society — in the way we address innovation and knowledge, our business models, urban planning, production methods (think of "cradle-to-cradle"), community building, food and much more. All of these shifts seem to point in the same direction. In this manner, sustainism can provide a unifying framework to find answers to the pressing issues of our time.

Sustainism has its own style and perspective: diverse rather than uniform; effectiveness instead of efficiency; networked instead of hierarchical. Sustainism stands for the perspective of long-term investment and appropriate speed, rather than "quick return" and "faster is better." From functionality to meaning, from space to place.

sustainist life =

sustainable x localist x

digital x global x

communityminded x

transparent x equitable x

handmade x hightech

x recyclable x diverse

ABOVE: A page from Sustainism Is the New Modernism.

Sustainism will give rise to new design criteria. "Do more with less" becomes the sustainist reply to the modernist "less is more." We will see more participatory design solutions and designs based on principles found in nature ("biomimicry" as it is called), while sustainism equally invites new combinations between "eco" and "hi-tech." We will move from the modernist credo "make it new" and the postmodern "use it," to the sustainist "revitalize it."

Sustainable life styles, the growing interest in the local, global communication, social media: all are concerned with culture. But this is not a countercultural movement, as in the 1960s and '70s. The imperative toward sustainism reflects a widespread global and local effort that we foresee will become mainstream. Even today, the "sustainability movement," which we view as part of the culture of sustainism, already involves more than 100 million people worldwide (or so estimates Paul Hawken, who has called it "the largest movement in the world").

The new culture we describe under the banner of "sustainism" poses a great challenge for designers, architects and planners as well as engineers, teachers and artists to shape our lives and living environments in this new era.). And at the same time the emergence of sustainism is to be seen as a call to action for entrepreneurs, businesses, community groups, governments, and non-profits to actively make space for the new culture and shape the future. What is called for is a new wave of innovation that takes sustainist criteria as its starting point — inclusive, socially available, ecologically responsible and locally oriented (but not provincial).

WHAT PSYCHOTHERAPY CAN DO FOR THE CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY CRISES

Apologies in advance, but I'm hoping that reading this will help you feel depressed – about biodiversity loss and our lack of progress over the climate crisis. The thing is, in these extreme circumstances, a bit of depression about the environment could be precisely what we need – it's the only sane response.

That humans are having an unsustainable impact on Earth may have become a familiar message – but it is still a difficult message to hear. It presents us with a complex challenge given our reluctance to face change. Environmental campaigner Gus Speth once said he used to think the biggest problems facing the planet were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. He believed that within 30 years, good science could address these problems. But, he continued:

I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with those we need a spiritual and cultural transformation. And we scientists don't know how to do that.

So who does know how to do that? Politicians? Economists? The problem with their solutions is the same problem that scientists face – they assume rational action from reasonable humans. But humans can be largely irrational. When it comes to the environment, we often function like well-meaning addicts, earnestly promising to quit polluting the seas, poisoning the air, exploiting the natural world – and then continuing to do exactly that.

A psychotherapeutic approach

So if we continue to look outwards for practical solutions, we will continue to fail. We also need to look inwards, at ourselves. And this is the job of psychotherapy – providing the emotional and relational maps to take us from catastrophe to transformation. As a member of the Climate Psychology Alliance (a group of academics, therapists, writers and artists) I believe that psychological understanding can help with the wide range of complex individual and cultural responses to the environmental crisis. Feelings such as anger, guilt, grief, terror, shame, anxiety, despair and helplessness are all appropriate reactions. But defences against these feelings – denial and disavowal – mean we have avoided taking the necessary action to address their cause. “Climate psychology” is a different kind of psychology. Rather than see these feelings as something to be “fixed” or “cured”, we see them as healthy understandable responses – human reactions that empathise directly with the planet. There is also value in understanding how grief, loss and mourning can shape our responses to climate change. For if we block out our emotions, then we are unable to connect with the urgency of the crisis – which may be one reason why we have so far failed to act sufficiently quickly.

A different picture

In practice, what we do in climate psychology may not look that different from other psychological approaches on the surface. What is different is what lies underneath – how we think, see, reflect and respond. This includes exploring the unconscious dynamics that get in the way of us facing climate change reality, and confronting our denial and apathy. By using our understanding of psychic pain to help people face ecological loss that is already happening, we legitimise their grief. And by adopting a “climate change lens” through which we can see how the crisis is increasingly shaping the world, and which can bring people to therapy, we help people understand their distress.

The result, if we are willing to engage, is what sustainability expert Jem Bendell calls “deep adaptation”. We can change the way we feel about the crises, bring about a new connection – and then act. In our work we are increasingly seeing relationship fractures and personal distress stemming directly from the environmental crisis. Teenagers, for example, who feel alienated from their parents because they don't share the same concerns about biodiversity loss. I have talked with children who say they feel unable to trust their parents because of the older generation's lack of action. I hear couples talk of marriages unable to bear the strain of one partner living in fear of the future, whilst the other places their faith in technology.

Using a climate psychology lens builds dialogue between these different positions. And through understanding and empathising with each position, people can begin to understand each other. After a climate psychology talk I gave recently, a woman who attended with her teenage daughter contacted me afterwards to say that on the way home they had their best conversation

in years. The parent had talked about her grief, guilt and fears that she could not protect her children. The daughter replied that she needed her mother's support to participate in the school climate strikes. They found common ground and a new relationship based on their fears and their need to take action together.

In cases of people suffering from eco-anxiety and similar issues, the hope is to find paths towards a new world shaped by a deepening understanding of our relationship with the planet and how our future is ultimately entwined with the survival of other creatures.

Then by using this understanding we can help navigate confusing, strange and frightening territories. Through acknowledging painful feelings, we can start to see them as holding transformational potential. It is this emotional growth that could save us. Depression is actually a step on the path that could lead back up to the surface.

As the American psychologist James Hillman said more than two decades ago:

Psychology, so dedicated to awakening the human consciousness, needs to wake itself up to one of the most ancient human truths: We cannot be studied or cured apart from the planet.

Caroline Hickman

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<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/23/us-farms-csa-food-coronavirus>

<https://sustainablefoodtrust.org/articles/we-still-need-alternatives-to-supermarkets-perhaps-now-more-than-ever/>

The massive expansion and dominance of supermarkets has had profound impacts on most aspects of our lives, sometimes positively, but certainly not always. By 2019, the traditional independent retailers made up just 5% of the entire food sector.

2019 share of UK food market:

	£ bn	%
Supermarkets and hypermarkets	106.3	54.9%
Convenience stores	41.4	21.4%
Discounters	24.5	12.7%
Online	11.6	6.0%
Other retailers	9.8	5.1%

Total Market 193.6

The rise of the supermarkets had a devastating impact on the local independent specialist food shops.

Butchers – in 1960, there were some [43,000 butcher's shops in the UK](#); by 2019, it was [nearer 6,000](#).

Fishmongers – in the late 1940s, there were around [8,000 fishmongers](#), and today there are [about 950](#).

Greengrocers – from [43,000 in 1950](#), by [2018 there were 2,500](#).

And, as the national economy grew, so [the average proportion of household income we spent on food dwindled from 33% in 1957 to 16% in 2019](#), although this masks significantly higher proportions for low income families.

Food as a Social Event

Past generations had a far better understanding of how their food was produced than we do and eating together was a major social event to be savoured. Being the first industrialised country, in the UK we have had more time to lose the folk memory of rural life and producing food, and with it the social aspect of eating together as families. We can see this in the average amount of time we spend eating during the day. [Long family mealtimes are a thing of the past](#) as they have been widely replaced by individual 'grazing' and syncopated family eating times. In the UK and US in particular, 'food is fuel', so you fill the tank as quickly as you can, and the social event of eating together as a family is largely lost.

A [recent study](#) compared national average time spent eating per day across a range of countries. Below, a few of these countries are compared with their national average BMI index, and their world obesity ranking, and the connections are quite stark.

Notable amongst the national data were:

Country	Time taken to eat/day	Average BMI (Body Mass Index)	OECD obesity ranking (1 = most obese)
France	2 hours 11 mins	25.0	107 th
Germany	1 hour 36m	26.6	97 th
UK	1 hour 18m	27.1	51 st
USA	1 hour 1m	28.9	16 th

The dangers of supermarket dominance

Some may say the loss of small, inefficient shops and farms is not really a problem – this is life. We no longer drive horses and carts, and some businesses always suffer when circumstances change. However, it is important to look at what we lose as a society when food suppliers are limited to a few large suppliers. For example:

Cutting of link between consumers and knowledge of food production

[Supermarket staff have limited knowledge of the foods they sell](#), when compared to the expertise developed over many years, and sometimes generations, in small local specialist shops. The supermarkets are sadly not sources of information and advice for consumers. They are loath to trumpet the nutritional or environmental benefits of one production system or food type over another.

Food miles

BBC Wales highlighted food miles in a memorable item where people outside a Tesco supermarket were shown some lamb chops from a farm 20 miles away. They were asked how far they thought the meat had travelled from the farm to the shop. The correct answer was around 250 miles, far more than most people guessed, due to the way the supermarkets' processing and distribution systems work.

Lack of choice

Large retailers supply great breadth of choice, but relatively little depth. Take apples for example. [Although 90% of traditional apple orchards have been lost since the 1950s, the UK still has around 2,500 native varieties of the 7,000 available worldwide](#). Yet of the 10 or so [apple varieties](#) which dominate the UK supermarket shelves, only 3 or 4 are British in origin. Whilst a nod is given

to native varieties in 'British Apples' packs, in reality this covers at most a few dozen varieties.

In the UK we have over 60 breeds of native sheep – the largest number of any country – but virtually all supermarkets sell merely '[Standard](#)' lamb. To the Victorians, mutton from animals over 2 years of age [was a superior meat](#), and yet no supermarkets sell mutton, or even 1 to 2 years old hogget. The Victorians also hotly debated where the sheep had fed and been reared, as they rightly believed that this affected the flavour of the meat, yet rarely are geographic origins disclosed on supermarket packs. The [fantastic variety of eating experiences](#) from our unique diversity of sheep meat from different ages, breeds and landscapes has been hidden from view due to the supermarkets' concentration on 'Standard' lamb.

Loss of crop and farm animal gene pools

The concentration of farm production to a [small range of varieties](#), dictated by a small group of supermarket buyers and international trade, [threatens the priceless gene pool](#) of our native crops and breeds. These offer us the ability to breed plants and animals for various characteristics which may be vital in the future as climate change takes hold. We lose these gene pools at our peril, but by growing and eating these diverse types of plants and animals, we can ensure their continued existence.

Added value

Mass market food manufacturers and major retailers make their money from adding value to basic raw foods. These are then strongly promoted at the expense of often more nutritive but less profitable un-processed foods. Sales of added-value meat, for example, has [increased by 20%](#) in the past 5 years, and is now worth £900 million. Ultra-processed foods (or UPF) now account for [more than half of all the calories eaten](#) in the UK and US. We buy these foods because time for cooking and eating has been lost to other activities, and we are prepared to pay more for someone else to prepare food for us. Consumption of many cheap but over-processed foods is now known to be [harmful to our health](#). Sales of added-value meat, for example, has [increased by 20%](#) in the past 5 years, and is now worth £900 million.

Loss of income to local, especially rural, economies

[Work by the New Economics Foundation](#) has shown that on a local level, economies benefit greatly from short, local food supply chains. The money

tends to stay within the community and is recirculated, boosting jobs, rather than being lost to corporate processors and retailers elsewhere in the country, or overseas.

Loss of infrastructure

As the main supermarket supply chains dominate, so we reach a critical point where the infrastructure for alternative systems of supply cease to be viable. In the 1930s there were over 30,000 abattoirs in the UK, with most towns and even villages having more than one. Today there are just [250 or so](#). Smaller local abattoirs are able to slaughter small numbers of animals for farmers or butchers to sell as fully traceable local meat. Over the past 10 years about a third of the remaining small abattoirs have closed. No small abattoirs means no fully traceable local meat, and once they're gone, that's it – the cost of establishing a small abattoir is significant.

Numbers of traditional wholesalers, including fruit and vegetables and fish, supplying the retail specialists, have also dwindled rapidly and are now at critical levels, threatening alternative supply routes to those of the supermarkets

Oligarchies

Just eight companies own the largest UK red meat abattoirs supplying most of the UK's supermarket meat. Only three are UK-based. Hence, there is just a handful of people, the supermarket category meat buyers, who buy some 75% of the meat sold in this country – this is surely a worrying situation. This excessive drive for economies of scale also applies to other foodstuffs. There are other dangers in this approach too, as the high incidence of coronavirus in large abattoirs has demonstrated.

These negative impacts do not apply to smaller, local producers and retailers. It is therefore important to keep both systems of food supply.

It is also important to understand how the supermarkets have become so dominant. They are superb experts in selling us their wares. They offer easy access, with free parking and handy trolleys; a large range of supplies under one roof; and attractive goods – and we now generally buy with our eyes. Importantly, they promote the image of 'cheap food' which is often a fallacy. When running my own organic meat business, we were often cheaper than supermarkets, and this is true of a range of independent food producers and

retailers. What the large retailers do sell is 'convenience' to a public which is short of time.

The Fight-back

Change is afoot. In recent years, we have seen a surge of interest in the story behind the food we eat. Whilst to many, food is still simply fuel (now even shamelessly sold in KFC 'Buckets'), increasingly people want to know where their food is from and how it was produced.

Farm shops, farmers markets, and some specialist food shops have seen strong growth, reflecting increasing interest in smaller-scale food producers and their rich variety of produce. The UK market for retail artisanal bakery products, for example, [is growing annually at 5%](#), when the overall bakery market has seen only a 2% increase. Significantly, mega out-of-town food stores have seen a decline in footfall, as shoppers look for smaller in-town shops and visit them more regularly.

Awful as it is, the coronavirus may be a pivotal moment, and leave at least one silver lining – a lasting resurgence of independently retailed food, and a shift away from supermarkets. Evidence is mounting that local, independent and organic retailers are seeing a significant increase in demand.

- A recent study has found that as a result of the lockdown [two in five Britons have chosen to use their local, independent shops and direct suppliers](#) more often than before lockdown.
- Independent butchers have greatly benefitted from a change in consumers' buying habits. Overall [sales of beef, for instance, are up by 27% since the virus struck, compared to 2019](#), but the figure is almost double that at high street butcher shops, [where sales have increased by 49%](#).
- Farm shops have seen a huge increase in demand, and many have struggled to keep up. [Some 92% of farm retailers in a recent survey](#) reported a 'significant' rise in new customers since lockdown rules began in March.
- Millions of British people have tried a vegetable box scheme or are buying direct from the farm, according to a [YouGov survey in April 2020](#). The virus outbreak has changed how the public value food as an essential, according to the Royal Society for the Arts and the Food Foundation and 38% say they are cooking more from scratch and 33% (representing 17 million people) are throwing away less food. Meanwhile,

The Food Foundation also found 6% – 3 million people – have tried a veg box scheme or ordered food from a local farm for the very first time. And [82% of box schemes now have waiting lists and are closed to new orders, with the average box scheme waiting list at 160](#). The largest box scheme has a waiting list of 6,700.

- Organic food has seen a recent surge in demand, with sales [increasing by 12.9%](#) in the year to November 2020, compared with an increase in non-organic foods of 8.9%, as more people eat at home.

It remains to be seen how permanent this change of shopping habits becomes, and it would not be sensible or even practical to suggest we should do away with supermarkets. They do have a useful purpose. However, we are in danger of having *only* supermarkets to buy food from if we, as consumers, [do not also buy from local and direct-sale food producers](#).

The good news is that we all have the power to save the fantastic diversity of British food for future generations. We simply need to buy from local specialist retailers or direct from producers. Maybe the coronavirus pandemic is the catalyst to permanently boost this trend. If so, it will not be a moment too soon.

How should economists think about biodiversity?

A new report for the British government lays out a framework

What is the contribution of nature to the economy? Students of economics are well acquainted with production functions, which work out how inputs like capital and labour combine to yield output. These functions make all sorts of assumptions, many of which economists know well (that the contributions of capital and labour are subject to diminishing returns, say). Others rarely get a thought: that a mix of inputs that generates output on Earth will not on Venus, for example. The breathable air, drinkable water and tolerable temperatures that allow humans to do everything they do, and the complex ecosystems that maintain them, tend to be taken for granted. This is more than a mere analytical oversight, reckons a new report on the economics of biodiversity commissioned by the British government, and produced by Partha Dasgupta of the University of Cambridge. By overlooking the role nature plays in economic activity, economists underestimate the risks from environmental damage to growth and human welfare.

The report features its own illustrative production function, which includes nature. The environment appears once as a source of flows of extractable resources (like fish or timber). But it also shows up more broadly as a stock of “natural” capital from which humans derive “regulating and maintenance services”: the work of environmental cycles that refresh the air, churn waste products into nutrients, and keep global temperatures hospitable, among other things. With this new production function in hand, economists can properly account for nature’s contributions to growth. Functions that omit nature misattribute its benefits to productivity, exaggerating human capabilities.

The inclusion of natural capital enables an analysis of the sustainability of current rates of economic growth. As people produce gdp, they extract resources from nature and dump waste back into it. If this extraction and dumping exceeds nature's capacity to repair itself, the stock of natural capital shrinks and with it the flow of valuable environmental services. Between 1992 and 2014, according to a report published by the un, the value of produced capital (such as machines and buildings) roughly doubled and that of human capital (workers and their skills) rose by 13%, while the estimated value of natural capital declined by nearly 40%. The demands humans currently place on nature, in terms of resource extraction and the dumping of harmful waste, are roughly equivalent to the sustainable output of 1.6 Earths (of which, alas, there is only the one).

To reduce these demands without slowing growth would be a monumental task. Between 1992 and 2014, Professor Dasgupta estimates, the efficiency with which humans transformed natural capital into gdp grew at about 3.5% a year. To stop natural capital declining by 2030 while maintaining current growth trends, however, would require growth in efficiency of about 10% a year.

Even these sorts of rough calculations fail to capture fully humans' potential vulnerability, because complex natural systems can flip from one equilibrium to another under pressure. The cost of restoring an ecosystem that has been destroyed can be larger than the value of the services it provided when healthy—assuming restoration is possible. Deforestation of the Amazon rainforest beyond some critical threshold is likely to cause an abrupt transformation of the forest into savannah, a change that may prove irreversible. Indeed, Professor Dasgupta argues that economists should acknowledge that there are in fact limits to growth. As the efficiency with which we make use of Earth's finite bounty is bounded (by the laws of physics), there is necessarily some maximum sustainable level of gdp.

This is a striking admission from an economist. For now, these ultimate limits to growth are not yet binding. There is still considerable room for efficiency to improve (in part, the review notes, because of government subsidies, worth 5-7% of global gdp, which encourage environmentally wasteful activities). But a more pressing worry is that activity pushes nature beyond critical thresholds—in terms of global temperatures, the chemistry of the oceans, the productivity of the soil, or something else—before humans are able to recognise the danger and react.

Down to earth

That economics stands to benefit from a better understanding of nature's contributions to activity seems clear enough. But whether a better understanding of the economics of biodiversity is essential to improving humans' relationship with nature is another question. Economists' work on climate change has yielded insights, for example, but it is less clear that the profession has improved the policy response.

Professor Dasgupta hints at this problem by appealing to the "sacredness" of nature, in addition to his mathematical models and analytical arguments. Clear thinking about nature can benefit from framing it in economic terms: as an asset and input to production, the overuse of which is a problem of incentives and property rights. Building the political will to prevent irreparable damage to the environment, though, may require an appeal to values that are beyond the purview of economics. ■

https://www.ted.com/talks/r_alan_brooks_when_the_world_is_burning_is_art_a_waste_of_time_feb_2021#t-550756





A lens on sustainability
Series 2

Cambio is an ongoing investigation conducted by Studio Formafantasma into the extraction, production and distribution of wood products, commissioned by Serpentine Galleries. The website collects the research outcomes and compiles an archive of documents, videos, books and articles on the topic.

Cambio, from the medieval Latin cambium, 'change, exchange', is an ongoing investigation conducted by Formafantasma into the governance of the timber industry. The evolution of this form of commerce over time, and its tentacular expansion across the globe, has made it difficult to regulate. It grew out of the bioprospecting that took place throughout colonial territories during the nineteenth century, becoming one of the largest industries in the world both in terms of the revenue it generates and the impact it has on the planet's biosphere.

The earliest objects in the exhibition are samples of rare hardwoods first exhibited in the Great Exhibition of 1851, a few hundred metres from this building, which represent trees logged to the point of extinction. The newest are the exhibition display furniture and seating designed by Formafantasma, all of which were made from a single tree blown over in a storm in northern Italy in 2018. Contained in every piece of wood is an archive of climatic change and the movement of natural materials around the world.

Cambio also references the cambial layer, a membrane that runs around the trunk of trees, producing wood on the inside, a record of the tree's past, and bark on the outside, enabling it to keep growing. Like the rings of a tree, the central spaces of the exhibition present data and research in the form of interviews, reference materials and two films made by Formafantasma in response to their research, while the perimeter spaces offer a series of case studies that provide insight into the way wood is sourced and used. Each of these investigations represents a collaboration with experts from the fields of science, conservation, engineering, policymaking and philosophy. Together, they move from a microscopic analysis of wood and its ability to store carbon dioxide, to a metaphysical understanding of trees as living organisms.

This multidisciplinary exhibition highlights the crucial role that design can play in our environment, and its responsibility to look beyond the edges of its borders. The future of design can and must attempt to translate

emerging environmental awareness into a renewed understanding of the philosophy and politics of trees that will encourage informed, collaborative responses.

The exhibition opens with two pieces that introduce the physical matter of wood and its properties; a two-screen projection, and two sections of a tree trunk. Together, they offer a re-evaluation of trees – as sources of information, constantly recording global climate change, as the solution for mitigating these changes by storing carbon dioxide as they grow, and as a warning against over-management and monocultured forests that are more vulnerable to intense weather events. The smell, developed by smell researcher and artist Sissel Tolaas, evokes the wet earth and flora of a forest, offering an immersive reminder of what is at stake when we lose this environment.

Constructed in the format of a visual essay, this film investigates how the industry of timber has evolved over time. It asks how a networked understanding of materials can be applied to a more holistic approach to design, and draws connections between timber's physical materiality and the abstract but pervasive conditions of exploitation, colonialism, and consumerism.

The film starts with the appearance of primordial plants on Earth, their evolution into trees, and the subsequent flourishing of human life across the planet. It continues with the global expansion of the timber industry in conjunction with the European imperialist agenda, and its later shift towards the development of sustainable forestry practices and environmental conservation.

Shot in a former Italian plantation for paper production, it makes use of chroma key compositing – a process by which it is possible to 'layer' images over existing footage by introducing green screens into the frame while shooting, and collaging other images or footage in later. Various different colours have been used in television and film to achieve this effect, but green has become one of the most commonly used – as with most technologies – due to human features. The human eye evolved to differentiate movement and depth against the green of the forest, and what has become an instinctive disregard for flora in favour of the potentially dangerous fauna has been called

‘plant blindness’. Here, the forest is never a background – it is the subject matter and focus of the film.



One side of this central space is dedicated to a film that focuses on the governance of the timber industry and how this is structured today, touching upon the major European and global regulations and regulatory bodies involved in it. The four reading points on the other side, meanwhile, have been designed by Formafantasma, and offer direct access to a website that holds reference materials collected by the design studio over the course of the past eighteen months. These include filmed interviews with the specialist collaborators that informed the projects on display in this exhibition, reading materials, reference images and links form a living archive of the designers’ research-led practice. Together, the resources in this space aim to offer a greater level of transparency, both in the research and thinking of design practice, and in the structure of a global industry.

The film *Seeing the wood for the trees* addresses the current state of the timber industry, showing images and documents set against the forest floor and also using the green screen technique that was employed for *Cambio*, shown in the next room. The text of the voiceover was conceived in conversation with Formafantasma and written by Vanessa Richardson of the European Investigation Agency. Organisations like the EIA fight against the practice of illegal logging and to uphold the principles of sustainable forestry using international certification systems such as the FSC and PFSC.

Like the film in the space next door, *Seeing the wood for the trees* employs green screen, or chroma key compositing, to illustrate the text, but offers only the forest floor as a background; the viewpoint of the camera, pointing straight down, echoes the film's discussion of forest governance 'from above'.

<https://vimeo.com/394186750>



Notes on metamodernism

Timotheus Vermeulen^{1*} and Robin van den Akker²

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The ecosystem is severely disrupted, the financial system is increasingly uncontrollable, and the geopolitical structure has recently begun to appear as unstable as it has always been uneven.¹ CEOs and politicians express their “desire for change” at every interview and voice a heartfelt “yes we can” at each photo-op. Planners and architects increasingly replace their blueprints for environments with environmental “greenprints”. And new generations of artists increasingly abandon the aesthetic precepts of deconstruction, para-taxis, and pastiche in favor of aesthetic notions of reconstruction, myth, and metaxis. These trends and tendencies can no longer be explained in terms of the postmodern. They express a (often guarded) hopefulness and (at times feigned) sincerity that hint at another structure of feeling, intimating another discourse. History, it seems, is moving rapidly beyond its all too hastily proclaimed end.

Nicholas Bourriaud’s suggestion, altermodernism, is probably the most well-known conception of the latest discourse. However, it also appears to be the least understood. In response to the exhibition of the same name Bourriaud curated at Tate Britain in 2009, Andrew Searle reported in *The Guardian* that “Postmodernism is dead . . . but something altogether weirder has taken its place”.¹⁰ Similarly, the art critic for *The Times*, Rachel Campbell-Johnston, testified that “Post-modernism is so last year but [that] its replacement . . . is all over the shop”.¹¹ Bourriaud’s accompanying essay invites a similar reaction: the precise meaning of altermodernism is as slippery and evasive as the structure of the argument is unclear. As we understand it, Bourriaud ultimately defines altermodernism as a “synthesis between modernism and post-colonialism”.¹² According to Bourriaud, this synthesis is expressed, respectively, in heterochronicity and “archipelagraphy”, in “globalized perception” as well as in nomadism, and in an incorporation and/or affirmation of otherness as much as in the exploration of elsewhere.

Many of Bourriaud’s observations appear to be spot-on. The developed world has extended*and is still in the process of expanding*far beyond the traditional borders of the so-called West. Bourriaud argues that this development has led to a heterochrony of globalized societies with various degrees of modernity and a worldwide archipelago without a center; to globally intersecting temporalities and historically interrelated geographies. Consequently, he justly asserts, our current modernity can no longer be characterized by either the modern discourse of the universal gaze of the white, western male or its postmodern deconstruction along the heterogeneous lines of race, gender, class, and locality. He suggests that, instead, it is exemplified by globalized perception, cultural nomadism, and creolization. The altermodernist (artist) is a homo viator, liberated from (an obsession with) his/her origins, free to travel and explore, perceiving anew the global landscape and the “terra incognita” of history.

Bourriaud’s conception of altermodernism is at once evocative and evasive; it is as precise in its observations as it is vague in its argumentation. However provocative his writing may be therefore, it is also problematic. For instance, his notion of a “globalized perspective” is somewhat difficult, for it implies a multiplicity and scope of (simulacral) vision neither phenomenologically nor physically possible (it appears to us to be more appropriate to speak of a “glocalized perception”, in which both the a priori of situation and situatedness are acknowledged). Similarly, his intriguing account of a progressive creolism is opposed to the retrospective multiculturalism of the artworks he illustrates it with. And his description of the restless traveler and the Internet junky as embodiments of altermodern art also seem rather anachronistic. For that matter, Saatchi’s (long the personification of the postmodern, late capitalist art made flesh) recent shift away from the Young British Artists toward contemporary artists from the Middle- and Far East is far more telling*precisely because it implies an interest in a variety of “glocalized perceptions.”

The main problem with Bourriaud's thesis however, is that it confuses epistemology and ontology.

'Ontology is studying the structure of the nature of reality or the nature of exists and, epistemology is studying the potentiality of the knowledge of human being. Ontology is about Being that exists as self-contained or independent of human. But epistemology is about human cognition.'

Bourriaud perceives that the form and function of the arts have changed, but he cannot understand how and why they have changed. In order to close this critical gap, he simply assumes (one could call this the "tautological solution") that experience and explanation are one and the same. For Bourriaud, heterochronicity, archipelagraphy, and nomadism are not merely expressions of a structure of feeling; they become the structures of feeling themselves. And, indeed, it is because he mistakes a multiplicity of forms for a plurality of structures, that his conception of altermodernism*as expressed in the irregularity of the exhibition and the inconsistency of his writing*"is all over the shop", never becomes wholly comprehensible let alone convincing.

Bourriaud perceives, say, seven types of fire-works, in seven kinds of disguises: one is red, one yellow, one blue, one is circular, one angular, and so on. But he cannot see that they are all produced by the same tension: an oscillation between metals, sulfurs, and potassium nitrates. We will call this tension, oscillating between*and beyond*the electropositive nitrates of the modern and the electronegative metals of the postmodern, metamodern.

Performatist works are set up in such a way that the reader or viewer at first has no choice but to opt for a single, compulsory solution to the problems raised within the work at hand. The author, in other words, imposes a certain solution on us using dogmatic, ritual, or some other coercive means. This has two immediate effects. The coercive frame cuts us off, at least temporarily, from the context around it and forces us back into the work. Once we are inside, we are made to identify with some person, act or situation in a way that is plausible only within the confines of the work as a whole. In this way performatism gets to have its postmetaphysical cake and eat it too. On the one hand, you're practically forced to identify with something implausible or unbelievable within the frame*to believe in spite of yourself*but on the other, you still feel the coercive force causing this identification to take place, and intellectually you remain aware of the particularity of the argument at hand. Metaphysical skepticism and irony aren't eliminated, but are held in check by the frame.²³

The leading American art critic Jerry Saltz also has observed the surfacing of another kind of sensibility oscillating between beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes:

I'm noticing a new approach to artmaking in recent museum and gallery shows. It flickered into focus at the New Museum's "Younger Than Jesus" last year and ran through the Whitney Biennial, and I'm seeing it blossom and bear fruit at "Greater New York," MoMA P.S. 1's twice-a-decade extravaganza of emerging local talent. It's an attitude that says, I know that the art I'm creating may seem silly, even stupid, or that it might have been done before, but that doesn't mean this isn't serious. At once knowingly self-conscious about art, unafraid, and unashamed, these young artists not only see the distinction between earnestness and detachment as artificial; they grasp that they can be ironic and sincere at the same time, and they are making art from this compound-complex state of mind*what Emerson called "alienated majesty".²⁴

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Self-Reliance

I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. Always the soul hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instill is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,-that is genius.

Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be universal sense; for always the inmost becomes the outmost-and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what they thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. It is not without pre-established harmony, this sculpture in the memory. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. Bravely let him speak the utmost syllable of his confession. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. It needs a divine man to exhibit anything divine. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no invention, no hope.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connexion of

events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the Eternal was stirring at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not pinched in a corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but redeemers and benefactors, pious aspirants to be noble clay under the Almighty effort let us advance on Chaos and the Dark.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of our own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within? My friend suggested,—"But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the devil's child, I will live then from the devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways....

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible Society, vote with a great

party either for the Government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,-under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are. And of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life. But do your thing, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blindman's buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? . . . Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four not the real four: so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the prison uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history; I mean "the foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we do not feel at ease, in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved but moved by a low usurping willfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face, and make the most disagreeable sensation; a sensation of rebuke and warning which no brave young man will suffer twice.

For non conformity. the world whips you with its displeasure.... It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

The other terror that scares us from self trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loath to disappoint them.

But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this monstrous corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself; what then?

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Out upon your guarded lips! Sew them up with packthread, do. Else if you would be a man speak what you think today in words as hard as cannon balls, and tomorrow speak what

tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said today. Ah, then, exclaim the aged ladies, you shall be sure to be misunderstood! Misunderstood! It is a right fool's word. Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.'

The objective is for the system to survive or be replaced by a new system. In art, the use of the term resilience in the context of art therapies and community work often points to survival tactics in the context of personal crisis or systemic failures. The objective is not to save the system, but develop the ability of "letting go and moving on," 28 to nurture well-being of individuals, groups, communities, and people. In other words, restoring stability by surviving despite systemic troubles and personal obstacles. The aim of regaining, preserving, or improving stability is what sets the idea of resilience most clearly apart from the idea of resistance that is linked to disruption. In this book the authors explore how the idea of resilience might be helpful in rearticulating the ways in which the arts have realigned with activism since the 1980s, and how working with and within a neoliberal order recalibrates the aesthetic tactics and strategies for engaging with politics through art. Perhaps paradoxically, the gradual stripping are made accountable for their legitimization has also carved out opportunities to assert their relevance in social terms. Despite the dominance of an economic frame, art can also opt to emphasize its social significance and still comply with the neoliberal logics of use value. The imperative of societal impact, then, seems to have replaced the more radical mission of political change that characterized engaged art in the 1960s and 1970s. This alludes to a shift in thinking about art's relation to politics, we suggest, one that moves steadily away from resistance and towards resilience. Both originate in art's ability to nurture and foster people's political imagination, but where the former is fundamentally oppositional and embraces what Halberstam has called "a truly political negativity," 29 the latter can be more diffuse in its political posture.

Resilience's rise in popularity in the past decade did not increase coherence across the term's uses. Resilience thinking occurs in a variety of societal fields and academic disciplines, and despite manifest similarities, there are also distinct differences. 41 Some correlate with the scales to which the term can be extended; addressing resilience of individuals or singular objects implies a different outlook than concern for resilience on a system level. Brown summarizes the widespread discontent with the term resilience that followed in the wake of its popularity as follows: "First, there is the failure to recognize resilience as socially contingent,

rarely addressing the question of ‘resilience for whom?’; second, its mainstream usage is conservative, focused on the persistence of a ‘system’; third, it focuses on a system which is disturbed by external or exogenous forces, so it underplays the internal, endogenous and social dynamics of the system.”⁴² Resilience, she argues, tends to overlook power relations and politics. The use of the term has become increasingly vague, and the way it traveled from scientific concept to normative cultural idea is problematic precisely because “it has become entangled and co-opted by neoliberal modes of governance exacerbating and accentuating its essential conservatism.”⁴³ The theme of resilience emerged from the concerns of societies fixated on risk.⁴⁴ The widespread interest in resilience can be seen as indicative of severe societal anxiety about systemic crises, human-made and natural disasters. This anxiety is reflected in visual culture; consider the abundant tales about the end of the world, natural hazards, pandemic outbreaks, and all sorts of supernatural incarnations of pending doom. Survival films are particularly fashionable. The ubiquity of resilient characters in contemporary visual culture more generally is both historically related to the dominance of character-driven, goal-oriented storytelling, and symptomatic of the insecurities and vulnerabilities of our times. The fascination with resiliency on screen, I contend, represents a double anxiety of the devastating effects of disruptive external forces (systemic crises) as well as of personal risk and vulnerability in the context of neoliberal governance and austerity policies. While the arts play an important role in tolerating our societal anxieties, consumption by itself does not engage the political imagination in a radical way. On the contrary, normative interpretations of resilience are appropriated to support conservative political agendas that seek to maintain the status quo. The notion of resiliency is used to hold individuals, groups, and communities personally responsible for their fortunes; they are called upon to be flexible and capable of bouncing back from adversity. The resilient characters in our various cases all comply with the demands of a neoliberal ideal of self-management; they struggle, adapt, and survive.

In these two art films the protagonists are shown enduring severe but everyday forms of adversity: the stigma of disfigurement and uncertainty of livelihood. Their antagonists are not found in brutal wilderness or men’s beast-like conduct in combat, but in the common villainy within our socio-economic systems. Compared to the colonizers, soldiers, and explorers of the survival films, these are marginal characters who already occupied vulnerable positions before the films’ plots commenced. It is the women, moreover, who are most at risk and who have to learn how to bend endlessly.⁴⁸ Resilience in the feminine sense, then, appears to be what is left for those who lack a position of power. Both masculine and feminine forms of resilience unmistakably point to the pervasiveness of neoliberal forms of governance that require individuals to exercise control over the self. None of the films discussed challenges that norm; they speak to us about individual responsibility and the need to develop resources to cope with adversity and

overcome whatever life will throw at us. If art has therapeutic potential, as Alain de Botton and John Armstrong proposed in *Art as Therapy*, and “should help us to better endure and enjoy our lives,”⁴⁹ a key lesson to be learned from these resilience-themed films is the one readily available in the self-help literature. “Accepting responsibility for our problems is thus the first step to solving them,” F*ck author Manson states.⁵⁰ This gives rise to the question whether resilience thinking can be utilized at all by artists seeking to cultivate our political imagination and nurture hope for structural and perhaps even systemic change.

These names become the scaffolding for Lütticken’s question: “But where does the decline of old classes and the emergence of new classes or micropolitical class-like formations—perhaps on the basis of gender or race—leave class as a project, possessing historical agency?”⁹ This issue of class is crucial, but the question’s formation, laid on top of the near-absence of women in his paper, provokes a number of counter-questions: what has happened to feminism (“as a project”?) if an article exploring revolutions in culture and radical thinking can almost forget to include women? What has happened to sexual politics or the analysis of white privilege if discussions of gender and race are potentially to be reduced to the jargonistic category of micropolitics? Is gender not the macropolitics that dances through every single other politics, as Spivak points out when she writes that “gender is the last word. Figure out the double binds there, simple and forbidding”?¹⁰ What has happened to radical thinking if it is now acceptable to be so blatantly sexist in print? Is feminism “so last at the hand of male authors”?¹¹ I deliberately place the feminist-political subject and the gendered-male author in an antagonistic relationship here in order then to go back to the questions raised by Foucault:

What are the modes of existence of this discourse: where has it been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for himself [sic]? What are the places in it where there is room for possible subjects? Who can assume these various subject functions? And behind all these questions, we would hear hardly anything but the stirring of an indifference: What difference does it make who is speaking?

“Feminism is at stake in how we generate knowledge; in how we write, in who we cite,” continuing: “Citation is feminist memory ... Citations can be feminist bricks: they are the materials through which, from which, we create our dwellings.”³⁵ The dwellings here, the brick walls, as Ahmed would say, are antithetical to feminist politics. Feminist memory has no home in these texts. This has profound implications for their readers being able to develop radical politics of visibility and of the making of, understanding, and being in visual cultures. Furthermore, women, who are at best a brief shadow in these texts, have no home in them. One

conclusion is that these texts are as irrelevant to those who identify as women and to those who have feminist politics as women are to the writers of these texts. *** A part of the following quotation emphasized in italics, from Stuart Hall, was supplied by the editors of this book in their outline to the authors of chapters. Coming from Hall's introduction to a book of his collected essays about Thatcherism, it is a slightly wry comment on the voluble parties and groups to the left of the Labour Party in 1980s UK politics. The whole paragraph from which the quote comes is worth studying in full: I have spent more time in this brief introduction trying to set out the essential starting-points in my analysis of Thatcherism than I have given to the crisis of the left: but that is because, analytically, the two cannot be separated. I have come to a particular view about at least the elements of a strategy of renewal on the left because I think I understand what constitutes Thatcherism as not simply a worthy opponent of the left, but in some deeper way its nemesis, the force that is capable in this historical moment of unhinging it from below. Thus, what I say about the crisis of the left is a sort of mirror-image of what I say about Thatcherism. The only way of genuinely contesting a hegemonic form of politics is to develop a counter-hegemonic strategy. But this cannot, in my view, be done if we go on thinking the same things we have always thought and doing the same things we have always done — only more so, harder and with more “conviction”. It means a qualitative change: not the recovery of “lost ground” but the redefinition, under present conditions, of what the whole project of socialism now means.

Protest about and analysis of the exclusion of women is of course, far from a new matter in the women's movement, with cries for 50 percent inclusion on grounds of fairness and equality being regularly heard from the suffrage movement onwards. My protest here, however, is not simply on “common-sense” grounds of fairness and equality: it is on the basis of the politics that are necessary in this moment. It is as urgent now as it has ever been to build feminist political strategy that is informed by good sense—the rise of the far right supports a series of “strong leaders” who are demonstrating how fragile democracy and inclusive human rights can be. This urgency reverberates in our corner of the artworld, which intersects with political thinking. Theory based upon omission of women, misreading of representations, or lack of attention to feminist practices will never allow for the development of resistant or revolutionary practices that are effective. Theory that recognizes that it is prefigured by practice and therefore both tests practice and tests itself against practice will allow us to develop feminist tactics and visual activism that are increasingly effective in practice. If our collective thinking still admits such egregious omissions as I have identified here, then our practices will not be sufficient for the formidable task in hand.

what forms do the cultural politics of opposition take, and how are artist-activists materializing the images and sounds of emancipation and decolonization against capitalism's rapacious commodification of anything and everything?

They also identify and cultivate modes of resilience—at once conceptual, social, material, and political—grounded in grassroots mutual-aid practices, where aesthetics connects to and inspires social movement power in resistance to extractive capital. In doing so, these practices both reveal complex causalities and effects of global extractivism and propose forms of movement-building and solidarity with those on the front lines of opposition.

The video installation *Crossings* visualizes nothing less than the workings of extractivism, the dominant paradigm of advanced capitalism. According to theorists Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, extractivism identifies both historical and current modes of wealth accumulation based upon the withdrawal of raw materials and life forms from the planet's surface, depths, and biosphere in the production of financial value, which run in coordination with expansive politico-economic and socio-technological systems pledged to its operations. ³ Fundamentally, extractivism comprises a calculus of accumulation by dispossession, to use the terms of David Harvey, an accumulation without corresponding deposit (except in the form of waste, disease, and death), which transforms whatever it touches—be that mines, forests, rivers, oceans, or human and nonhuman life—into economic value, employing whatever means at its disposal, including machinery, architecture, labor, finance, logistics, and media.

Extractivism consequently designates a common motivating logic of institutions, museums, universities, corporations, and states, organizing their trade deals, social forms, labor policies, data mining, energy systems, and technologies. As a global formation, "the 'new

urban frontier' is continually opening in diverse contexts, prompted by the appropriation and expropriation of spaces, values, infrastructures, and forms of life that are submitted to capitalist valorization.” 6

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pAqy4U0xjg>'s work consists of complex cinematographic cartographies that assume the form of video installations. Introduced to video by Nam June Paik, she went on to elaborate the medium's philosophical relation to time, memory, geography, and subjectivity, notably in her long-term collaboration with sociologist and philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato.

Since the late 1990s, the artist's practice has been characterized by a unique relationship between research and the narration of political geographies, on the one hand, and her use of the nonnarrative properties of moving images, as geographies of affects and intensities, on the other. This has resulted in far-reaching explorations of the mnemonic landscapes of twentieth-century Europe, imperialist violence as seen through the prism of migratory experience, and deviant, minoritarian, and resistant subjectivities. Her narrative method insists on a subterranean collective memory of imperial violence and fascism. This shared history constitutes a commonality which is permanently endangered by the segmentation of memory and imagination through neo-imperial, neoliberal, and reactionary ideology.

The groundbreaking video-essay *Passing Drama* (1999), for example, deals with the memory of political refugees deported from Turkey to Greece in the 1920s, many of whom (including members of Melitopoulos's family) experienced forced labor under the Nazi regime and repeated displacements thereafter. The film renders remembrance and forgetting as rhythmic structures through the interweaving of collective memory, subjectivity,

and time. The moving image is linked to movement in space—a method of research and image-production that maps geography and psychology onto each other to reveal a different political imaginary.

Recent work by the artist, who was born in Munich in 1961, traces the geopolitical history of experimental forms of psychiatry tied to the struggle against fascism and disciplinary terror. This research is realized as audio-visual cartographies of what the artist describes as the “secret coding of communication of minority cultures,” as well as concepts such as “machinic animism” through which these codings, like the musical refrains of memory, can come to the fore. The revolutionary psychiatric practice and political activism of Félix Guattari provides a foil for Melitopoulos’s engagement with the current neoliberal onslaught on the social fabric, as manifested in the Greek crisis.

—Anselm Franke

According to this information, again global in character, taxes are weaponized in an asymmetrical class war. 8 Politics become reduced to a massive police operation, as multitudes lose faith in representative systems and, not surprisingly, enviro-economic structural adjustments are accompanied by the gradual withdrawal of civil liberties. At the same time, democracy, as a political project of popular sovereignty, regulatory authority, and accountability, becomes increasingly hollowed out by corporate power, economic inequality, and corruption, as activism becomes increasingly subject to control, repression, and illegality. 9 Indeed, environmentalists are exposed to growing state violence and extrajudicial killings, as dramatized by the case of Berta Cáceres in Honduras, who joined with the Indigenous Lenca people in waging a grassroots campaign that successfully pressured Chinese state-owned Sinohydro, the world’s largest dam builder, to pull out of the Agua Zarca Dam project. She is one of thousands of activists murdered recently in a country operating under the US-supported 2009 deposal of democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya. More, her case forms part of an international trend of increasing levels of state and corporate violence visited upon environmentalists, Indigenous activists, and independent journalists opposed to extractivism’s world order. 10

In proliferating instances, aesthetic practices themselves shift character and modulate within this geopolitical framework, as the artistic blurs with social movements, producing an expanded field of artistic sensibility with cosmopolitical scope and collective resilience, focused on the formation of liberated values, and joined in contexts where nothing less is at stake than a contemporary war of the worlds. 14 Resilience, in the ecological context, measures the capacity of complex systems to organize themselves at different scales, to recover from the unpredictable and anticipated shocks of environmental breakdown, and to withstand extreme weather events and habitat destruction. 15 Activists and social movements are also building capacities of resilience, but not as a neoliberal form of sustainability foregrounding economic dynamism and preserving inequalities, or again as a mode of individual survivalism within the context of extreme libertarian social breakdown. Rather, they are defining resilience as the practice of collective solidarity and mutual aid in the face of growing risk produced by fossil capital, where resilience is a capacitation machine working against the structural debilitations of environmental violence, where environment is not merely biophysical, but socio-political and techno-economic. 16 If resilience takes on aesthetic tones, then it refers to the expanded creative zones of appearance and sensibility where collective solidarity and mutual aid are expressed, mediated, and cultivated through images and sounds, stories and affects.

<https://vimeo.com/90098625>

Part of an extensive research-based video practice that has investigated other such sites of extractivism—including Forest Law , 2014, co-developed with Paulo Tavares, which examines petrocapiatist drilling in the Ecuadorian Amazon and Indigenous resistance to it that adopts a rights-of-nature defense, and Egyptian Chemistry , which considers water politics along the Nile and how water engineering relates to local agro-ecologies, the hydropower of farmer collectives, and revolutionary politics 21 —Biemann’s video Deep Weather provides aerial shots of the vast oil fields in the Athabasca River region. Narrated by the artist in a whispered voice-over (or rather, a hushed and humbled voice-under), the audio track speculates about the geological impacts of these corporate activities both locally and globally.

It’s difficult to answer these questions, and to clearly separate hope from despair, especially when the topologies of revolt and normalization, desertion and capture,

are so complexly intertwined, and where the effects and outcomes of these events are never simply punctual or secure. What is clear is that we need a transnational movement answering and pre- power, operating within and between nation-states that no longer function solely according to the logics of democratic representation and accountability, as is shown in Melitopoulos's *Crossings*. "Ultimately, the only way to begin dismantling imperialist relations of domination and truly liberate the new debt colonies from their economic subjugation is for the working classes and social movements of both the debtor and the creditor countries to become aware of their shared interest in building a unified front against the impositions of global finance," writes Jerome Roos.⁴² It's exactly this need for internationalist solidarities that the work of the above activist-artists show as pressing. In them, we see some of the transnational social energies uniquely capable of challenging and transforming petrocapiatalist systems of governance. In these blackouts of fossil and financial power, we see the signs of radical defiance, a call to revolt, desertion, and insurrection.



Traditionally associated with trauma and childhood development, resilience refers to the ability to positively adapt to adversity, rebound from tragedy, and rebuild that which has been damaged or destroyed. 1 Initially limited to the study of individual psychology, over the last 40 years resilience has expanded to include the family, community, environment, and, more recently, culture. Today, resilience is “viewed in terms of an interplay of risk and protective processes over time, involving individual, family, and larger sociocultural influences.” 2 This more expansive notion of resilience, and its reliance on community, has made it a touchstone for artists and curators interested in ways in which aesthetic theories and practices can influence society, contribute to inclusivity, and combat systemic crisis. Practicing what has been termed alternately artistic activism, community-based art, and relational aesthetics, socially engaged artists and curators offer new and sometimes revolutionary responses to the world that seek to support communities and cultivate resilience. 3 How do the arts cultivate resilience and help us to overcome failures, to transform askew strivings.” 4 Although Lewis is referring to the ways in which successful people use professional setbacks as motivation, research shows that the impulse to rebound from failure is strongest among those with robust social networks. 5 “Far from signifying weakness, interdependence with others can provide a foundation for resilience [because] social support is associated with resilience to stress, and positive physical and mental health,” 6 trauma expert Steven M. Southwick states. The arts provide aesthetic and therapeutic experiences for individuals, but collaborative artistic practices foster resilience by literally bringing people together with a common purpose. A significant way the arts perform resiliency is by making space for the appreciation of alternative experiences and viewpoints. This may come from the diversity of participants, whether based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality, or it may result from the variety of objects, media, and histories under study. As noted by curator Nato Thompson, we should “take stock of the capacities and resources of everyone involved in order to construct worlds collectively. Building new worlds requires patience, compromise, and conviviality. It is a process of working in the world and with people.” 7 Unlike individual studio practices, “[i]n which artists are focused primarily on developing the formal or aesthetic qualities of their work, with the goal of creating works of art that are then presented to an audience,” socially engaged artists work collectively to create “an intentional social impact, and the process of developing the work—often in concert with community members—may even be the ‘product’.” 8

In socially engaged artistic practices, the work is not made for individual satisfaction, but for the good of the community, with the artist-curator acting as a facilitator of a co-creative and interdependent process. By collaborating with others, we learn empathy and acceptance, and by studying objects and histories removed from our own personal experiences, we witness cultural diversity. In addition to bringing people together, a collaborative artistic practice may involve

working with people outside your immediate community so that you may better understand a historical event or social issue. This community is “not based in a shared identity or on a presumption about how the other feels, but [on] transformation out of the experience of discomfort, and against the odds.”⁹ In this way, the activity of collaborating with others who may be different from you allows for challenging stereotypical notions of race, nationality, gender, sex, and dis/ability, and cultivating an expansive and inclusive worldview. Despite warnings that socially engaged artistic collaborations run the risk of perpetrating an ethnographic “primitivist fantasy,”¹⁰ a collaborative research approach also yields “opportunities to raise critical consciousness, highlight social relations and promote deeper understanding among participants, facilitators and audiences.”¹¹ The ability to work across differences to build community helps participants develop resilience—a way of being in the world that not only allows one to persevere, but also to thrive in the face of adversity. A key component of this process is affective solidarity, which, as developed by feminist theorist Clare Hemmings, is rooted in the concept of a “sustainable feminist politics of transformation” that embraces dissonance and moves “beyond empathy as a privileged way of connecting with others” to a space where “difficulty and difference are understood as constitutive parts of knowledge.”¹² Collaborative engagement not only fosters resilience, then, it also supports affective solidarity and may act as a catalyst for social change. As art historian Grant H. Kester notes, “[c]ollaborative practices complicate the notions of aesthetic autonomy” and engage the community in co-producing new “forms of knowledge.”¹³

A turning point in the history of photography, the 1975 exhibition *New Topographics* signaled a radical shift away from traditional depictions of landscape. Pictures of transcendent natural vistas gave way to unromanticized views of stark industrial landscapes, suburban sprawl, and everyday scenes not usually given a second glance. This restaging of the exhibition includes the work of all 10 photographers from the original show: Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Joe Deal, Frank Gohlke, Nicholas Nixon, John Schott, Stephen Shore, and Henry Wessel.

1975 is the year that will change the idea of landscape photography, a rift towards a new conception of landscape.

Before that year we used to conceive the landscape as a natural scenery, without any element created by men, or at least with men and churches to remark the spiritual feature of the nature. The norm were the photos of Ansel Adams, pure and breath-taking sceneries in black and white.

It is the exhibit of 1975 *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape* curated by William Jenkins in Rochester (New York) that rewrote the rules of landscape photography. William Jenkins selected eight then-young American photographers: Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Joe Deal, Frank Gohlke, Nicholas Nixon, John Schott, Stephen Shore (the only one among these who shot coloured film) and Henry Wessel Jr. He also invited the German couple, Bernd and Hilla Becher. The landscape has always been an icon of the American visual identity, but in that year, there is a shift away from traditional depictions of

landscape which began under the initial exploratory auspices of the U. S. Geological Survey. The New Topographics photos are about “A man-made wilderness”, the American myths of the West, suburban expansion, and the exploitation and destruction of natural resources. Landscapes have traditionally been produced in order to evoke contemplation on beauty, they were intended to be morally instructive or edifying. The New Topographics photographs depict a mundane but oddly fascinating topography, a reflection of a suburbanized world and a reaction to the tyranny of idealized landscape photography that elevated the natural and elemental. Man-Altered Landscape carried a political message and reflected how the natural landscape was being eroded by industrial development and the spread of cities. The majority of the photographs in New Topographics do not actually depict the landscape per se, but what Americans have built on the physical landscape, and its transformations evident in the post-industrial age. However, there is a lack of a sentimental environmentalism, the photographs are overly cold and defiantly impersonal. Critics describes these photographs with an ironic mark, nonetheless this irony is hard to be perceived in a subjectively objective representation of a man-altered landscape, and it seems more like the adjective that every post-modern kind of art has to be endowed with. Now, the term New Topographics has become a photography genre and a hashtag on Instagram with more than 100.000 tags

In the 1970s, an exhibit titled New Topographics: Photographs of a Man- Altered Landscape, began a style of photography that was “noted for its cool, detached, and almost scientific documentation of the landscape” (Pauli, 2003). This relates to the connection between photography and science, and photography and reality. The detached nature of the images conveyed a message that there was no human involvement in creating the image; any person in the same place may take the same image. It is an objective representation. However, there is a message embedded within these images as evidenced by the work of Edward Burtynsky, a modern Canadian photographer, who has a style that is similar to the New Topographics. He captures expansive images of the negative impacts of the human relationship with the Earth. Burtynsky has stated that “my work attempts to identify the marginalization of the processes that exist for us to sustain our lives in the city and to find a visual form that offers the viewer the opportunity to contemplate that phenomenon” (Campbell, 2008, p. 42). There are many who credit Burtynsky with raising awareness and alarm regarding the scale of human destruction on the world. At the same time, he is critiqued for his use of the toxic sublime. Playing on the scale and beauty of photographs like those of Ansel Adams, Burtynsky creates beautiful landscapes of the destruction of nature. “For those who are able to see beyond the beauty of Burtynsky’s photos, his images do confront us with the scale of the impact ‘progress’ has on nature, but most likely only those already aware of the issues will take notice” (Cammaer, 2009, p. 128).

Zahara Gómez Lucini



Landscapes

The mass graves, covered with grass and herbs, the field. The flowers are part of it.

They've fed on the bones and on the bones' thoughts.

Their perfume is perjury.

E. Jabès, The Book of Questions

Our bones are the last witnesses of us, of our life.

Us as fossils. The evidence of our existence and our story.

My work consists in creating visual territories; Building a language between osseous landscapes and geographical landscapes: a comparison between the micro-sight and the macro-sight. A form of digging out oblivion.

The Memory Recipe Book

A gastronomic photographic and social project

A collaborative project with Las Rastreadoras del Fuerte in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, Mexico. The Memory Recipe Book is, as its name reveals, a recipe book, that is conformed by several dishes that were shared by Las Rastreadoras de Fuerte, a group of women who have been looking for their missing relatives in Los Mochis, Sinaloa since 2014 and until now. Each recipe corresponds to the favourite dish of a missing person.

Several experts on enforced disappearance in Mexico have collaborated with texts for the book, such as the journalist Daniela Rea and María de Vecchi Gerli (ARTICLE 19), both of them are human rights activists.

50% of the book's profits are destined to Las Rastreadoras del Fuerte as a collaboration to their cause. The Memory Recipe Book is a homage to the missing ones but also for us, who are still fighting against oblivion. Is a book to learn new recipes and to transform that which we understand as an individual matter into a collective matter; it's a book to nurture our memory, to accompany our own resistance ways.

Mora about this project here: www.recetarioparalamemoria.com

The recipes that shape this book are in both ways an excuse to share with those who have opened their intimacy with us readers. But it is also a vehicle to give the desaparecidos a place at our table.

"Let's allow the act of cooking to become an excuse to speak the unspeakable; to bring back those who have been taken away from us. Let's allow cooking to become a survival mechanism to face their absence."

Zahara Gómez Lucini



COOKING AS A FORM OF ACTIVISM

These recipes are meant to:

Taking action

Learning new recipes

To feed and nurture our
memories.

To remember..

To resist together

To build collective actions.

YESENIA LISETH TORRES RAMOS

LA CABEZA DE CHIVO PARA JORGE ALBERTO

24 DE OCTUBRE DE 2013

INGREDIENTES

Carne de cabeza de chivo
Ajo
Chile verde
Cebolla
Pimienta en bola
Agua
Tomate rojo
Cilantro

PROCEDIMIENTO

Se pone a cocer la carne partida en trozos en agua con ajo, chile verde, cebolla y pimienta en bola. Se deja cocer a fuego bajo alrededor de 2 horas. La carne se pica hasta que quede blandita.





She lifted her gaze from the firewood stove and smiled:

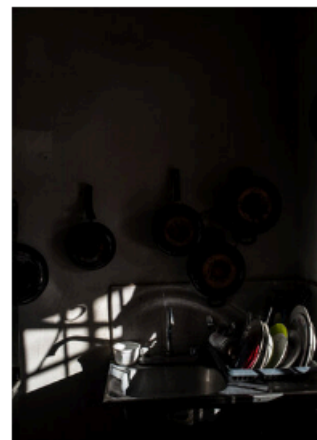
— - I cooked for him every single day, for weeks. Then, I understood. He's not coming back.

We looked at each other...

and it came to me, the certainty that Resistance is an everyday gesture



It's here where it
happends
in this moment I
understand:
every step is important
every gesture matters.



<https://www.recetarioparalamemoria.com/es/bonding-through-food>

What we do

Through our Guiding Principles we transcend innovative ideas into actionable opportunities that break social norms and rediscover, restore and reinvent people, places and food. Our efforts focus on three programs:

SHARE



Refectorio

Restore dignity

Food holds the greatest power for social impact. A simple gesture of a nourishing meal, shared at a convivial table, in a place of dignity, speaks to the soul as well as the body.

[Learn more](#)



Learning Network

A global community of empowered actors

The long-term vision is to demonstrate transformative examples of equitable and inclusive programs designed to promote a just food system and advocate for the value of human potential.

[Learn more](#)



Innovation Hub

The interconnection of different disciplines

We are building a virtual forum in which a global network where experts from diverse disciplines can cultivate and share innovative ideas, encourage innovation, and inspire critical thinking.

[Learn more](#)



How Massimo Bottura Convinced 60 World-Class Chefs to Launch a Soup Kitchen

Inside the chef's new book, *Bread is Gold*

by Daniela Galarza | Nov 21, 2017, 9:03am EST

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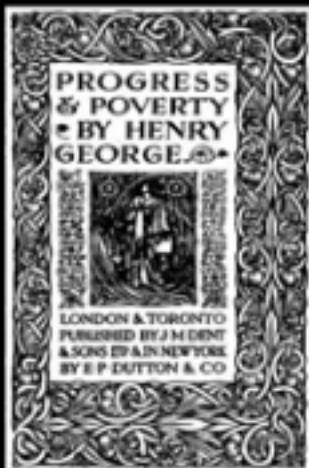
   SHARE

“A recipe, after all, is a solution to a problem.”

In the food world, Massimo Bottura, the chef and co-proprietor of *Osteria Francescana* in Modena, Italy, needs no introduction. He's won every accolade; a reservation at his restaurant is as hard to get as a date with the Pope; and his success has brought him fame and fortune. Today, the chef known for translating big ideas into gorgeous, transcendent plates of food is also [using his platform](#) to draw attention to — and try to solve — two massive, global problems: hunger and food waste.

“Will the role of chefs define the future of food?” he asks in new book, *Bread is Gold: Extraordinary Meals With Ordinary Ingredients*. “Chefs are becoming ambassadors of culture, influential thinkers, and activists.” The book is full of recipes — fish soup with bread gnocchi, banana peel chutney, [burnt lime stew](#), strawberry gazpacho, honey and toasted millet ice cream — for inventive ways to use food waste and imperfect ingredients. It's also a printed documentation of the events that led the acclaimed chef to open high-concept soup kitchens in cities around the world.

<https://www.eater.com/cookbooks/2017/11/21/16617272/massimo-bottura-bread-is-gold-cookbook>



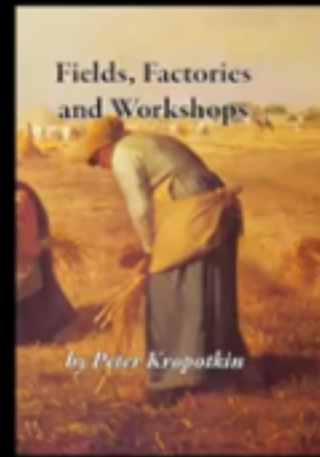
Land value tax



Regenerative farming



Food sovereignty



Infrastructure

Rural reform



Permaculture



Forest Garden



Organic



Nature-led diet

Working with nature



USA



Britain



Egypt



Italy

Hungry Planet
Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio

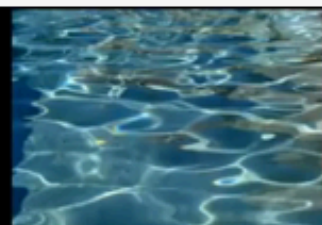
Food culture



1/3 lost or degraded



30% food-related



70% in farming



2 billion



50% of lakes



50% wasted



1/3 harvest



10 cals for 1



55% decline



'Levittown', New York 1949



Southdale Centre, Minnesota 1956



'Festival Shopping'



Food-in-boxes



British cheese, 1970



British artisanal cheese shop, 2019

160 million consumers

110 buying desks

3 million farmers

Jan-Willem Grievink
European Food Study

Democratisation





Slow Money



Transition Movement



Oikonomia



Doughnut economics

Sitopian economy

Peter Menzel & Faith D'Aluisio

Peter Menzel is a freelance photojournalist known for his coverage of international feature stories on science and the environment. His award-winning photographs have been published in GEO, Stern, Le Figaro, Der Spiegel, Paris Match, Focus, Muy Interesante, El Pais, National Geographic, Smithsonian, the New York Times Magazine, and Time. He has received several World Press and Picture of the Year awards, including two first place awards from World Press.

Faith D'Aluisio is a former award-winning television news producer. She is the editor and lead writer for the publishing imprint Material World Books. The couple lives in the United States in Napa, California. They have four sons: Josh, Jack, Adam and Evan, and a grandson: Xiaoyue.

Menzel and D'Aluisio's book *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats* (Material World Books, Ten Speed Press, 2005) is another around-the-world exploration of average daily life, this time focusing on food in 24 countries. The authors detail each family's weekly food purchases and the total cost, and include thought-provoking interviews and food lists. The centerpiece of each chapter is a portrait of the entire family surrounded by a week's worth of groceries. The team won the coveted James Beard Best Book Award in 2006 for *Hungry Planet*, and in 2005 received Book of the Year for that volume from the Harry Chapin World Hunger Media Foundation.

Menzel and D'Aluisio's book, *What I Eat: Around the World in 80 Diets* (Material World Books, 2010) is a photographic journey across 30 different countries that explores what 80 people ate during one recent day, calorically analyzed. The book tied for the Jane Grigson Award in 2011 from the International Association of Culinary Professionals.







Slow Food – Petrini's term – is used to signal awareness of a food's origin, on the part of the producer and "co-producer", the movement's name for the consumer. Slow Food shies away from the word "consumer" because "by being informed about how our food is produced and actively supporting those who produce it, we become a part of and a partner in the production process".

Promoted by members of the organisation, the term stipulates that the food should "taste good, that it should be produced in a clean way which fully respects the environment, human health and animal welfare" and that "food producers are paid a fair wage".

Slow Food is necessarily regional, promoting and protecting local produce. Its aim: "To counteract fast food and fast life, the disappearance of local food traditions and people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how food choices affect the rest of the world."

Now in its 20th year, the growth of the Slow Food movement remains steady, consisting of more than 100,000 members in over 132 countries worldwide. Alongside a multitude of publications produced in the interest of furthering the campaign, numerous food and wine fairs are held globally to extend the reaches of the movement.

Padcraig Allen

CARLO PETRINI: THE SLOW FOOD GOURMET WHO STARTED A REVOLUTION

For 20 years the Slow Food movement has waged war on mass-produced meals.

He established the world's first-ever University of Gastronomic Sciences, to put the study of food on a firm academic footing. And in 2004, in an event that complemented the Salone del Gusto a few yards away, Slow Food hosted its first Terra Madre ("Mother Earth") event, bringing 5,000 small-scale farmers and fishermen from 130 countries to Turin to show and talk about their work and livelihood and share ideas on how to secure and improve it. The twin events are now biennial fixtures, with the next ones planned for autumn 2010.

How will the Slow Movement grow in the future? "Every generation has to start again from zero," says Petrini today. "There are no certainties about the future. We must always have our antennae alert to the way things are changing. The idea of the modern has been superseded; the challenge today is to return to the small scale, the hand made, to local distribution – because today what we call 'modern' is out of date. The crisis we have been facing in the past year is not merely a financial crisis but also a crisis of systems and values. To overcome it we need to change our behaviour."

The defining myth of the modern world, he says, was that of Prometheus, who stole fire from the gods. "For two centuries humanity has done everything in its power to become the master of the world. But in the third millennium, the myth of Prometheus no longer corresponds to the aspirations of contemporary man. Instead we should turn to the figure of Noah. Faced with the excesses of modernisation, we should no longer seek to change the world, but to save it."

The process was in a sense one of dramatic enrichment: the consumption of meat in Italian households exploded, from 22kg per person per year in 1960 to 62kg in 1975; vastly increased quantities of cheese, eggs, fresh fruit, sugar and coffee were added to the traditional diet of rice or pasta augmented by milk, wine and little else. Life for the ordinary Italian was becoming much more interesting.

But at the same time, and with equally blinding speed, a lot of things were going out of the window. "The umbilical cord that had once connected the worlds of farmer and consumer was cut," Petrini noted. "Today hardly anyone buys their wine directly from their trusted wine maker, or goes to the farm to buy eggs and a chicken or a rabbit; hardly anybody knows the baker who makes their bread, the charcutier who slaughters the pigs and cures the meat, the man who churns the milk of his sheep or goats to make cheese." Not long ago the local grocer's shop and the pub, as well as being sources of food, were places for the exchange of information and knowledge, where customers did their shopping and eating informed by the wise words of people who were closely in touch with the sources of supply. But all these fonts of food wisdom were being swept away by modernisation, in the form of supermarkets and fast food.

Two events in 1986 convinced Petrini that Italy was at crisis point. One was the opening of a branch of McDonald's in Piazza di Spagna, in the heart of Rome. The other was the death of 19 people and the poisoning of hundreds of others by cheap wine cut with methanol.

The arrival of America's most famous hamburger chain was greeted, in Italy as in France and elsewhere, by angry demonstrations. But Petrini believed that protest was futile. The militant French farmer José Bové might drive his tractor to the site of a new McDonald's and sabotage it, citing the motto: "Where the hamburger is planted, Roquefort dies." But while Petrini agreed with the sentiment, he disagreed with the reaction. "We don't wish to adopt a strategy of open conflict with the multinationals," he said. Instead he and his colleagues set about creating resistance to fast food by building awareness of the wealth of traditional food that was at risk.

"The strategy of penetration of McDonald's in Italy," Petrini wrote, "brought its own antidote." In other countries McDonald's began setting up shop in the provinces. In Italy on the other hand the chain began from the metropolitan centres, "appealing to a public that was already Americanised" – with the result that out in the provinces, people saw the danger and began to wake up to the fact that the foods and pubs they held so dear might soon be at risk.

Further and Ongoing Research -

Reading List –

Sitopia: How Food Can Save the World - Carolyn Steel

The Third Plate: Field Notes on the Future of Food – Dan Barber

Border as Method, or, The Multiplication of Labor - Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson

Archive and Affect in Contemporary Photography – Sarah Bassnett

Aesthetic Theory - Theodor Adorno

The Curatorial Turn: From Practise To Discourse – Paul O'Neill

The Politics Of Operations: Excavating Contemporary Capitalism - Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson

Why Stories Matter: The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory – Clare Hemmings

Border Nation: A Story of Migration - Leah Cowan

Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men - Caroline Criado-Perez

On Spiders, Cyborgs and Being Scared: the Feminine and the Sublime - Joanna Zylińska

Bioethics in the Age of New Media - Joanna Zylińska

Artists –

Angela Melitopoulos

Ursula Biemann

Dayanita Singh

Zahara Gomez Lucini

Nancy Holt

Agnes Denes