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# The One And The Other

By Mute Editor

Editorial

Including: Anthony Davies on art, corporations and activism, Simon Pope on locative media, Gregory Sholette on the art group REPOhistory and gentrification in Manhattan, Tiziana Terranova's Network Culture, JJ King on the future of WIPO, Mark Crinson on art and urban history, Christian Nold on Jodi's solo show at FACT, Ben Watson on David Toop, Hari Kunzru on Gustav Metzger, Mattin on the politics of musical improvisation, Tim Savage on Donna Haraway's Companion Species Manifesto, Anja Büchele and Matthew Hyland on poet Susan Howe, Armin Medosch on ISEA, artist's project by Zeigam Azizov, and much more!!!

Reaching its 10th birthday this November, *Mute* has hit a threshold. Our organ is undergoing some changes, shifting its weight towards web based publishing and letting the print recede for a while. The idea is to search for new ways of combining these different media ecologies, combining the slowly cooked articles that normally appear in the magazine with the possibilities for flash-fried, just-in-time authorship, feedback, relay and linking that the web offers.

As Luce Irigaray has put it in respect to gender, neither egalitarian nor separatist strategies can resolve the problem of difference. We need to learn to approach the other as other in love and civility . Without wishing to trivialise her (albeit problematic) remarks, bringing together print and web publishing in new ways would ideally aspire to this form of resolution not a subsumption of the one in the other, but a recognition of the one as a horizontal transcendence of the other. If the durability and definitiveness of the printed word can be compared to the masculine form and the transience and mutability of web publishing to the female, then what we are interested in is how the two can learn from each other without becoming pure hybrid, engineered hermaphrodite.

Horizontal transcendence is a way of articulating the unbridgeable gap that exists between distinct identities a preservation of the integrity of difference that nonetheless keeps open the terrain of negotiation in forming new subjects. This conundrum of negotiating the other as other seems to recur throughout this issue of *Mute* in various ways. In our section on precariousness (the effect of a post-fordist economy on labour), Angela Mitropoulos (p.88) asks how the precariat's struggle for rights can be reconciled with the need to elude capture by the same juridical process which rewards some with guarantees over pay and conditions and others with forcible deportation. Given the choice, she concludes, a different future, by definition, can only be constructed precariously, without firm grounds for doing so, without the measure of a general rule . Rather than the hybrid dream of flexicurity then, we need to harness the risky creativity of precariousness whilst creating new grounds for dependency and collective security.

Another parallel question can be seen emerging in our section examining the relationship between culture-led urban regeneration and public or site specific art (p.52); under what terms can artists operate when their work and general presence is converted into the compost of urban regeneration which simultaneously acts to regulate, economise and purge the communities and environments they take root in? How can art, produced and consumed as one of the 'creative industries' and overdetermined by its role as 'regeneration incubator', maintain some critical independence from economic imperatives? Clearly this is a relation that can't be negotiated only with civility and love . In his article Basic Instinct (p.67) Anthony Davies examines the queasy parallels that prevail between economics, art and activism in this case their reactionary retrenchment post 9/11. As with gender, what at an epiphenomenal level appears utterly distinct on closer inspection reveals itself to be deeply

merged.

Simon Njami's survey of African contemporary art's negotiation by the Western art world from the 80s to the present day examines the question of difference once again (p.78). For him, the answer lies in the need to disconnect art works from their national and cultural contexts, to deterritorialise them, to throw them up into the non-place of individual creativity. This seems to demand refusing the category African art per se. The pros and cons of maintaining categorical distinctions, differences, is also essential to discussions surrounding the Wages for Housework campaign which has born fruit in Venezuela with the passage of Article 88. As Laura Sullivan points out (p. 103), the problem with such wages is that they formalise and help maintain the historically contingent fact that housework and social reproduction is principally done by women, short-circuiting the more radical Marxist feminist goal of doing away with such labour divisions altogether. In thinking through Irigaray's proposition, the lived reality of preserving, progressing or ditching these identity distinctions should never bow to idealism.

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