Art That Loves People: Relational Subjectivity in Community-based Art

Heather Davis

A Thesis
In the Department
Of
Communication Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Joint Program in Communication)
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

September 2011

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: **Heather Davis**

Entitled: **Art that loves People: Relational Subjectivity in Community-based Art**

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Communication)

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final examining committee:

Chair	Dr. A. Jain
External Examiner	Dr. K. Robertson
External to Program	Dr. J. Sloan
Examiner	Dr. P. Van Wyck
Examiner	Dr. B. Massumi
Thesis Supervisor	Dr. M. Kin Gagnon

Approved by _____
Dr. W. Buxton, Graduate Program Director

August 31, 2011

_____
Faculty of Arts and Science

ABSTRACT

Art that Loves People: Relational Subjectivity in Community-based Art

Heather Davis, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2011

This doctoral dissertation is an interdisciplinary investigation of contemporary community-based art practices. I analyze the social and political implications of these practices as structures of radical democracy, as relations of collectivity that include the other-than-human, and for new understandings of subjectivity as relational. This work is based in communication studies, but also draws from cultural theory, philosophy, art history, social geography, political theory and feminist thought. Using a multi-method qualitative approach, including ethnographic practices of friendship as method and self-reflexive journal writing, I examine three cases of community-based art.

The first is that of the international artists' collective WochenKlausur who were invited to teach a 'learning through doing' class at Alfred University in upstate New York. The project was largely considered a failure, but one that revealed the specificity of WochenKlausur's method, which is to create social interventions using principles of agonistic democracy, as articulated by Chantal Mouffe. I look at their practice to highlight how its replicability could be useful for alternative social infrastructures. For my second site I chose the exemplary historical project *Flood* by Haha, which involved the creation of a hydroponic garden in a storefront to grow vegetables for people with HIV/AIDS. I argue that their project created a collective of humans and other-than-humans through their use of the hydroponic garden, a technological feature that revealed

complicated systems of interconnection. Deploying the philosophy of Gilbert Simondon and Brian Massumi, I articulate the importance of other-than-humans to collectivity and to understanding subjectivity as primarily relational. The third case is the Spiral Garden, an art-garden-play program for differently-abled and able-bodied children in Toronto, Ontario. Here the concept and practice of friendship, developed using the philosophy of Georgio Agamben, Maurice Blanchot and Simon Critchley, introduces an open-ended structure of relation, creating affective ties while preserving difference in proximity.

Situated within a broader analysis of community-based art, each of these case studies illustrates alternative structures for collective art practice that can be used as models for creating new relational modes amongst and across humans and other-than-humans as life-building gestures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In a study that figures relation and the structures of friendship, it should not come as a surprise that this work was possible only because of the efforts, inspiration and talents of a large number of people. I have first to thank Cecilia Chen and Erin Despard for their brilliance, patience, unparalleled editorial work and their commitment to collaboration and friendship. If it were not for the happy circumstance of being thrown into this together, I don't think I would have made it through. I am very grateful to the ongoing support of my supervisor, Monika Kin Gagnon, for always being able to see the larger picture and for her dedication and availability, especially at the end of this project. Peter van Wyck was instrumental to this thesis in his editorial comments and ongoing support. I am indebted, in all the best ways possible, to Heather Lash for her love and subtle, seamless editing style. Pablo Rodriguez was an invaluable interlocutor and editor, engaging and challenging me throughout this process. Elizabeth Grosz's generosity and rigour exhibited in the term I spent with her at Rutgers University continues to be an inspiration for me. Thank you to Fabien Rose for his assistance with the translations as well as his friendship and support. Near the end of this process, my residency at the Banff Centre in the Research in Culture program was instrumental for gaining a renewed perspective on this work, so I am grateful to the organizers, Imre Szeman and Heather Zwicker, all of the incredible participants and guest faculty, especially Lauren Berlant and Michael Hardt, for the brilliant conversations and the space to think through these questions in the serenity of the Rocky Mountains. I am particularly grateful to Paige Sarlin for the late night talks and the many skype conversations that got me through the final stages of this. Her passion and commitment to both theory and practice is a

testament to the project to make more livable worlds. I have no way to express my gratitude to all of the participants at Spiral Garden, for being the inspiration for this work and for the immeasurable energy and commitment that you all show. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Michaela Chandler, Amber Yared, Jessica Moore, Doug Moore, Liz Rucker, Sean Frey, Bohdan Petryk, Robert Vine, Micah Donovan, Lynne Simmons, David Field, and Shannon Crossman. I am especially grateful to Skye Gross for answering my requests and ridiculous questions with such good humour. Sarah Dobbs graciously consented to the research despite its harried framing, and Patty Rigby very kindly put much effort into making this happen, without having met me. My immeasurable gratitude goes to Jan MacKie for her years of dedication and hard work, to her passion, creativity and humour – without her vision none of this would have been possible. Thank you to Claudia Eipeldauer and Martina Reuter for their hard work, buoyancy, political astuteness and incredible hospitality, and to all the participants in WochenKlausur's project at Alfred. I would also like to express my gratitude to my examination members, Brian Massumi, Joanne Sloan, and Kirsty Robertson for their detailed reading and incisive commentary that will help me to further develop this project. Finally, I would like to thank my family, Diane, Phil, Marcy and Alison for their unwavering support. Alison's own work as a community artist was an inspiration for me throughout this process. I am truly blessed to have the support of all these amazing people, and countless others, who each, in their own ways, are continually working to create more democratic, creative and vital realities, who make this world a joyous place to continue to struggle in. This project would not have been possible without the financial support of the Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture.

To Cosmic Bird Feeder (1997-2007) for those summer days that stretched to infinity and passed in the blink of an eye; for all those who made it possible, who made it work, who passed through, who loved it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF FIGURES

We must ward off, by every means possible, the entropic rise of a dominant subjectivity. Rather than remaining subject, in perpetuity, to the seductive efficiency of economic competition, we must reappropriate Universes of value, so that processes of singularization can rediscover their consistency. We need new social and aesthetic practices, new practices of the Self in relation to the other, to the foreign, the strange.
— Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*

…making art that loves people is more important than loving art
— Pedro Reyes, "Interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist"

Introduction

> *Affective politics, understood as aesthetic politics, is dissensual, in the sense that it holds contrasting alternatives together without immediately demanding that one alternative eventuate and the others evaporate. It makes thought-felt different capacities for existence, different life potentials, different forms of life, without immediately imposing a choice between them. The political question, then, is not how to find a resolution. It's not how to impose a solution. It's how to keep the intensity in what comes next.*
> – Brian Massumi, "Of Micropolitics and Microperception"

This thesis grew out of my long engagement with community arts practices, specifically the Cosmic Bird Feeder and Spiral Garden at Holland Bloorview Kids' Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto, Ontario where I was employed as a community artist from 2001 to 2007. Spiral Garden, founded in 1984, is a reverse-integration children's garden-art-play program that creates a 'living story space' through the use of multi-disciplinary art techniques.[1] Cosmic Bird Feeder was a satellite garden that existed from 1997 to 2007 in North York, Ontario. Although these were two separate gardens and had different staff, participants and sizes, their ways of working and underlying philosophy overlapped significantly. In both programs, a story arises through the interactive play of all those on site – children, artists, staff, plants, animals, microbes and insects – and is developed throughout the eight-week program. The openness of the program – the way in which people are free to pursue their own interests, to simply stare at the sky, or to lose

[1] Reverse-integration describes the process of integrating able-bodied people into the environment of differently-abled people. Its underlying philosophy takes the necessarily assumed, normalized able-body and displaces or deconstructs it, replacing it with a proliferation of different bodies and bodies with different capacities not known or limited in advance. At both Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder the range of disabilities spans the full gamut, from mild impediments to those in power wheelchairs on life-support systems with a nurse in attendance at all times. Children who are clients of Bloorview fall both into the categories of those who have acquired injuries and those who were born with various conditions that affect their mobility, cognitive, and/or expressive capacities.

themselves in the pleasure of hammering – was developed in opposition to a dominating culture where lives are intensively scheduled and an over-emphasis is placed on producing measurable results. The collective story brought to life at the gardens (the short term phrase by which participants designate these programs) blurs imagination and reality. There is something quite magical about those gardens, something hard to describe, hard to put into words, but that almost everyone who passes through feels. While working at Cosmic Bird Feeder, it was as if we had temporarily been able to create the world we wanted to live in. This utopian feeling did not refuse the complexity of the space, the deep conflicts that sometimes separated staff members, and the hard realities of working with children in extremely difficult circumstances (which sometimes led to very difficult behaviour). What I think was and remains so remarkable about the gardens was the commitment and devotion they elicited, the sense of attachment and belonging that so many people, staff, volunteers and participants alike, felt and continue to feel toward them and in them. This feeling was consciously fostered through morning rituals, which included drinking tea made from the garden together, and continues through our ongoing involvement in each other's lives. These two garden programs reach far beyond regular child-care or arts-based summer camps; they create a whole (if temporary and limited) world. They were and are an attempt to carve out a space and create a relational structure through dedication and attentiveness. Here people can consciously be together more democratically, as collective creative play and storytelling release the anxiety of self-sovereignty. In other words, the ideal of a supposedly sovereign self that is its own governing force is relaxed in the gardens, which encourages thinking and acting in ways that are more permeable, that acknowledges our vulnerability and dependence on each

other. At Spiral, we can open to others in ways that are often foreclosed in our everyday lives. So the beginnings of this research came from an unbridled passion for the singularity of these two intertwined programs and the people involved. Stemming from the intuition, or latent idea, that I encountered as a community artist, it seemed as if community-based arts might be able to create different kinds of structures for relation, allowing people to resingularize their subjectivity.[2]

More generally, the rise in interest in community-based arts from the 1990s onwards led me to wonder about the particularities of these art practices, what they could offer and what they limit in relationship to broader social and political concepts and the possibilities for developing alternative cultures and subjectivities as considered by political theorist Chantal Mouffe and philosopher Félix Guattari. Such speculation dovetails with a broader turn in contemporary art towards socially-engaged practice as seen through the increased production of critical art writing, art practice and curatorial work in this genre primarily in North America and Europe.[3] However, the interest in

[2] I employ the term community-based art here to reference both the history of community arts – which goes under the monikers 'community cultural development' in the United States, and *animation socio-culturelle* in the francophone world – as well as the turn in contemporary art practice towards socially-engaged art. As Arlene Goldbard notes, "Community-based arts is preferred by some practitioners, who find it sensible to scoop both participatory projects and conventional arts projects about community issues into a single category, united by their common social and political aims. [This includes] any form or work of art that emerges from a community and consciously seeks to increase the social, economic and political power of that community" (2006, 21). I discuss these genres at greater length in Chapter Two "Reviewing the Literature."

[3] I don't mean to suggest that this turn is without continuity or history, as activist art has been central to much of the art developed in the 20th century. However, since the early 1990s there has been renewed interest in socially-engaged art which moves out of the gallery and into other spaces, reflected in critical writing as well as in artistic practice and institutional support. See Sholette and Stimson 2007; Thompson and Sholette 2004; Bishop 2006b; Holmes 2008; Kester 2004; Kwon 2002; Foster 2006; re-public art (www.republicart.net); and Block and Nollert 2005 for a few exemplary accounts of critical reflection on contemporary practice in this lineage, all of which were written in the past decade. The recent biennales Documenta XI in 2002, Manifesta 7 in 2008 and, outside of Europe, the 11th International Istanbul Biennal in 2009 also focused on collaboration amongst artists and non-artists directed at social change. There are too many contemporary community-based artists and organizations to list them here, but a few examples would be Alfredo Jaar, Artur Żmijewski, Aydan Murtezaoğlu & Bülent Şangar, Black Audio Film Collective, Common Weal Community Arts, Engrenage Noire, Le Groupe Amos, Igloolik Isuma

community-based art cannot be separated from the context of de-funding, de-regulation and the move towards privatization in the past forty years.[4] As the rise of neoliberalism since the late 1970s carves away at formerly public services, there has been increased pressure on the arts and culture industries to fill in the gap, as George Yúdice identifies (2003).[5] He argues that culture has become an expedient force, meaning "culture-as-resource is much more than commodity; it is the lynchpin of a new epistemic framework…such that management, conservation, access, distribution, and investment – in 'culture' and the outcomes thereof – take priority" (2003, 1). Contemporary multi-disciplinary art practice sits precisely at the nexus of this larger framework. Walking a perilous line between buttressing the decline of the welfare state by providing precisely those services (such as education, therapy, community development and beautification) that have been cut back by federal governments, community-based art practices respond to this moment by re-creating the forms and structures of relations amongst people, to

---

Productions, Jumblies Theatre, Leave Out Violence (L.O.V.E.), RAQS Media Collective, Stephen Willats, Tim Rollins and the Kids of Survival (K.O.S.), The Village of Arts and Humanities, and What is to be done/Chto Delat.

[4] Community arts, and art more generally, is now considered an effective tool for capitalist accumulation of wealth. Richard Florida's account of the creative city (2002) has led many municipalities to pump millions of dollars into arts funding for 'urban renewal' projects, often used as a euphemism for gentrification of neighbourhoods and the forced displacement of poor people. As art historian Kerstin Mey makes clear, "To a great extent, these often centrally administered initiatives have been anchored in an instrumental logic; art in the expanded social field was employed to generate economic benefits through improved physical environments and to enhance social inclusion by using its potential to sustain, shape, and transform communal identity" (2010, 331).

[5] David Harvey defines neoliberalism as "in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices…But beyond these tasks the state should not venture" (2005, 2). He identifies the emergence of neoliberalism with Deng Xiaoping's decision in 1978 to liberalize China's economy, Paul Volcker's dramatic change in monetary policy decisions following his appointment as Chairman of the US Federal Reserve in July 1979, and with the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the UK in 1979, and Ronald Reagan in the US in 1980.

themselves, and to the world.[6] It is possible, in this moment of state withdrawal, to begin to re-imagine and differently enact forms of 'being-in-common,' a term I use throughout this work to describe the 'synching of singularities,' drawn from the philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy (1991) and the political theory of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2009).[7]

Working out of this context, I argue that community-based art can be a form of resistance to neoliberal structures (even as they act as props) by creating models of being-in-common that refuse both a virulent individualism and a communitarianism of the kind which demands conformity to a particular identity in order to receive membership. Community-based art signals and continues a shift in politics, subjectivity and community, a shift from identity to relation, from sameness to difference. I have identified three examples of collective art practices in order to effectively illustrate the potential for community-based art to create new methods, structures, and forms of becoming with the world immanently through relation in order to re-imagine and re-enact different forms of subjectivity and collectivity. The first of these is WochenKlausur, a Vienna-based artist collective who work through commissions to directly intervene and improve a specific social problem. The second example, Haha's project *Flood,* was a storefront and hydroponic garden that operated in Chicago from 1992-1995 to distribute greens to people living with HIV/AIDS and through this activity created a volunteer network for active participation in healthcare. For the final example, I return to the site that opens this thesis, Spiral Garden. What I am proposing is that artistic practices

[6] A parallel could be seen between the rise of community-based art and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as responses to the withdrawal of the welfare state. NGOs (or sovereignty-free actors) emerged in force after the 1973 oil crisis at the same time as the welfare state was in serious decline, and also provide alternative avenues for organizing political structures (Miessen and Basar 2006, B30).

[7] However, some critics offer a more cynical take on the situation. As Bojana Cvejiæ states, "in neo-liberalism we do enjoy a 'being-together,' if you like. What we have in common is commerce and communication – in one word: the network" (2005, np).

formulate new structures for envisioning collectives. In other words, *community-based art practices create alternative socio-political structures that allow people to relate to one another and their environment differently, which implies, in the cases that follow, a turn from an individualist model and towards one of relational subjectivity*. No longer contained within a paradigm that pits society against the individual, where the boundary and autonomy of the individual is sacred, I have undertaken these three case studies on specific artists' collective practices to highlight how the re-emergence of utopia in political thought, as a stand-in category for an optimistic future, has given rise to some concrete artistic practices that refuse the distinction or separation between art and life.[8]

Community-based art continues a lineage of art practice wherein art shifts away from the material and conceptual realms, and into everyday life, a move from object to process-based art. The specific mechanisms of artistic practice can create a kind of space or gap to provide avenues for productively re-thinking the socius and subjectivity together; these art practices create a particular kind of framing of relations that allows for experimentations with being-in-common differently. Community-based art practices are about increasing joyful affects, what the 17th-century philosopher Baruch Spinoza would refer to as increasing the ability to act in the world.[9] In other words, joyful affects are that

[8] Postcolonial theorist Leela Gandhi argues in her book *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship* on the resistance to colonialism in England, that broadly speaking utopian thought was quelled after the rise of communism and the subsequent world wars; however, utopia re-emerged in the 1960s and has been "haunting the ruins of 'the political' ever since" (2006, 18). It is within this utopian thought that she both situates her own research and locates one of the vectors of resistance that is her subject.

[9] Spinoza's definition of affects, and the categories of joy or sad affects, has influenced a wide variety of scholars, primarily in the field of cultural theory. Spinoza's theory of affect is developed in his *Ethics*, Parts III-V. In Deleuze's lectures on Spinoza he articulates the function of the affects clearly: "on this melodic line of continuous variation constituted by the affect, Spinoza will assign two poles: joy-sadness, which for him will be the fundamental passions. Sadness will be any passion whatsoever which involves a diminution of my power of acting, and joy will be any passion involving an increase in my power of acting." (http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=14&groupe=Spinoza&langue=2).

which allow perseverance in being, or more than that – a flourishing. By providing moments of coming together differently, under the rubric of art practice, community-based art generates these joyful affects, implicitly enabling, while reconfiguring, the actors that participate in them. Although the analysis of community-based art has generally focused on what constitutes a 'community,' I argue that over-emphasis on the discourses that surround these art projects tends to overlook the practices themselves. In my three examples, community-based art refuses the safety and assurance of sameness where, to follow the example of postcolonial theorist Leela Gandhi in her analysis of friendship as a constitutive structure in resisting imperialism, "Affective singularity, anarchist relationality, and other-directedness are…the constitutive elements of the utopic community that we are conjuring" (Gandhi 2006, 20). And, importantly, the structures of these art practices continue a tradition of collectivity which reinforce what I am calling 'relational subjectivity' elaborated from the philosophical tradition of radical empiricism that argues for ontology as processual and relational.[10]

Broadly speaking, the term 'relation' is conceived within the bounds of familial relations, economic relations, relations between objects, and the 'relational' as a kind of feminine quality of empathy; all of these usages offer an insight into the trajectory I am

[10] Radical empiricism broadly defines a lineage of philosophy that can be traced to William James and other American Pragmatists, including John Dewey and Charles Peirce. This position rejects the dualism of epistemology and metaphysics in favour of an approach that values detailed observation and views knowledge as arising from an active adaptation of the human organism to its environment. It arose from a particular historical moment where the empiricism of science was becoming hegemonic but where religious thought had not abated. The response that James provides to this historical moment was to posit concepts as instruments, a fallible anti-Cartesian position. This turn in philosophical thought towards a pragmatic orientation was developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in their insistence on moving away from the truth of a concept, to its consequences, to what it enables. They add to this, 'nomad thought,' where "The concepts it creates do not merely reflect the eternal form of a legislating subject, but are defined by a communicable force in relation to which their subject, to the extent that they can be said to have one, is only secondary. Rather than reflecting the world, [Deleuze and Guattari] are immersed in a changing state of things" (Massumi 1992, 5).

following, but I elaborate this notion as relational subjectivity. In particular, I draw much of my argument from the thought of philosophers Gilbert Simondon (1992; 2005) and Brian Massumi (2002a, 2002b, 2009a, 2009b) who articulate ontology not grounded in essence, but in relation. That is, being is conceived as a process of *becoming with* the world. For although conventional configurations of relation put the subject into a social field, they still rest upon the pre-supposition that there is a discrete subject that then interacts with other discrete subjects. Relational subjectivity is based on ontology as becoming, an immanent co-emergence of world and individual. It does not presume an already individuated individual, but rather seeks to account for the emergence of individuals even as the moment of coherence or constitution of the individual is always more than itself, constantly stretching its borders and retreating back, becoming multiplied and inhabited. The human subject then is neither pitted against society nor is purely constituted by society; rather, the two terms constantly emerge and re-emerge together. What this notion of ontology does is account for change, providing a consistency for the in-between or middling of relations.

By shifting the understanding of subjectivity from primarily individual to primarily relational, the relationship between self and other is radically reconceptualized (Guattari 2000). *No longer can I see you as completely outside of me even as you remain singular, and no longer can the problems of the material world that we live in and that informs and embodies us, be understood as simply 'out there.'* As American art critic, artist and teacher Suzi Gablik notes, "New models put forward by quantum physics, ecology, and systems theory that define the world in terms of interacting processes and relational fields call for integrative modes of thinking that focus on the relational nature

of reality rather than on discrete objects" (1995, 83). This shift towards relation offers a way out of a paradigm of relentless competition in which it becomes easy to stigmatize individuals for their failings, rather than look at systemic injustice as a matrix of relation. I realize that the figure of relation, as in 'the network,' has become the dominant sign of the twenty-first century, and although it carries a robustly positive connotation, its effects do not always work out well for people. The shift to relation in the guise of global interconnection has signaled in new modes of exploitation, coupled with the extension and centralization of certain forms of dominating power through corporate globalization and an ever rapacious capitalism (Hardt and Negri 2001; Haraway 1991). However, in both its negative and positive forces, relation opens up subtle, contingent, and complicated ways of thinking through subjectivity and politics that can provide alternative models for responding to this particular historical moment.

To address, explore and evoke the notion of 'relation' as it is cultivated within community-based art, I developed a method based on the three case studies I have described in brief. It was important for me to use case studies as the basis for my research as I was interested in the immanent relations possible in community-based art, and this seemed to require detailed observation, as well as discursive readings. Relational subjectivity means engaging not simply with a person, but with that person in relationship to a particular situation. I am thinking here of the parallels I found in Spiral Garden's approach to that of Félix Guattari's descriptions of transversal psychology at La Borde, the psychiatric clinic where he worked in Cour-Cheverny, France. In his description of these techniques he says,

> …it's not simply a matter of remodeling a patient's subjectivity…but of a production *sui generis*…the constitution of complexes of subjectivation:

> multiple exchanges between individual-group-machine. These complexes actually offer people diverse possibilities for recomposing their existential corporeality, to get out of their repetitive impasses and, in a certain way, to resingularise themselves. (1995, 6-7)

Community-based arts do this not by providing a kind of free-for-all space, but by creating structures of being-in-common differently, either through extended time and commitment, or through a model of replicability. Each of the collective practices I discuss – WochenKlausur, Haha's project *Flood*, and Spiral Garden – all provide methods and structures for the possibility of the transversal interaction between individual-group-machine, in Guattari's sense, of resingularisation through relation.

The choice of these three sites loosely follows Guattari's model of ecosophy wherein he develops an "…ethico-political articulation…between the three ecological registers (the environment, social relations and human subjectivity)" (2000, 28) as the only adequate response to the globality of contemporary interconnected problems. In other words, although Guattari's point is that these three registers cannot be separated out, each of the examples speaks more clearly to one of the registers – environment, social relations and human subjectivity – that he has identified. WochenKlausur's replicable method of social intervention corresponds to the social register; Haha's use of a hydroponic garden reverberates through an ecological register; and Spiral Garden, through the model of friendship, materializes the inherent relationality of all subjectivity, intensely expressed through the necessary interrelations and dependencies of children who, in some cases, require a facilitator to move or communicate. The three examples can be taken together as a heterogeneous response to thinking through alternative strategies for world building or the materialization of the good life, as queer theorist Lauren Berlant would say, "that might better be associated with flourishing" (3, 2010).

These involve an activation of the social imaginary, both by providing concrete responses to reconfigure local social bonds, and also by allowing these examples to replicate and move through the world as propositions.

In Chapter One "The Fleshiness of Words: Methodology," I describe my methodological approach as a primary point of departure and orientation, as I have situated myself as a researcher in the middle of two of my cases, as both an observer and participant of relation. In order to adequately account for my case studies and their relations, I adopted a writing style that did not reduce an analysis of these collective practices to a singular narrative, but which instead itself reflected a kind of collectivity of voices and perspectives. In order to evoke this polyphony, I have also relied on lengthy quotes from participants as well as on excerpts from my fieldwork journals (which appear throughout the thesis in italic text). My approach attempts to hereby evoke, rather than represent, each of the collective practices that make up my case studies. Rather than creating a complete picture of what each practice constitutes (as if this were even possible), my writing seeks to create a resonance with the practice, picking up on particular lines, as harmony, through the three ecological registers that Guattari identifies. I draw heavily in this methodological writing practice upon the sociologist Lisa Tillman-Healy's "Friendship as Method" (2003) to bring out the affective ties that draw me to this research, as well as upon Laurel Richardson's arguments for writing as a way of knowing (2005). These approaches refuse the positivism of traditional ethnography or social science, and allow me to make transparent the lines of affinity and complicity with my objects of research while inserting myself wholly into the matrix.

In Chapter Two, "Reviewing the Literature" I turn to a review of the literature that this thesis draws upon. This interdisciplinary research, based in communication studies, then crosses the fields of cultural theory, philosophy, art history and criticism, social geography, political theory and feminist methodologies in order to situate community-based art as generating structures for collectivity and relational subjectivity. I begin by identifying three lineages in art history and cultural theory that inform community-based art. These are, a utopian modernism, an insistence on the autonomy of art as a bloc of sensation, and art that is concerned with bridging art and life, where art becomes a way to intervene directly into the social. These lineages of artistic practice substantiate historically the community arts in a way that has been largely overlooked by art critics and art historians (Goldbard 1993, 2006; Fleming 1995). I attempt, in small part, to contribute to the literature by linking these two different streams, of community art and socially-engaged art in the broader definition of community-based art in this chapter in particular, but also throughout the thesis. After these discussions of art theories and practice, I turn to an examination of friendship as a methodological principle underlying community-based art, followed by a discussion of relational subjectivity, and finally turning to agonistic democracy as an adequate political response to this conceptualization of subjectivity.

The next three chapters constitute the bulk of the thesis and are detailed analyses of the case studies. Chapter Three focuses on the Austrian contemporary art collective WochenKlausur, whose practice I observed and researched while they were teaching a 'learning through doing' class at Alfred University in Alfred, New York in April 2010. Following a very pragmatic ethic, WochenKlausur use their social capital as artists to

enact particular, locally-based change, creating concrete interventions in public life, such as roving medical clinics for homeless people in "Medical Care for Homeless People" (1993), a language school for Balkan refugees in the project, "Language Schools in the Balkan War" (1999), or, in the case that I analyze here, "A Room for Afterschool Activities" (2010) where they developed an after-school program for youth. Their modest interventions demonstrate the possibilities and limitations of artistic projects, providing a model for doing politics and subjectivity differently. I analyze the artistic contribution of WochenKlausur as a replicable method, a method that was derailed in their attempt to situate their practice within a university setting. As their project at Alfred was not successful, the example also serves to underline the importance in experimentation and the generative possibilities of failure for contemporary art. Using WochenKlausur as an example helps to stake the claims and limitations of relational subjectivity, and its necessary structures, as it develops through artistic practices. This case provides an example of agonistic democracy (Mouffe 1988, 2000, 2009), as their work revolves around the matrices of self-organization and enablement; they are interventions that create networks of solidarity amongst local people to make concrete improvements in their daily lives. I begin with this example as a way to moderate some of the more poetic and hopeful gestures that are taken up in later chapters. WochenKlausur's practice provides an opening to think through the pragmatics of intervention as art, and to understand the inherently compromised position of the political. Their pedagogical actions revealed the limits of the structure of the university in particular and intervention more generally. Subversive engagement means a kind of reproduction of the terms under critique. It is in the cracks in-between, within the oscillation between reproducing a

dominant and dominating order, and resisting doing this, that WochenKlausur carves out a space for a different kind of politics. WochenKlausur also serves as an example that is fully embedded in and owes its heritage to the art world. They seek to change the parameters of what art can do from inside these museums and other art institutions.[11]

In Chapter Four, I move from the pragmatic to the ephemeral. My second case study examines the exemplary historical work, *Flood* (1992-1995) by Haha, which was arguably one of the most successful and engaged projects to emerge from the seminal art exhibit *Culture in Action* curated by Mary Jane Jacob (1992-1993). Haha's project involved the construction of a hydroponic garden in a Chicago storefront to grow vegetables to be distributed to people living with HIV/AIDS. This biological manifestation necessitated thinking with the other-than-human. In this sense, besides being a landmark project, the work is important for thinking through relational subjectivity as regards the nonhuman and the kinds of artistic structures put into place to enable this evocation. To understand our selves as thoroughly relational, it is necessary to examine and reconfigure our placement, as humans, within and to the 'natural' world. For any split from the world, stemming from Cartesian dualism, is part of a matrix of cleavages that separate mind from body and self from other. These divisions are at the foundation of the liberal, sovereign subject, and account for much of the destructive components of individualism. I thus posit the self as relational by asking what happens when we think of other-than-humans as intrinsically part of our collectives. The garden in *Flood* became a network of relation; through its demand to be tended it connected multiple people in, around, and beyond Chicago. This site was the only one of the three

[11] Gregory Sholette describes this as a mimetic practice, re-creating and transforming the institutions under critique. See *Dark Matter: Art and Politics in the Age of Enterprise Culture*.

that I did not have direct access to, so the project remained for me a text, accessed through primary and secondary literature. This chapter contains the bulk of my philosophical investigation and fleshes out the concept of 'relational subjectivity' through the work of Gilbert Simondon and Brian Massumi. As they might ask, what does it mean not to think of individuals *in relation to* other individuals, but to think of *ontology itself* as relational? A hydroponic garden literally depends on relation, its relation to chemicals, mechanics, people, and water for its survival. And positing the garden as an art practice, displacing the garden from its normal modes of operation, containment and signification, creates a gap, which then allows for the possibility of different relations amongst humans, as well as the exposition of humans as also thoroughly relational. This case further serves as an example of how the art world has taken up community-based practice.

In Chapter Five, I return to the place that originally led me to pursue these questions – Spiral Garden. This site offered a kind of depth that was impossible in the other locations because of my long-standing commitment to both the program and many of the people involved with it. This previous knowledge and attachment meant that I could pick up on nuances that might not be observable to a more 'objective' researcher. In any event, the notion of 'objectivity,' along with the idea that it could describe anyone's status, was entirely undermined in pursuing this research, in line with feminist methodologies and critiques. As Tillman-Healy points out, "feminists have been instrumental in debunking the myth of value-free inquiry" (2003, 732-3).[12] Aside from my own intimate attachments, what the Spiral site offers is an example from community

[12] See also Sandra Harding *Thinking from Women's Lives*; Liz Stanley *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory, and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*; Joyce McCarl Nielsen *Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences*; Nancy Naples *Feminism and Method: Ethnography, Discourse Analysis, and Activist Research*; Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, Christina Gilmartin and Robin Lydenberg *Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology: An Interdisciplinary Reader*.

art of a particular kind of structure for thinking and doing relational subjectivity. More specifically, I use the matrix of friendship, based on sharing life, to explore relations amongst everyone on site. Duration, constraint of scale, and trust built through collective decision-making have all created the conditions where friendship operates as a model for solidarity while preserving difference. Similarly, friendship creates a way of becoming with others where the self becomes inhabited, populated, and extended through friends. Friendship, as a mode of governing relations, can then operate as a political gesture of opposition. The ethics that are fostered at the garden through friendship follow the tone of "unconditional hospitality" that philosophers such as Emmanuel Levinas (1969) and Jacques Derrida (2001) have described.[13] I use friendship as a model for organizing the social, extending its values to everyone while recognizing that it is neither possible nor desirable to be everyone's friend. This case readily lends itself to thinking of friendship as a way of structuring relations rather than as particular intimacies, in part due to the difficulty of relating with people who cannot communicate in the standard fashion, many using eye contact, affective noise or simplified sign language. Friendship is used as a concept to structure relation in the register of subjectivity.

The three main projects that I analyze all stemmed from the desire, on behalf of their participants, to make a difference in the world, to shift the parameters of the possible, and to address pressing social issues. What seems interesting to me is that although these social injustices remain as catalysts at the heart of the projects, something else takes over. This something else is a kind of being-in-common that privileges

[13] Although both Levinas and Derrida are concerned with the relation to the stranger, I draw from them the ethical stance that is developed through configurations of friendship that go beyond our friends. In other words, I use unconditional hospitality as a structure of relation, where friendship can be extended to those who are not friends. See Jacques Derrida *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* and Emmanuel Levinas *Totality and Infinity*.

relationality over individuality. Making room for difference, within and between and among us, while creating structures for being together, allows more space for maneuvering through oppression. And it is by positing alternative socio-political structures that community-based art begins to create different ways of being-in-common and in turn the hope for a different kind of politics. For, even if we only temporarily get to live in the world we want, the knowledge that it is possible can be an impetus to continue to advocate for progressive change. Creating propositions of the collective good life is necessary to change, extend, shift or solidify the social imaginary.

This dissertation, then, engages and enacts a particular kind of pragmatic optimism, recognizing that in order to shift relations in the world, humans need forms of attachment to it. These forms of attachment are generated in the specific art practices that I look at as well as in the strains of philosophy and critical theory with which I engage. Optimism functions to create attachment to a particular kind of futurity (Berlant 2006), and it is with this gesture of futurity that I find my artistic and philosophical affiliations. We become attached to the world by way of being fully composed of it, a mutual emergence that generates commitment. Conceiving of subjectivity and politics as inherently relational means finding networks of relation that enable growth, experimentation, and the proliferation of life, following a Deleuzian model (Deleuze 1988; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 1994).[14] It is this kind of relation that arises from the middle, that generates attachment, commitment, and solidarity, a *politics of relation*, that is created through contemporary community-based art practices. This political approach

[14] In "Immanence: A Life," Deleuze writes "The life of the individual gives way to an impersonal and yet singular life that releases a pure event freed from the accidents of internal and external life, that is, from the subjectivity and objectivity of what happens" (2001, 28).

can be thought of within the framework of affective politics, which as Brian Massumi eloquently remarks, is about "keeping the intensity in what comes next" (2009a).

This dissertation could then be seen as an attempt to map a few community-based art projects as life-building gestures. Despite the obvious limitations of political intervention through the arts, in terms of scale and what can be accomplished, there is also a sense of a kind of elaborate possibility in our midst, and the hope and liveliness of community-based arts is a way of countering rational sentiments of despair. What seem especially exciting and relevant in the projects that follow are the ways in which they propose mini-utopias as actually existing possibilities. They can be seen as materialized propositions for living differently, disseminating tactics for future resistance and simply for futures.

Chapter One:

The Fleshiness of Words: Methodology

> *…an authentic experience is a better place to begin than an object already set apart.*
> —John Dewey, *Art as Experience*

Community-based arts are processes that put into place relations, ways of being, and ways of interacting that might not otherwise be possible. They are practices that grow out of a particular set of questions, developing and shifting in relation to the demands of the particular projects, the people involved, and the larger socio-political contexts. They require commitment, negotiation, time, duration, and care. In order to address this affective matrix, I needed to build an adequate methodology. And the mixed method that I developed fostered its own set of relations, through participant observation, journal writing, critical reflection, long conversations, and friendship as method. As I approached and studied, spent time with each case, questions arose; the theoretical framework emerged from this attention, emerging from relation, as it were. The hope is that this research follows from the complexity of each of the practices I analyzed, to create parallel gestures, resonances with them to let them move from their particular locations and circulate differently in the world, as written evocations.

This research has involved the creation of a mixed methodology that incorporated ethnographic practices of participant observation and interviews, further supplemented by archival research, and writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson 2005). The theoretical elaborations in the pages that follow reflect these sustained encounters with the art

projects, WochenKlausur and Spiral Garden, where I conducted fieldwork. These two examples are supplemented by the historical example of Haha's project *Flood*. My thesis maintains that each of the three cases creates alternative socio-political structures that are capable of transforming subjectivity and collectivity.

Researching and writing, however solitary, always emerge from a relational context. The question that arose was how to make this more explicit, how to approach writing and research with the same kind of relational openness that I see reflected in both the artistic practices I examined and the theoretical framework I used. If my cases highlight an approach to politics that privileges processes of becoming with the world and others, how can I begin to write in a way that reflects or mirrors these concerns? In other words, how can I approach my research as a space of encounter? How can I make this project itself a kind of relational event that retains the voices of those others without appropriation, allows them to interject, and to object in and through the writing? Although what follows falls short of the ideal of full accountability to these questions, the dissertation itself and theoretical elaborations grew out of the many encounters enabled through my research, out of my choice to incorporate ethnographic practice into my methodology. In a sense, then, although highly authored, everything that follows is deeply informed by all these other voices, who literally spoke to me in interviews, and who always speak through me by way of my friendships and theoretical influences.

As I have said in the introduction, this research grew out of my sustained encounter with Spiral Garden. The desire to transmit the tone and complication of that space required revisiting the site with my research questions in mind and pen in hand. As I did not want to rely solely on memory or archival material, I decided to go back to

Spiral to conduct fieldwork. This process was much more involved and taxing than I had originally anticipated, in part because of the rigorous research ethics review processes and in part because of the position of being a researcher in a program that I had previously simply been a part of.

On the first day of my research at Spiral Garden I needed to get parents to sign consent forms for their children, to let them know what the project was about. Although the majority of these interactions were quite pleasant encounters with people I had known for years, including those who were quite curious and sympathetic to my research, I had more than one parent who looked at me as if I was daft after handing them consent forms which included a request to interview children, some of whom may never have spoken a single word in their lives. I explained that I would use other methods, different kinds of questions, rely upon facilitators and other communication tools, but ultimately I really could not adequately address this problem in the time that I had. When confronted with this set of considerations, as well as the task of sorting through all my collected materials, the problem arose of how to adequately convey the complexity of the space, the care and dedication that goes into all engagements there, with each other and the other-than-human, as well as the playful, irreverent qualities. The regular forms of communication at the garden, I was quite quickly reminded of, exceed language. Instead, communication rests upon slight gestures, long histories, and context. So, I needed to find a way of expressing the limitations of language within the written document. Through these considerations, the question of method moved forward into writing itself, inciting me to think about how to conduct academic research informed and guided by a politics of care. To accomplish this, I tried to write in a manner that preserved the polyphony and

complexity of the cases, to evoke the practices that I studied, or, in Kathleen Stewarts words to "write not as a trusted guide carefully laying out the links between theoretical categories and the real world, but as a point of impact, curiosity, and encounter" (Stewart, 5).

I decided to continue to develop this approach in relation to the other case study where I conducted fieldwork, that is, with WochenKlausur. The specificity of this approach was not made clear to me until my fieldwork in Alfred. While I was there, Brett Hunter, a professor in the sculpture department, commented that it wasn't very common for people studying art to conduct participant-observer ethnographic research as I had chosen to do. This is true. But as collective, process-based practices seemed to require actually *being there* to observe and experience, to put myself in the middle of the various relations. The emphasis upon process in these art practices also entails the prioritization of relation, as philosopher and cultural theorist Brian Massumi states "A process is by nature relational, from its first strike to its recharging for more" (2002b, xxix). Art that is more concerned with objects or images is usually analyzed with one of a number of well-honed art historical techniques – of the artists' intention, textual analysis, or historical materialism, amongst numerous others. My hope was to reveal and challenge the matrix of power and knowledge that is held in the ethnographer's capacity to write up the 'truth' of someone else. In order to deconstruct this paradigm, I use auto-ethnography and journal writing following from the critiques of feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppression scholars in order to think and practice ethnography in a more critical, self-reflexive fashion (Tuhiwai Smith 2006, Tillman-Healy 2003, Clifford and Marcus 1986) to evoke the practices of both WochenKlausur and Spiral Garden. Again, I found the inclusion of

other voices through interviews, as well as the proliferation of my own voice in different writing styles, helped to convey the complexity of community-based art. For if these projects are primarily about relation, and as relation is a continually evolving, contradictory, and intensive expression, the writing also needed to follow these lines. I then turned to Laurel Richardson as my primary inspiration for writing as research. Further, I realized that the care and attention that is called for in community-based art mirrors the model of friendship, and so I also draw upon Lisa Tillman-Healy's sociological description of friendship as method in what follows. It is in her insistence upon a feminist politics of care and attention that mimetically draws forth the practices of community-based art themselves.

The inclusion of Haha's project is to both to account for the more ecological registers of my research, but also because *Flood* set a historical precedent for working with communities. The *Culture in Action* exhibition marked a turn in contemporary art towards the inclusion and multiplication of community-based practice, and Flood was arguably the most successful of the projects showcased there. It is then a seminal piece for bringing together these streams of community engagement, local activism, and the art world. Although my writing cannot account add the depth and nuance that actually being there may provide, I rely upon Laurie Palmer's evocative descriptions to give another layer to the project.

Loosely adopting a model of ethnography, one that involved a rigorous participant observer practice, but that did not necessarily adhere to the conventions of anthropology, allowed me to think *with* my case studies, from within them. Relation grows out of an encounter. There is a convergence here of site-specific, interventionist art practice, and

my site-specific mode of research, which is grounded in ethnography. But this local particularity should not be understood as a blinkering of broader problematics, rather, as anthropologist James Clifford points out:

> It's interesting to connect an 'ethnographic' approach with 'site-specificity' in art. Both are ways of decentering established centres of art/cultural production and display…But it's important to recognize that turns to the specific and the local occur in contexts of 'complex connectivity,' to adopt John Tomlinson's substitute for the diffusionist term 'globalisation.' (2000, 59)

It is precisely these connections – particular, local practice embedded in complex connectivity, at the intersections of ethnography, art, and intervention – that are explored throughout this dissertation. The site-specificity of both the art practices and my methodology aims to reveal the complexity of every singularity, and the particularity of every relation.

In this approach, I align myself with cultural theorist Chela Sandoval (2000) as she articulates how critical theory *emerges from* the anti-oppression practices and forms of resistance in everyday life. The practices that follow, although not oriented towards race politics and anticolonial struggles as in Sandoval, do attempt to orchestrate atmospheres that keep open the space for alternative socio-political imaginaries, to allow those who have often been constricted some more space to move with each other. Liberatory, oppositional practices are interwoven into theoretical structures, and theory becomes a method to enact and posit hope in a world that seems to be all too bereft of it (Sandoval 2000). It is the hope for political change in feminist, anti-racist and decolonizing methodologies that my work both stems from and responds to, emphasizing the points at which theory and practice meet in a method that seeks to open up space for increasingly different subjects and that opposes brutalizing structures of power.

Although it is impossible not to predetermine the outcome of the research to some extent (we always pay attention to what interests us and make connections with what we already know), the art practices that I studied called for their own particular set of theoretical articulations. In other words, despite my obvious conditioning as a researcher and person situated in the world, the sites and practices impinged upon me and invited new and specific ways of approaching each of them. As such, the trajectories I followed were not foreseen but rather emerged in the encounters between myself and each site.

Ethnography can be a way of responding to the specificity of a site. However, it is necessary to take into account the anthropological critiques by James Clifford (1986) and others (Marcus and Fischer 1986; Rosaldo 1989; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Trinh 1989), which stems from a critical awareness of the ways anthropology has historically been deeply embedded in colonial practices. Ethnography, in its best iterations (Brummans 2007; Goodall 1994; Stewart 2007), is about writing in a way that both reveals the world and preserves its foreignness. In this way, "…the rhetoric of ethnography is neither scientific nor political, but is, as the prefix *ethno-* implies, ethical. They also speak of the suffix *–graphy* in reminder of the fact that ethnography itself is contextualized by a technology of written communication" (Tyler 1986, 122). Ethnography, as highlighted here, is about ethical writing, the imperative of doing justice to those who consent to participate in a given study, to adopt an approach that does not attempt to *represent*, but rather to *evoke*, the experience of an other. As Stephen Tyler argues:

> The whole point of 'evoking' rather than 'representing' is that it frees ethnography from *mimesis* and the inappropriate mode of scientific rhetoric that entails 'objects,' 'facts,' 'descriptions,' 'inductions,' 'generalizations,' 'verification,' 'experiment,' 'truth,' and like concepts that, except as empty invocations, have no parallels either in the

> experience of ethnographic fieldwork or in the writing of ethnographies. (1986, 130)

Leaving space for others, as an ethical stance that does not try to subsume the other into myself, profoundly informs and guides my work through two methods in particular. The first approach acknowledges and uses friendship as method (Tillman-Healy 2003). The second is an explicit writing practice that through the use of different voices, primarily a more theoretical voice and a personal, journalistic voice, attempts to both evoke the experience of these various and particular art practices while recognizing that to transmit the essence of each space is impossible, and not even desirable (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Richardson 2005). Instead, I hope to evoke the relational interconnections within each practice, the forms of attachment that are cultivated through different artistic techniques.[15]

Friendship as Method

Community arts practices arise out of a primary belief in the creative potential of everyone and in the power of art as a connecting and enabling force. Its methods, which often include sustained interaction with a diverse group of people over long periods of time, work through friendship, and privilege openness, willingness and attentiveness to others (Goldbard 2006). Community-based art is adopted in a manner of exchange, rather than mastery, of learning together rather than pedagogy (the term pedagogy deriving etymologically from 'the art of teaching the child' that privileges teaching over learning

[15] My methodology, which seeks to account for the relational aspects of community-based art, reverberates with the Actor Network Theory (ANT) as described by Bruno Latour, in his insistence that "…the work, and the movement, and the flow, and the changes…should be stressed" (2005, 143). Although I draw implicitly upon Latour's approach, I chose not to directly use his method as I wished to retain the political, and especially feminist, histories and trajectories that are embedded in writing as research and friendship as method.

[O'Neill and Wilson, 2010]). In order to *evoke*, to work my way inside community arts, I also needed to adopt this methodology of friendship. Friendship as method mirrors the practices of community-based art itself. Community art is built on sustained relationships with people, either as intense experiences over a short period of time, or often as longer projects that last upwards of twenty years. The approach that is taken in these practices is one of care and cultivation, of sharing time together. These are precisely the same kinds of techniques and relations that categorize friendship, and so the use of friendship as method is both the approach that I took towards this research as well as the approach of the community artists I interviewed.

Method is less about a pre-determined position as it is about a certain approach and the development of particular tools for investigation; therefore, employing friendship as method does not demand befriending all participants, rather it involves adopting a particular style or manner. Regardless of the actual intimacies I hold with each of the participants, I chose to observe the principles of friendship with everyone involved, following sociologist Lisa Tillman-Healy, which means treating participants with respect, and honouring their stories by using them for "humane and just purposes" (Tillman-Healy 2003, 745).

Tillman-Healy describes friendship as method as a 'narrative ethnography.' She maps out the stakes and claims of friendship as methodology, where the "primary procedures are those we use to build and sustain friendship: conversation, everyday involvement, compassion, giving and vulnerability" where the researcher becomes "a vulnerable observer" (Tillman-Healy 2003, 734). She argues that researchers need to adopt the natural pace of friendship, a long-standing, life-sharing operation. However, it

is also extremely important for me to be clear that many of the people I interviewed and spent time with for this research were and are my personal friends.

Friendship as method explicitly positions itself as emerging from feminist and other anti-oppressive qualitative methodologies, whilst implicitly critiquing the role of researcher as distanced and objective observer. It is therefore situated as part of the critical turn in ethnography from within the domains of sociology and anthropology. Due to the care and personal commitment that this methodology involves, these ethics of attention and compassion are also carried into the research itself. The hope is that this will allow for more complex, located, and ethical modes of research. As Tillman-Healy states, "Because of the power imbalance between researcher and participants, field relationships always have the potential for colonization and exploitation. Friendship as method seeks to undermine and disrupt this" (2003, 744). She goes on to explain that "Perhaps the most important aspect of this methodology is that we research with an ethic of friendship, a stance of hope, caring, justice, even love" (2003, 735). This is because "when we engage others' humanity, struggles, and oppression, we cannot simply shut off the recorder, turn our backs, and exit the field" (2003, 743). And, she notes that although friendship usually happens within rather than across racial, class, ability, and other kinds of social divisions, when we use these same principles to challenge these barriers, those with more privilege can become powerful allies for people traditionally marginalized, implicitly making everyone more compassionate and capable political actors.

My research generally, but in particular with Spiral Garden, began in response to those to whom I am already deeply attached, who are already a part of my life in a long-standing way. This attachment, although usually a benefit, sometimes proved quite

difficult. As I have already in part described, the formal mechanisms of doing ethnography distanced me from this group, by placing myself outside of the more organic flows of friendship. Tillman-Healy comments, "Close friends already may share deeper, more intricate perspectives of self, other, and context but must continually step back from experiences and relationships and examine them analytically and critically" (2003, 735). This operation can sometimes be painful and tricky, forcing a researcher to confront, on a personal level, the shortcomings of a project or group of people that have become quite dear. In my own research, it was challenging to navigate the lines around professionalism and friendship, particularly in the case of Spiral Garden, not simply because of what it forced me to face, but because it forced me to recognize myself as a researcher. In order to gain access as a researcher to Spiral Garden, I first had to pass through two sets of ethics review boards, which required a huge amount of negotiation. In part, the methodology that I adopted was a result of these protocols. Knowing what to say to get the research approved as quickly as possible tended to foreclose some of the more creative impulses that I originally had in approaching the sites. However, my previous knowledge of Spiral also made the process much quicker than it would have been for an outsider. I knew who to call, who to talk to, and relied on many favours from friends to get the ethics approval in the short time frame that I had. The process was extremely rigorous, and I was worried that it my research would be indecipherable (if relatively harmless) to those trained in the positivist tradition of medical research normally conducted at Blooview. In the end it passed, and just in time.

All of a sudden, I was situated both in, but mainly outside of, a community to which I had wanted to re-connect. The position of the researcher then became one of

estrangement, both in the sense of leaving what is familiar, making oneself strange in order to see again, but also in the sense of disconnection, recognizing that my place was slightly outside of what I had in the past felt deeply attached to. This was made especially clear to me when, abiding by the protocols handed down through two sets of research ethics review boards, I had to get children to sign consent forms to interview them. In that moment, that awkward moment of having to solicit information and consent from children who, in some cases, I had known for years, I watched them step back. Although this was at least partially exacerbated by the research design, the position of researcher, occupying the preordained stance of authority and power, is outside the regular ways of being in the gardens, outside the regular procedures of friendship.[16] These children and young adults, as well as staff members and friends, became my *objects of research* through the apparatus of the interview: microphone, digital sound recorder, consent forms, pointed questions. In stepping into the role of researcher, I somehow stepped outside what I wanted to research, the play and natural connection of the garden, outside the way friendships grow between people organically and in unlikely formations. Despite the assertion Tillman-Healy makes that "Friendship as method demands radical reciprocity, a move from studying 'them' to studying *us*" (2003, 735), what she glosses

[16] Formal interviews are not of the garden's culture, whereas arts-based methods, some of which are already in use at the garden would reflect the manner of interaction and investigation at the garden more closely. Bohdan Petryk's unpublished study on Spiral Garden conducted out of a desire to document these practices in *Seeding Expertise: A study of the Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder Programs,* suggested using the collective story format 'true stewies' to research the often enigmatic qualities of the gardens. True stewies is a form of collective storytelling where each child in turn tells a short, true story, usually with a particular theme in mind. One person, an adult or youth, transcribes part of each story, linking them all together, which results in a hilariously absurd non-linear collective story. I think using this approach to get children to talk about their experiences at Spiral, among other arts-based methodologies, could prove quite effective and more fruitful than the traditional interview format that I adopted for this research. As such, I have also relied heavily on supplemental materials and my own knowledge of and experience with the programs. I discuss practices of documentation and research in more detail in Chapter Two.

over is the way in which, through the apparatuses of power and knowledge, the researcher becomes dislocated from this holistic sense of friendship.

What is interesting and valuable in this approach, however, is that it foregrounds how friendship is not simply about harmony or ease. Instead of being understood strictly as a mode of connection or intimacy, it allows for a certain distance, a space, a drawing into and out of friendship, without it snapping. What Tillman-Healy rightfully asserts is that friendship as methodology can be a way to challenge the predetermined categories of researcher and subject. Being a researcher is not an easy posture to assume in the context of friendship. Friendship makes the position of the researcher productively uncomfortable, causing the research itself to be generated from a slightly different standpoint, challenging the matrix of power and knowledge. Sometimes a more intimate connection afforded me access to people's candour; other times it proved inhibitive. However, as Tony Gross, a parent who has been actively involved in the gardens for over seven years, pointed out: "[Spiral Garden]'s a community because it extends beyond the garden itself. It's social; it's friendships, clearly. It's not just people going to work, or we wouldn't be here [participating in a research discussion, eating dinner together]? Would we? No."[17] And so I am deeply indebted to those friendships, not only for bringing much joy and profundity to my life personally, but as the engine and inspiration for this research.

[17] Tony Gross in discussion with the author, August 20, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

Writing as method of diffraction

Friendship as method implicitly creates a demand for a reflexive practice of writing to account for the nuance of care and commitment, of the complicated relations of each site. Adopting a feminist approach of auto-ethnography meant positioning myself as a subject of this study, primarily enacted in the form of my journal entries. This process of including myself was not always comfortable, as Tillman-Healy says, "With friendship as method, researchers must examine, scrutinize, and critique ourselves in ways not required by traditional qualitative inquiry" (2003, 730). Employing this methodology presents a certain kind of liability, a kind of exposure and laying bare that opens myself to critique just as it calls upon me to be more critical. But it is necessary to use this kind of auto-ethnographic approach to allow a deeper understanding of the processes of becoming-collective and relational subjectivity that I ground and elaborate further in Chapter Two, "Reviewing the Literature."

This writing process involves 'crystallization,' a term coined by Laurel Richardson, that deflects the will to absolute knowledge, instead replacing it with multiple entry points, multiple convergences and divergences, as well as multiple voices that interject into and interrupt the text throughout. It means layering various perspectives of a project, through sociological *and* art historical *and* descriptive *and* evocative *and* philosophical *and* diaristic writing styles. This palimpsestic writing does not end up at a definite conclusion, but rather at a series of openings and questions, informing and honing the possibilities inherent in conducting 'critically optimistic' research.[18] This is bricolage as method; the mimetic activation of the cases through writing. These reflect

[18] I borrow this term from Jacob Wren and Pieter De Buysser's experimental theatre piece "An Anthology of Optimism" (2009-2010).

the mixed genres that offer "different 'takes' on the same topic, what I think of as a postmodern deconstruction of triangulation" (Richardson 2005, 934). Triangulation is a tool of social science, based on empirical scientific approaches, as a means to 'verify' one's data, to secure a position of objectivity by looking at a research object from three different perspectives or sources. Cohen and Manion (1994) define triangulation as an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint" (254). Triangulation can be accomplished through the use of data triangulation, involving different set of data collection; investigator triangulation where there are at least three different researchers; methodological triangulation which involves the use of different methods such as interviews, observation, questionnaires, etc; and theory triangulation using different theoretical perspectives (Denzin 2006). Each of these methods of triangulation represents a means to cross-check research findings. However, the idea seems to be that through this empirical cross-checking one can come closer to arriving at the 'truth.' Crystallization, as argued by Richardson, refuses the refuge of objectivity or absolute knowledge. This methodology embraces the world as it is revealed in multiple complex layers and perspectives without recourse to a stable truth. "The central imagery is the crystal" Richardson writes, "which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach" (2005, 934). Hopefully, this approach allows for broader connections with practices and philosophies outside of particular preoccupations within disciplines, as a way to connect philosophy to practices in the world for critically productive and engaged accounts of thinking/doing subjectivity differently. It is the complicated connections between

ethnography, archives, stories, fantasies, theory, and philosophy that reveal not a truth, but a structuring, a crystal that points towards a resingularisation of subjectivity, which refuses a simplistic positivist principle. My relation as researcher introduces not simply an interface between these worldly practices and critical theory, but (hopefully) a generative practice in itself.

And crystals produce diffraction. Donna Haraway defines diffraction as a metaphor for critical consciousness, one that resonates with Richardson's crystallization of knowledge. As Haraway defines it,

> Diffraction patterns are about a heterogeneous history, not originals. Unlike mirror reflections, diffractions do not displace the same elsewhere. Diffraction is a metaphor for another kind of critical consciousness at the end of this rather painful Christian millennium, one committed to making a difference and not to repeating the Sacred Image of the Same. I'm interested in the way diffraction patterns record the history of interaction, interference, reinforcement, difference. In this sense, "diffraction" is a narrative, graphic, psychological, spiritual, and political technology for making consequential meanings. (2000, 103)

It is with an eye to heterogeneous historical presents, to the radical emergences and interferences that I chose to adopt a methodology of crystallization coupled with writing as diffraction.

It is important for me in this project to approach the writing and research with the same kind of relational openness that I see reflected in both the artistic practices I studied and the theoretical framework I use. A writing practice that attempts to reflect these collective practices involves acknowledging the ways the activities of researching and writing, however solitary, always emerge from a relational context. There is a kind of inhabitation or possession in writing so performed as a collective endeavor, a way in which my voice invokes the voices of numerous others. For, even the "most individual

enunciation is a particular case of collective enunciation" (Deleuze and Guattari 2006, 84). It is this recognition, of the many voices that speak through me and inform this work, of my complete indebtedness and connectedness to a multitude, that I wish to acknowledge and reflect in the writing of this thesis. This debt is made explicit through the numerous people who have helped edit and hone this dissertation, inserting their own marks quietly into my writing. And the writing itself, then, becomes quite important, even if the talents of this author are limited. As Richardson states: "Our task is to find concrete practices through which we can construct ourselves as ethical subjects engaged in ethical ethnography—inspiring to read and to write" (2005, 939). For it is also only through this approach that theoretical writing can move out of its solipsistic inwardness, towards a world of others, inciting debate.

Throughout what follows I use two main writing styles. One is culled from my research journal; the other adopts a more traditional academic voice. I also include long excerpts and quotes from the participants to make these other voices more audible, to occupy more space, reflecting an understanding that even within my authorial voice the voices of others are constantly moving in and out, not simply informing, but inhabiting me, turning my own writing into a polyphonic collective expression. Here I follow Richardson who states: "I consider writing as a method of inquiry…a way of 'knowing'—a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it. Form and content are inseparable" (2005, 923). Part of my writing practice involves the literal interjection into the writing the 'voices' of my subjects through quotes from interviews. I hope for the interviews not to simply uphold a coherent theory, but to show the divergences,

differences, and antagonisms between the actors both between and within the art practices I take as my case studies as well as between my own authorial voice and the voices of the people who graciously agreed to participate in this research. In this, I hope for the differences in voice to reveal and enact the methodology of crystallization – creating a structure without limiting or constraining it to a particular truth, revealing the complexity of each site, each practice, and each singular actor.

I follow Donna Haraway's description of words as "intensely physical…I find words more closely related to flesh than to ideas" (2000, 85). This means using a kind of description of the projects that allows for the messiness of embodied realities to come into writing. Where writing becomes a 'worldly practice,'

> …that imploded set of things where the physiology of one's body, the coursing of blood and hormones and the operation of chemicals – the fleshiness of the organism – intermesh with the whole life of the organism. So that in a way you can start talking about any dimension of what it means to be worldly – the commercial, the physiological, the genetic, the political. (Haraway 2000, 109-10)

There is a sense of proliferation here, of complexity, of polyvocality, which mirrors the complexity of the artistic practices themselves. Integrated into this worldly commitment, is a commitment to critical theory and philosophy that enables me to deal with contradictions and uncertainties without seeking recourse to a neat resolution, in order to project different political possibilities. Writing itself, as the interweaving of worldly commitments, bodily uncertainties, excessive ethnographies and critical theory, becomes one vector of the practice of research. For it is through writing, as Richardson reminds us, that we come to know the world (2005).

The three sites: textual analysis and ethnographic practice

As I previously mentioned, in order to address the practices of community-based art, rather than simply its discursive formations, I decided to conduct fieldwork with two different artist groups, WochenKlausur and Spiral Garden. In each case I spent a period of time participating in and observing the practices of the group, writing journal notes and interviewing artists and participants. There were differences in approach to each group, though, as their methods of working diverged sharply. In other words, my methodological approach, already circumscribed by the limitations of time, access, and previous relationships, also shifted due to the specificities of the different practices. This difference is reflected in my writing. For WochenKlausur, whose approach to engaged art is extremely pragmatic, the writing becomes more analytic and straight-forward. For Spiral Garden, a magical, lyrical place where story is brought to life, the writing tends toward the poetic and descriptive. This intentional shift in style is an attempt to evoke the practices of each group.

Haha's project *Flood*, stands an exemplary historical case of the turn to socially-engaged public art. Because this project was conducted between 1992-1995 I had to rely upon secondary literature. Although this was not the ideal approach, it provided an insight into the possibilities and limitations of engaging with past work. For example, it proved difficult to deal specifically with the failures of the project because they were de-emphasized in the literature surrounding it. In other words, much of the literature which spoke directly about *Flood* was produced either by the artists themselves (Palmer 1994), by curators (Jacob, Brenson and Olson 1995), or sympathetic art critics (Scanlan 1993; Snodgrass 1993a, 1993b) and so it was difficult to understand both the full scope of the

project simply from reading reviews, however interesting they may be, and many of the problems with the project were simply not mentioned.[19] This may also be the result of the artists' intentions and investments in the projects, where their desires are written into the documentation of projects and critical distance may be impossible, or undesirable, to attain. It was also difficult to get a sense of the commitments of the various people involved due to the distance in time and space between the project and my engagement with it. It did, however, allow me more liberty to explore the possibilities of what it means to set up a garden as the heart of an art project, and provide me with an opening for a full elaboration of relational subjectivity via the philosophical thought of Gilbert Simondon and Brian Massumi, especially in their insistence on the importance of the non-human. The writing here tries to evoke, with much description provided by the artists' own accounts, a sense of the place; however, it also tends towards the abstract because I did not have access to the work itself.

The practice of participant observation with WochenKlausur began as Claudia Eipeldauer and Martina Reuter picked me up from the Buffalo bus station and we drove together through upstate New York, taking an unplanned scenic route to Alfred. I was meeting Eipeldauer for the first time; Reuter I had met once before when I interviewed her in Vienna in August 2009. Although my personal relationships with them are quite circumscribed, the experience still had the character of a burgeoning friendship. WochenKlausur's own methodology is conducted in this spirit of friendship, of co-conspirators, of developing commitments and intimacies, of finding ways of working that resist hierarchical structures and promote listening and openness to others.

[19] For a more critical account of *Flood*, and the broader *Culture in Action* program see Miwon Kwon (2002) especially Chapter Four "From Site to Community in New Genre Public Art: The Case of 'Culture in Action,'" who scoured the *Culture in Action* archives to retrieve the material that she cites.

My ethnographic work with WochenKlausur proceeded through a multi-faceted approach. I spent five days with Eipeldauer and Reuter, following them around, taking photographs, helping out when I could, and writing in a field journal throughout. This involved being present for meetings with community members to solicit support, resources and volunteers with the project as well as spending time with the teenagers who were integral to the project. I observed the planning meetings between Alfred University students, the teenagers, Eipeldauer and Reuter. While in Alfred, participatory observation consisted of a fair amount of sanding and dry-walling, as WochenKlausur prepared a room in the community centre to be converted into the Chill Stop Teen Center. I also conducted formal interviews with five of the students who were attending the class and participating in the project, some during class hours on Monday morning, others in the setting of a neighbourhood café, sipping fair trade coffee amidst university students. I interviewed Brett Hunter, a professor in the sculpture department at Alfred, who has been integral to the transformation of the department toward more socially oriented and engaged art practices, which led to WochenKlausur's invitation to teach a class. Right before my departure I sat down with Eipeldauer and Reuter in a local Pizza Hut to discuss with them their reflections and opinions of the project and how it fit in with other WochenKlausur work and we kept in touch via email after the project was over, exchanging notes and photographs.

In the study of Spiral Garden, I spent two weeks in the last session of the summer in August 2009 writing in my journal, gardening, nailing, painting, helping to prepare for the end of summer celebration and talking with parents and staff. During this time, I interviewed children on site, usually in groups, while they were either in between

activities or engaged in a repetitive task at an activity table, where conversation was already flowing. I adopted this strategy so as not to interrupt the natural flow of conversation and activity in the garden, to try to integrate myself into, rather than remove the participants from, the environment. In hindsight, however, I don't think this formal interview process was completely successful. Adopting a more playful approach, or getting children interested in the interviews earlier, spending more time at the gardens, would have been beneficial.

Additionally, I conducted group interviews with current and former staff members. In the end these interviews took many forms: a group of us sat down to dinner after work one evening, with a discussion afterwards; a quiet conversation between staff and former staff took place out in the garden during one of the work days; a hurried interview with Sarah Dobbs, the Artistic Director, happened over lunch, when she finally had a chance to catch her breath; and a lovely, long conversation with Jan MacKie, one of the original artists and Artistic Director of the gardens for over 20 years, was conducted in her beautiful studio at her house in the Bruce Peninsula. These interviews were considerably more productive and interesting than those conducted during the program, in part because the method of art practice at Spiral had already integrated this kind of reflexive practice.[20] The staff also tend to be extremely articulate, thoughtful and passionate about their work, and, of course, interviewing adults is quite a bit easier than interviewing children.

[20] As part of staff training at the beginning of the summer we would sit in a circle and have 'philosophy meetings' (often lasting for hours), which were designed to discuss our hopes and intentions for the program, reflecting on what it is that we were trying to do in order to begin the summer in a mindful fashion.

During the two weeks at Spiral, I also participated in daily activities, and kept a field journal. Later, with the help of Jan MacKie, Sarah Dobbs and Karin Farkshidy, I gathered many supplementary materials, including all the Annual Reports as well as catalogues of stories, photos, songs, and the research reports of Bohdan Petryk and Micah Donovan.

The three different case studies each elicit their own style of writing and theoretical elaborations. In other words, the process of sifting through the material provoked particular questions and frameworks, emerging as a sculpture might from a stone. The straightforwardness of WochenKlausur, their immanently practical approach to problem solving, leads to considerations of radical democracy, of engagement and participation, important and practical questions. As I will elaborate in the next chapter, I employ Chantal Mouffe's account of agonistic democracy to think through relational subjectivity in the context of cultural autonomy. Haha's *Flood*, a seminal art project for the intersection of community-based practice and contemporary curating and criticism, opens up philosophical questions around the role of these projects. It remains an evocative project, defying distinct classification, and creating room for allegory and philosophical thought; as such, this chapter contains the bulwark of the philosophical argument that I am making for relational subjectivity, one that troubles any notion of sovereignty by also including the non-human forces that run through us. The anomalous garden of *Flood* incited a claim for the importance of other-than-humans to a collective politics. Finally, the intimate attachments and not-so-easy bonds at Spiral Garden led to me to think of friendship as a structure for relation, creating a space to extend friendship to those who are not your friends. Friendship is expressed in Spiral as distance in

proximity. Each of these concepts reflect the specificities of the art practices and different forms of relation and collectivity, but do not exist in isolation.

I turn now to a review of the literature to situate the three case studies in their broader fields of cultural theory, philosophy, art history and criticism, social geography, political theory and feminist methodologies. I indicate three theoretical frames within art history and philosophies of art that inform community-based art. I then discuss the political and philosophic histories of friendship, as it is taken up through the practices of community-based art, moving on to the theoretical elaborations of Gilbert Simondon and Félix Guattari to situate my usage of relational subjectivity, and arrive at the work of Chantal Mouffe and William Connolly as political framings for such a relational practice.

Chapter Two:

Reviewing the literature

> *What matters, at the end of the last century and the beginning of this one, is the slow emergence of an experiential territory, where artistic practices that have gained autonomy from the gallery-magazine-museum system and from the advertising industry can be directly connected to attempts at social transformation. The urgency, today, is to reinforce that territory with both words and acts, and to use it for further constructive projects and experiments in subversion.*
> —Brian Holmes, "Do It Yourself Geopolitics"

> *According to Yolanda López, "In an era when the state has disintegrated to the degree where it can no longer attend to the needs of the people, artists who work in the community need to consciously develop organizing and critical skills among the people with whom they work." For this they were called 'community artists,' and critics refused to take their work seriously.*
> —Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*

This research takes place at the intersection of several disciplines, which are usefully described through a summary of the scholarly literatures referenced throughout. Emerging from the fields of cultural theory, philosophy, art history and criticism, social geography, political theory and feminist methodologies, I maintain that community-based art creates alternative socio-political structures that draw attention to the always and inevitable relational aspect of our existence, and away from sovereign, individualist, competitive models. Drawing on thinkers and methods from a range of academic disciplines allows me to examine each of my case studies from a number of different angles, in order to evoke each practice in all its messy contradiction.

While community-based arts constitute the ground and practices upon which my case studies are most instrumentally situated, this chapter identifies the key conceptual

touchstones that this interdisciplinary research engages. What follows is organized to pull out the different registers (practical, methodological, philosophical) that work congruently in my discussions of the case studies described in Chapters Three to Five. I begin by identifying three approaches that inform and influence the practice and theoretical foundations of community-based art – a modernist utopian perspective; art that maintains autonomy as a bloc of sensation; and art that is concerned with participation, the public and community, all of which tend to bridge art and life. I then move to a discussion of friendship as primary to community art, followed by a survey of the philosophical foundations and various approaches to relational subjectivity that I utilize, concluding with a discussion of political frameworks adequate to thinking through relation.

As community-based art practices have been a rather subterranean lineage in art production in the twentieth century, artists and curators have often been left with the task of its documentation and historiography (Clover 2000; Dickson 1995; Gablik 1991; Heartney 1995; Jacob, Brenson and Olson 1995; Jacob, Palmer and Ploof 2008; Pacific 1998; Palmer 1994; Parr 2006; Rosler 2010; Stevens 2002; Temporary Services 2007; Zinggl and Jeanée 2004). As most of this literature is directed at other practitioners, the majority is focused on methods of evaluation, definition or best practices (Burnham 2009; Clements 2007; Davis 1998; Galindo 2001; Goldbard 2006; Lowe 2001; Lulashnyk 2001; Howard and van Fossen 2005; Korza and Bacon 2005; Langdon 1996; marino 1997; Matarasso 1997; Marsland, Page and Shortt 2000; McCabe 1984; McGauley 2006; Ontario Arts Council 1998; Petryk 2005; Toronto Arts Council 2008). There has also been a significant amount of research from geographers and folklorists,

especially those associated with critical regionalism (Mackenzie 2006; Miller 2004, 2005; Morris and Cant 2006; Rose 1997) who use ethnography to understand the effects of involvement on communities and participants in community-based art. There have, however, been few extended critical studies on community art (notable exceptions would include Goldbard 2006 and McGauley 2007).

I make a distinction here between 'community-based art'[21] – a broad term that signifies a number of practices that actively involve nonartists as participants, a category that includes a wide variety of socially-engaged practices – and 'community art,' where

> The key distinction … turns on the artist's role: when the individual artist's vision, that person's aesthetics, choices and vocabulary, control the work in which community members take part, the work – however strong, striking, or moving, however valid as art per se – is not essentially about community…because it violates the underlying principle of equality of participation and the underlying aim of collective expression. (Goldbard 2006, 83)

Another useful distinction would be that because of community art's distance from the art world, its practitioners have developed their own institutions. Organizations such as the Village of Arts and Humanities in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania or Common Weal in Regina, Saskatchewan, and associations such as Community Arts Ontario (http://www.communityartsontario.ca) stand as prime examples. Whereas socially-engaged art relies much more heavily on pre-existing art institutions such as museums and galleries as well as its associated documentation and historiographic practices of catalogues and critical writing. As such, most of the literature that focuses specifically on

[21] Community-based art is one of a proliferating number of genres surrounding these practices, which although distinct, revolve around similar sets of concerns in socially-engaged late twentieth century art. This list would also include art in the expanded social field (Bloom), dialogical aesthetics (Kester), site-specific art (Kwon), community cultural development (Goldbard), interventionist art (Sholette), participatory art (Bishop), activist art (Felshin), relational aesthetics (Bourriaud), dialogue-based public art (Finklepearl), new genre public art (Lacy), collaborative art (Green), littoral art (Barber), etc. which could also be categorized under the various 'turns' in contemporary art practice such as the 'social turn' (Bishop) and the 'educational turn' (O'Neill and Wilson).

community art practices is written by and for community arts workers, usually to promote best practices, share ways of working and to document its history. From this orientation, the intersections with other contemporary community-based practices are often overlooked. Exceptions to this general trend come from those who consider art in relation to the public, citizenship, or activism more broadly speaking (Barndt 2006; Burnham Frye and Durland 1998; Felshin 1995; Lacy 1995; Lamoureux 2009; Martin and Schmitt Campbell 2006; Pontbriand 2000).

Within the domain of art history, community-based art has received attention either by way of socially-engaged and political art that has its roots in the historical avant-garde (Frieling 2008; Groys 2008; Bishop 2006b; Sholette 2004), or critics have taken up the discursive impacts of the term 'community' (Kwon 2002; Kester 2004; Foster 2006; Pontbriand 2000). Although the critiques of community point out some of the fundamental contradictions of community-based practice, what is largely missing is a sustained engagement with the practices themselves. This thesis closely examines community-based art as a set of collective practices, ranging from interventionist art which emerges from much critical art practice in the twentieth century (Sholette 2004); to new genre public art (Lacy 1995) where museums and curators often act as intermediaries between artists and communities; to community art (Goldbard 2006) which sits somewhere between art and community organizing, where artists and participants create process-based works with people over long periods of time (sometimes spanning more than twenty years). I bring together these various streams of art practice to show the links between them, to highlight their enactments rather than discursive formations, and argue that what unites them is a common orientation to

relation, to the creation and reinforcement of a relational subjectivity. Employing ethnography to examine the practices of community-based art as I have described in Chapter One, my research complicates some of the criticisms that rely heavily on discursive and institutional analysis (Kwon 2002; Kester 1995, 2004; Foster 2006).

The literature surrounding my three case studies reflects these trends in community-based art, where practices that fit snuggly within the art world (even as they operate as voice of resistance) have received more critical attention, whereas community art has had to rely on practitioners for whatever documentation is available. In particular, WochenKlausur's practices appear in the writings of art historian Grant Kester (2004), by the artist group Temporary Services (2007) and by art critics (Davis 2010). As with many community-based and contemporary artists, much critical commentary and documentation has been provided by members of WochenKlausur themselves, particularly Pascal Jeanée until her unexpected death in 2002, and Wolfgang Zinggl (Jeanée 2002; Jeanée and Zinggl 2004; Zinggl 2001). As well, their practices have received attention from art and activist forums online (http://www.socialdesignsite.com/content/view/82/73/, http://themodel.ie/weblog/wochen klausur-for-dorm, http://www.sdscrolls.org/museums/beyond-green/wochenklausur-index. html). Haha has received quite a lot of critical attention from art historians (Purves 2005; Sholette 2004; Kwon 2002; Becker 2002; Finklepearl 2001; Van Laar and Diepeveen 1999; Hixson 1998; Lippard 1997) curators (Heartney 1997; Jacob, Brenson and Olson 1995) and their practices have been critically examined in numerous art magazines (Scanlan 1993; Snodgrass 1993a, 1993b; Heartney 1993; Gamble 1994; Yood 1992; Golden 1990; Hixson 1990). Laurie Palmer, one of Haha's members, has written

eloquently on their practice (Palmer 1994, 2004a, 2004b) and their collective book, *With Love from Haha*, documents fifteen years of collaborative art production (Jacob, Ploof, Palmer 2007). The case of Spiral Garden is much different. The *Spiral Garden Resource Book* was published in conjunction with Médecins Sans Frontières and Bloorview Kids Rehab (2009) to provide documentation and to disseminate its specific methodology and best practices. One unpublished study, conducted through the initiative of a long-time employee who recognized the need to provide further documentation (Petryk 2005). These research and documentation efforts are coupled with the annual reports that the garden produced until 2004, as well as staff evaluations initiated by Micah Donovan. Additionally, one published interview appeared in a journal of critical theory (Levine 2002) on Spiral Garden and there is one Master's thesis in art education (Galindo 2001) examining its practices. The disparity in both sites of publication as well as volume marks the difference between art practices that are associated with or reliant upon museum and gallery structures and those that lie outside of these institutions.

Art, Modernism and Utopia

I identify three orientations in contemporary art history that are prevalent in the literature addressing community-based art in relation to subjectivity, all of them carrying a kind of utopian hope for what art can do in the world: the first is a modernist perspective, the second is an affective theory of art, and the third locates the work of art at the intersection of art and life. This first approach would be characterized by a modernist drive that

focuses on the individual artist.[22] Subjectivity, as art critic Grant Kester argues (2004), is cast here as a self-contained whole, at a remove from the complications of everyday life and relations with others, implicitly white and male in its hegemonic 'neutrality.' However, despite the foreclosure of this approach, which relies so heavily on a particular version of the sovereign subject, this view of art also carries a radical political project where art operates as critique to inspire action. This approach is exemplified by cultural theorists and art critics Theodor Adorno (1980), Clement Greenberg (1940), and Suzanne Langer (1953). If art is defined through its distance from the everyday, the critical distance art is able to maintain from everyday life allows for the possibility of a shift in perception and thus of action. For example, Suzanne Langer defines art as that which

> …liberates perception and with it, the power of conception – from all practical purposes, and lets the mind dwell on the sheer appearance of things. The function of artistic illusion is not 'make-believe,' as many philosophers and psychologists assume, but the very opposite, disengagement from belief – the contemplation of sensory qualities without their usual meanings…the knowledge that what is before us has no practical significance in the world is what enables us to give attention to its appearance as such. (Langer 1953, 49)

Art allows the viewer to step slightly outside of the normal rituals of quotidian existence to produce an effect of seeing again; that is, it makes objects strange in order to question the assumptions underpinning how we see the world. As philosopher Jacques Rancière puts it: "The aesthetic state is a pure instance of suspension, a moment when form is experienced for itself. Moreover it is the moment of the formation and education of a specific type of humanity" (2004, 23-24). Contained within this perspective is a hope that through art, we will be inspired to change the world, but as Rancière makes apparent,

[22] See Pam Meecham and Julie Sheldon, *Modern Art: A Critical Introduction* for a good introduction and overview of the artist as genius within modernism. For the links between ideology, subjectivity and artistic production see Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*.

access to art is still reserved for the privileged few. Art historian Laurie McGauley identifies this utopian longing in modernist thought as central to art practice, but especially to community-based art, which explicitly attempts to shift social conditions. She claims that the longing for utopian resolution is what governs a contradictory impulse to bring art and politics together but which simultaneously attempts to keep them apart (2007, 2). McGauley warns that this utopian longing, the desire for art to ultimately resolve social problems, undermines its political potential. In her words

> Paradoxically, 'community art' is…the romantic ideal, the Aesthetic State, the happiness that we seek; it represents the ultimate resolution. To pursue the vision of community subsumes art to this function; to pursue the relationships of collaborative and collective art with others risks not respecting the specificity of art. The subversive function is only inherent in the autonomy of art; in this view, community corrupts the autonomy, and any subversive potential is lost. (2007, 65)

This fear of the instrumentalization of art practice, specifically through such a politically ambiguous concept as 'community,' is what engenders much of the critical suspicion of community arts. However, it is also precisely the impulse of art as a social force in the world through a kind of 'education of the senses' that forms the ideological basis of community art. Art is one of the major realms where we realize that our senses have been trained, and through this knowledge it is possible to understand our selves as trained and thus as malleable, shifting and unbounded.

Art as a bloc of sensations

The second major approach to thinking about art and its impacts is through its direct effects on the nervous system. This conceptualization of art is reflected in the writings of Walter Benjamin (1936), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1994), Elizabeth Grosz

(2008), Brian Massumi (2002) and Erin Manning (2009). This framework foregrounds art's desubjectifying effects, that is, the way the force of art can cause the subject to become out of step with herself, to temporarily expand or annihilate a previous understanding of subject and subjectivity. In other words, in the space between the work and one's body, we are temporarily overcome through the affects and percepts of art, and in this moment there is the possibility to expand and undo, through perception, a sense of the self as bounded. This approach has been applied to music (Grosz 2008), experimental film (Deleuze 2001a), to the bodily experiments of such artists as Stelarc (Massumi 2002a) and to dance and painting (Manning 2009). Here, art is autonomous. Without being removed from the world, it is nonetheless figured as a fully active force. As philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari say, "the thing or the work of art…is *a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affect*s" where "Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts, and affects are *beings* whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived" (1994, 164). This gives art a radical autonomy from humans, where art "exists in itself" (1994, 164). The production of art's affects passes through the human, to recompose or resingularise subjectivity. This theoretical tradition provides a groundwork to explain the relationship of art to a subject, where that subject is not separate, removed, or sovereign; it situates art as a force that can shift perception. However, this approach within art history and criticism cannot fully account for contemporary practices in the expanded social field, that is, for both the discursive and non-discursive elements of community-based art. In other words, for this project it was

necessary to incorporate the theoretical positions which figure art as a bloc of sensations, which directly affects the nervous system, and a theorization of the instrumentalization of art, while recognizing the utopian desire that subtends both of these orientations.

Art is Life, Life is Art

In order to think through the political dimensions of community-based art as forms of intervention, I rely heavily on contemporary art history and criticism that locates the work of art at the intersection of art and life, emphasizing engagement and participation, and dissolving the categories of producer, participant, and audience. Although I draw upon each of the two previous perspectives outlined above, the research that follows is most closely aligned with this third approach to art, that which blurs the boundary between art and life. Much of the literature on the intersection of art and the politics of everyday life has been written by artists themselves as manifestos, including the Futurists and Constructivists (Sholette 2004), the Situationists (1995), the Fluxus movement (Higgins 1967), and Allan Kaprow's argument for the dissolution of the boundaries between art and life, exemplified through his 'happenings' and his assertion that "nonart is more art than Art art" (2003, 97). The deconstruction of these borders between art and life seems to indicate, on the part of artists and curators, a desire for the work to be increasingly 'public,' disseminated through populist forms and events.

The philosopher John Dewey (2005) provides a theoretical contextualization for much of this thought and practice. He argues that aesthetic experience begins in the absorption in activity where experience signifies heightened life and active engagement, and critiques the separation of art from everyday life. In this view, it is possible to

instrumentalize art in the service of politics through the everyday. More recently, critical attention has been given to collaborative and socially-engaged practices that tend to emphasize the desire to use art as a means to shift relations in the socio-political sphere, where again much is written by artists (Jacob, Palmer and Ploof 2008; Temporary Services 2007; Lacy 1995, 2010; Goldbard 1993, 2006; Barndt 2006; Cohen-Cruz 2006; Fleming 1995; Gablik 1991; Golden 1987; Jeanée and Zinggl 2002) and curators (Block and Nollert 2005; Bourriaud 2002; Jacob, Brenson and Olson 1995, 1998; Obrist 2010).

These practices, as artist and writer Suzanne Lacy argues, grew out of and in response to a growing contestation of oppression, linking activism to artists' own practices. As Lacy makes explicit, formal experiments in art were and are deeply connected to progressive social thought and action:

> An alternative history of today's public art could be read through the development of various vanguard groups, such as feminist, ethnic, Marxist, and media artists and other activists. They have a common interest in leftist politics, social activism, redefined audiences, relevance for communities (particularly marginalized ones), and collaborative methodology. (1995, 25)

Significantly, many artist groups took up forms of political organizing as art production, and the collective itself was seen as a form to contest the elitist structures of art. The shift in artistic production in the 1960s and 70s was towards group work, as seen through the collectives General Idea, Art Workers Coalition, Art & Language, Gran Fury, PAD/D (Political Art Documentation and Distribution), and later, Group Material. As art historian Charles Green (2001) argues, the framework of collaborations questioned the hegemony of individual authorial control by opening up artistic production to the

unpredictability of working in groups.[23] Artists in the sixties sought to deconstruct the logic of the art market while mirroring the liberatory struggles of marginalized groups such as women, indigenous, black and other people of colour, as well as queers and anti-war activists, through these collective processes. Their enterprise disrupted the universalization of a sovereign subject through the direct resistance of marginalized and oppressed people and the advocacy of their allies.

Feminist artists, coming to the fore in the 70s, were also experimenting with questions of engagement and subjectivity. Prominent feminist artists operating at that time included Miriam Schapiro, Arlene Raven, Sheila Levrant de Bretteville, Mary Beth Edelson, June Wayne, Adrian Piper, Judith Baca and Lucy Lippard. This tradition has continued through the direct intervention and activist art strategies of ACT UP (AIDS coalition to Unleash Power) and the Guerilla Girls, both of which are still active today. They continue to question the status of artistic subjectivity in their de-personalized and anonymous gestures. Feminists were drawn to collective practices that challenged art's individualism, just as they challenged an *a priori* male identity. West Coast feminist art students in particular adopted this way of working, among them Mother Art, the Feminist Art Workers, The Waitresses, Ariadne: A Social Art Network, and Sisters of Survival, using interventionist collaborative practices as art.

[23] Artist and writer Martha Rosler makes clear that this turn in art production to collaboration is neither unprecendented nor is it remarkable in other work environments. She says "Young artists perennially reinvent the idea of collaborative projects which are the norm in the rest of the world of work and community and only artificially discouraged, for the sake of artistic entrepreneurism and 'signature control,' in the art-market world" (2010, 135).

Participation and the Public

One of the central themes in collective contemporary art has been the relationship to the 'public.' As art has increasingly been thought of in terms of cultural patrimony, housed in public museums, and has literally been moved to public plazas and streets, these questions have garnered more attention. With this growing interest in the intersection of the public and art, as it has been articulated and practiced by socially-engaged activist artists, the notion of the public itself has been expanded and questioned. Art historian Kirstin Mey identifies the influence of conceptual and performance art of the 1950s and 60s as precursors to the question of the 'public.' Judy Chicago, Martha Rosler, Hans Haacke, Gordon Matta-Clark and Helen and Newton Harrison in the United States; and Joseph Beuys, Marina Abramovic and Jochen Gerz in Europe, all transformed what art in the public domain looked like, and in the process questioned both the categories of art and public (Mey 2010, 331). In other words, artists and critics began to question who the public for art is and why do they, or should they, care? What does it mean to be a public? If art is public, where should it be located? And who should be involved in its production or in decisions regarding its subject matter? Much of this criticism draws on concepts of the public from critical and political theory (Habermas 1989; Fraser 1989; Warner 1999; Berlant 2008). Cultural theorist and curator Grant Kester most directly takes up these questions of democracy and dialogue in their application to contemporary art (2004). Drawing upon Habermas' notion of the public sphere (1989), where a public is created through rational discussion, Kester proposes what he calls 'dialogical aesthetics,' which describes art that uses face-to-face dialogue to promote democratic engagement. WochenKlausur serves as a primary example.

Art historian Miwon Kwon provides a broader overview of the history of what is known as 'public art.' She traces its evolution by looking at the movement of public art as monument to its instantiation in site-specificity (2002).[24] She points out that after the '*Tilted Arc* controversy,' which eventually led to dismantling the sculpture in 1989, more critical attention was turned to the communities, workers, and people that use and occupy these sites.[25] This work toward inclusion is expressed in a desire to situate art in, but most importantly *with* communities. The examination of the relationship between the public and art, through criticism and art practice, was central to the emergence of community-based art, particularly in new genre public art (Lacy 1995), which seeks collaboration with various communities to produce art, implying that a 'public' for an artwork should be actively involved in its creation.[26] The contested terms of the public in contemporary art have informed a broader movement towards social intervention, to make art accountable not simply as a mode of commentary, but as a means to actually shift social and political realities.

---

[24] Kwon defines site-specificity as "Site-specific work in its earliest formation, then, focused on establishing an inextricable, indivisible relationship between the work and its site, and demanded the physical presence of the viewer for the work's completion. The (neo-avant-guardist) aesthetic aspiration to exceed the limitations of traditional media, like painting and sculpture, as well as their institutional setting; the epistemological challenge to relocate meaning from within the art object to the contingencies of its context; the radical restructuring of the subject from an old Cartesian model to a phenomenological one of lived body experience; and the self-conscious desire to resist the forces of the capitalist market economy, which circulates art works as transportable and exchangeable commodity goods—all these imperatives came together in art's new attachment to the actuality of the site" (2002, 11-12).

[25] Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* was installed in the Federal Plaza in New York City in 1981, following its commission by the Arts-in-Architecture program. Those who worked in the Plaza had to walk around the 36.6 meter long sculpture and argued successfully for its removal. This highly publicized event led to a larger discussion about the role and value of public art.

[26] Artist and writer Suzanne Lacy claims that "Unlike much of what has heretofore been called public art, new genre public art – visual art that uses both traditional and nontraditional media to communicate and interact with a broad and diversified audience about issues directly relevant to their lives – is based on engagement" (Lacy 1995, 19).

I elaborate the possibilities in community-based art for alternative socio-political structures as collaborative autonomy (Smith 2011), or radical, agonistic democracy (Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Mouffe 2009; Connolly 1995), implicitly arguing for the public as a sphere of engagement that does not rest on rational argumentation, but that involves providing structures for relational becoming together. In this argument, I draw upon French curator Nicolas Bourriaud's intervention into socially-engaged art defined as 'relational aesthetics' (2002). Bourriaud coined the term in 1995, in a text for the catalogue of the exhibition *Traffic*, shown at CAPC contemporary museum in Bordeaux. Relational aesthetics, as Bourriaud argues, marks a movement from representation to the generation of relationships. He says, "the role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real, whatever the scale chosen by the artist" (2002, 13). Bourriaud focuses on those practices that create amicable social spaces, promoting relation between people as the primary goal of the work. In particular he analyzes practices that grew out of installation art, exemplified by artists Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Liam Gillick, Carsten Höller, Philippe Pareeno, Jorge Pardo and Rirkrit Tiravanija. What he terms 'relational aesthetics' has been characterized as art that seeks to create different kinds of relational moments amongst people, most notably in such examples as Rirkrit Tiravanija's *Untitled (Free)* (1992) at 303 Gallery in New York, a piece where he cooked and served Thai curry, soups, and phad thai to gallery-goers. Bourriaud argues for a shift within contemporary art from a belief in an ever-receding utopia, to the creation of micro-utopias, while highlighting how this mirrors a shift from a goods- to a service-based economy (2002, 13). I pick up on this idea of micro-utopias and the shift to relation

to engage with the political potential of community-based art. However, as Claire Bishop's (in)famously stated (2004) the democratic vision is sucked out of the artworks associated with relational aesthetics by their position in upscale galleries. Bishop argues that the claim that relational aesthetics shifts social relations is exaggerated, as the genre's proponents tend to promote social harmony amongst those who already occupy a privileged position in the (art) world, completely ignoring who is excluded from this world. She says, "Tiravanija's microutopia gives up on the idea of transformation in public culture and reduces its scope to the pleasures of a private group who identify with one another as gallery-goers" (2004, 69). Again, the concern here lies with who constitutes a public and what the nature of this public may be. Hal Foster also expresses skepticism at some of the more grandiose claims of relational aesthetics: "Sometimes politics are ascribed to such art on the basis of a shaky analogy between an open work and an inclusive society, as if a desultory form might evoke a democratic community, or a non-hierarchical installation predict an egalitarian world" (2004, 193). I would go even further and suggest that the radical possibilities ascribed to these art practices are inherently undermined by their circumscription within the art world, for those very principles that artists are aspiring to create are already foreclosed by the associated institutions of the elite and the circulation and commodification of both art works and art stars. Community-based art also carries a pretension to promote social harmony, but its foundational beliefs and practices are about drawing on the creative capacities of those who have been traditionally marginalized to create different socio-political structures of relation, rather that reifying already privileged positions.

Participation – what it means to participate and who is gaining from participation – is another theme that runs across community-based art literature. Participation as a broad term breaks down the authoritative stance between the artist and the audience (Bishop 2006b; Frieling 2008). Recently, however, the assumed good of participation has been critiqued (Bishop 2006a; Miessen 2007), asserting non-participation to be a valuable means of resistance, and arguing that participation itself can become a form of homogenization or cohesion. Participation can be a radical move to deconstruct the binary of art and life and artist/nonartist, but the terms of participation need to be understood within their contexts, recognizing that the 'good of participation' has now become solidified as its own ideological formation. A shift in terms from participation – which implies a certain kind of activity, an imperative for a particular kind of action – to relation – where ideas emerge from the middle and are responsive to the community (owing to the fact that they are generated by it) – provides a more adequate terminology for community-based practices.

Community Art

Community art has similarly been engaged with the contested terms of the public, particularly in its associations with accessibility and radical democracy. Popular educator Paolo Freire (1970) is a central figure for the theoretical conceptualization of community art. He argues for a collaborative model of education, emphasizing a shift from a banking model, where learners are constructed as empty vessels passively waiting to be filled with knowledge, to an emphasis on problem solving between co-learners. Freire's theories have been most directly applied by Augusto Boal (2008) who developed the 'theatre of

the oppressed,' legislative theatre and forum theatre. Each of these theatre techniques were developed as means to practice, through acting, alternatives and tactics in antagonistic or seemingly intractable political situations, proposing solutions and actively engaging in consciousness-raising. These two Brazilian activists and writers have been greatly influential to the body of literature and practice of community arts, where an emphasis is placed on learning together to resist oppression through experimentation. Their emphasis on horizontal and equitable relations, along with the perpetual interrogation of theory by practice, has translated fruitfully from the domain of education into that of performance and other arts.

Most of the literature surrounding community arts has been written by its practitioners due to its marginalization from mainstream art world circuits, as I have already stated. Much of this research focuses on methods of evaluation and best practices (Burnham 2009; Clements 2007; Davis 1998; Galindo 2001; Goldbard 2006; Lowe 2001; Lulashnyk 2001; Howard and van Fossen 2005; Korza and Bacon 2005; Langdon 1996; marino 1997; Matarasso 1997; Marsland, Page and Shortt 2000; McCabe 1984; McGauley 2006; Ontario Arts Council 1998; Petryk 2005; Toronto Arts Council 2008). François Matarasso argues for access to the production and reception of art as a universal human right (1997), extending and underlying the justification of these practices to funding bodies. However, few practitioners speak directly to the broader art world, and when they do they are often forced into the position of promoting or legitimizing their practices (Fleming 1995; Goldbard 1994; Felshin 1995). Tied to this promotional position is the task of history writing. As community-based art has operated outside of traditional

art institutions its history has been largely overlooked or unknown. Arlene Goldbard comments that this has meant that

> …community arts seem to exist in a perpetual present, seen by almost everyone except its hard-core practitioners as new and consequently in need of definition, explanation and, most of all, legitimation. So, claiming that community arts do indeed have a knowable past is not an innocuous exercise in history-writing. It is part of a campaign for legitimacy, a way of saying that the phenomenon has roots, substance, integrity and staying power. (1993, 23)

Indeed, when community art is taken up in art history and criticism, it is usually not portrayed in a favourable light; most often cited are the critiques by Hal Foster (2006), Miwon Kwon (2002) and Grant Kester (1995, 2004). Foster is concerned with the ways community artists may 'colonize' or add to a community's sense of disenfranchisement by uncritically adopting ethnographic methods as art. He says "the automatic coding of apparent difference as manifest identity and of otherness as outsideness must be questioned. For not only might this coding essentialize identity, but it might also restrict the identification so important to cultural affiliation and political alliance (identification is not always ideological patronage)" (2006, 175). Kwon similarly remains critical of the essentialization of the term 'community', as well as of how these borders are formed and maintained in community arts (2002). She expands on these liabilities: "the engagement of 'real' people in community-based art can install new forms of urban primitivism over socially neglected minority groups" (Kwon 2002, 138). Kwon highlights the dangers of seeing community-based art as an inherently more progressive or democratic practice, and the limitations of understanding community through the markers of identity. Kester focuses on the discursive engagement of the word 'community' and argues that the best practices, those least likely to use a disenfranchised community merely to benefit the

career of the artist, are those that engage with already politically constituted communities (2004). These critiques focus on the rhetoric of community art and devote more attention to the definition of 'community' and all its various implications than what these practices actually involve (Fleming 1995; Clover 2000). As Kwon acknowledges,

> Artist Martha Fleming has pointed out that what critical projects like Kester's are addressing is not so much the actual practice of community-based art but one discursive characterization of it, its commodification and promotion as 'new public art' by a "professional-managerial class (PMC) – the critics and curators currently creating careers and fiefdoms for themselves by harnessing and bringing into the fold an artists' activity that has been threatening the institutions that employ them." (2002, 143)

Although a discursive analysis of the concept of community has highlighted the exclusionary mechanisms within it and points to how 'communities' are sometimes approached as stand-ins for a particular set of issues which then flatten the lives of people onto one plane, what these critiques elide is the fact that many of the practices became grouped under the moniker 'community art' only because of the pressures of granting agencies who created certain categories that artists then recognized and responded to (Yashinsky 2007).

The actual practices of community art have received more attention from other disciplines, such as geography (Mackenzie 2006; Morris and Cant 2006), art education (Langdon 1996; Galindo 2001; Pearse 2006) and folklore studies (Miller 2004; 2005). The field of critical regionalism in particular has taken up the study of community art to examine alternative structures of public, urban space. Prominent amongst these studies, which use ethnographic principles to examine the workings of organizations is Gillian Rose's (1997) description of various community arts projects in Edinburgh as

'performing inoperative community.'[27] Here she provides, in the practices themselves, a philosophical grounding for the argument that Miwon Kwon puts forth in advocating a move from community to collective praxis.[28] Relying upon the philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy (1991) in his definition of inoperative community[29] – that is a community that cannot be identical to itself, that is not about work but about process, as a being-with that privileges sharing through compearance[30] – Rose argues with many other critical theorists that 'community' can no longer be associated with a radical political project because of its reliance on identity, intolerance of difference, and the close guardedness of its borders (Hall 1995; Harvey 1989; Massey 1994; Young 1990). These processes of inclusion and exclusion seem to rest upon a vision of the subject as "a rational transparent entity that could convey a homogenous meaning on the total field of her conduct by being the source of her actions" (Mouffe 1995, 260). The different other, outside of the self-same identity of the community becomes "an object of both fear and fascination" (Rose 185). Jean-Luc Nancy's definition of the inoperative community reveals the excess of

[27] Rose never names the organizations which she studied, but does identify that all of the community arts programs were based in Edinburgh, and that "Nearly all of the community arts workers I spoke with are employed in projects funded by the Urban Programme, administered by the Scottish Office. This programme provides funding for projects operating in what the Scottish Office defines as areas of multiple social deprivations, and which produce cost-effective and tangible results. These arts workers are therefore working in localities defined as deprived, and these are mostly interwar and postwar council housing estates on the outskirts of Edinburgh: Craigmillar, Muirhouse, Pilton and Wester Hailes" (1997, 190).

[28] Kwon concludes her study on site-specific art by arguing for a turn away from community towards collective praxis. She says "…collective art praxis…is a *projective* enterprise. It involves a provisional group, produced as a function of specific circumstances instigated by an artist and/or a cultural institution, aware of the effects of these circumstances on the very conditions of the interaction, performing its own coming together and coming apart as a necessarily incomplete modeling or working-out of a collective social process. Here, a coherent representation of the group's identity is always out of grasp" (2002, 154).

[29] Nancy calls his non-communitarian community, or the synching of singularities through being-in-common 'inoperative' to describe it as a process. He says, "This is why community cannot arise from the domain of *work*. One does not produce it, one experiences or one is constituted by it as the experience of finitude. Community understood as a work or through its works would presuppose that the common being, as such, be objectifiable and producible" (1991, 31).

[30] Nancy argues that in place of communion there is communication, which means that "finitude itself is nothing" (1991, 28). In order to designate this mode of appearing, an appearing of nothing, "we would need to be able to say that finitude *co-appears* or *compears* (*com-paraît*) and can only *compear*: in this formulation we would need to hear that finite being always presents itself 'together'" (1991, 28).

discourse, how it is undone in its making, never fixed and never complete. Rose says "Inoperative community constitutes a resistance 'to all the forms and all the violences of subjectivity,' as well as to all the forms and violences of 'community' (1997, 188).[31] Rose argues for an understanding of community, as it is articulated by the community arts workers she interviewed, where community is at once deployed and unworked (189), and through this oscillation resists and questions the assumed homogenization of community.

Friendship

Rose's analysis foregrounds a way out of the romance of community, critiqued by cultural theorist Miranda Joseph (2002) and art historian Laura McGauley (2007). McGauley's detailed study of community arts finds similar problems in the deployment of community, but she turns to friendship to posit a less romantic version of being-in-common, one she sees reflected in community arts practices themselves. Friendship has a long history as a political concept in philosophy, both sharing a common lineage in the Greek concept of *philia*. One of the primary philosophers of friendship is Aristotle who defines it in a temporal dimension as sharing one's life. Giorgio Agamben uses Aristotle's definition but reconceptualizes it, noting the connection to philosophy more generally, while thinking through the splitting of subjectivity that might be implied by sharing, which he argues, leads to a radical desubjectification, where the other, the friend, comes to inhabit the self (2009). Friendship has also been discussed by Maurice Blanchot as a proximity in distance where the friend remains foreign even in her closeness (1997),

[31] There is a resonance here with Emmanuel Levinas' philosophical project where he disrupts the 'violence of ontology' by positing ethics as primary. As Richard Cohen says in the his introduction to *Ethics and Infinity*, "Ethics does not have an essence, its 'essence,' so to speak, is to not have an essence, to unsettle essences. Its 'identity' is precisely not to have an identity, to undo identities" (1985, 10).

a concept derived from Levinas (1998).[32] Philosopher Jacques Derrida focuses on the inherently political and democratic underpinnings of the notion of friendship, while also pointing out the way in which these have been framed in a specifically fraternal fashion (1997), questioning whether it would be possible to think of democracy through friendship between women. Despite this, he argues for friendship's potency as a political concept because "non is comparable to this unequalled hope, to this ecstasy towards a future which will go beyond death" (1997, 3-4).

These political dimensions of friendship are also taken up in a more concrete fashion by a number of cultural theorists who show how friendship can work as a frame of consistency for radical political action. Postcolonial theorist Leela Gandhi (2006) argues that friendship worked as an anticolonial force at the end of the 19th century in England and India. Political theorist Nina Witoszek (2007) also argues for the efficacy of friendship in her discussion of the importance of private intimacies to the active public opposition and eventual overthrow of Poland's authoritative Soviet regime (1976-1989). The political implications of friendship have additionally been discussed at length by queer theorists (Foucault 2001; Warner 1999) where friendship becomes a way of resisting heteronormative culture and the normalization of homosexual culture. Although McGauley posits friendship as a model that she argues would be well adapted to thinking through community arts, she does not closely examine how this happens. I pick up on her suggestion, using the theories that cut across these disciplines, of philosophy, political and cultural theory, to provide a detailed account of the dimensions of friendship as a structure for relation in Chapter Five.

[32] Simon Critchely argues that for Levinas "the experience of a relation to the other [is] irreducible to comprehension and hence (for Levinas) to ontology, a relation [to the other can then] be described with the adjective 'ethical'" (1999, 261-2).

Subjectivity

In these discussions of community art, turning on notions of the public, participation, inoperative community, and friendship, what is being implicitly thought through is a non-sovereign self and non-sovereign collective. Within community arts literature, the subject is often assumed to be self-evident and much of the discourse surrounding community arts employs the rhetoric of agency, empowerment or cultural rights (Goldbard 2006; Matarasso 1997; Lowe 2001), based on a version of the liberal individual. This approach is useful as a tool to promote community arts and garner funds. However, the critiques of community leveled by art historians and others could usefully be applied to subjectivity here. The promotion of individual agency or empowerment can reduce the social field to transparent actors, in turn underemphasizing the role of power (Foucault 1982) or other nonhuman forces (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Guattari 1995) in subject formation. As Gillian Rose makes clear

> …perhaps it is not the case that to become visible and nameable, to express identity, is a necessarily radical strategy. To be named, to be discursively recognizable, may itself be a tactic which always already conceded too much. To be named is to make sense, to be made sense of; it is to be positioned in the realm of the legible, the knowable, the translatable. It is to be made vulnerable to knowledge; to be produced through discourse, to be produced. (1997, 187-188)

Although it is impossible to escape discourse, there is also something excessive in material and artistic practices that cannot be reduced to discursive formations. And to concede one's position, to become fixed, is not necessarily the best strategy. The danger in a politics of recognition that Rose articulates is echoed by cultural theorist Elizabeth Grosz. Grosz articulates the political and philosophical implications of a shift from recognition to imperceptibility:

> Instead of a politics of recognition, in which subjugated groups and minorities strive for a validated and affirmed place in public life, feminist politics should, I believe, now consider the affirmation of a politics of imperceptibility, leaving its traces and effects everywhere but never being able to be identified with a person, group, or organization. (Grosz 2005, 194)

This shift can be characterized as a move from representation (as recognition) to encounter where encounter becomes a disrupting moment of a force-to-thought (O'Sullivan 2006). Here, the sovereign self is abandoned in order to understand our selves as indiscrete, as porous, as inevitably open to the world and to others as an ethical position. In this political understanding of the subject, one's identity matters far less than how singular beings think, act, and relate to others in the world. In this conception, politics shifts to events and actions, rather than identities and representations. By thinking of subjectivity as inter- or trans-subjective, it is possible to begin to imagine a politics of difference wherein subjects are more accountable to each other; it also more adequately accounts for the kinds of forces and complications that make us up as subjects.

Relational ontology provides a way out of the impasse of identity as sovereignty.[33] I trace this concept through the philosophy of Gilbert Simondon, Félix Guattari and Brian Massumi where knowledge and being arise *with* the world as a form of constant becoming. The environment and the self are thoroughly entangled. Simondon seeks to account for the genesis of the individual and through this arrives at a philosophy of individuation. He states that his philosophy is in opposition to both a hylomorphism

[33] Psychoanalysis has long refused a version of the individual as sovereign, with the emergence of the unconscious at the beginning of the twentieth century. Guattari himself trained with Lacan and never completely renounced psychoanalysis. See Gary Genosko *Félix Guattari: An Aberrant Introduction* for a more detailed account of this history. However, my insistence upon relational ontology, rather than a discussion of the unconscious or split subject, rests upon an ecological orientation that is absent in the over-emphasis of the human in psychoanalysis. Further, despite the institutionalization of the unconscious as the operative theory of human subjectivity, political discourse the still employs the idea of the sovereignty as the height of liberal individualism.

which assigns an ideal form to matter and to a substantialist reading of the individual as self-generating monad.[34] Both of these conceptualizations take the individuated individual as pre-given, as already formed and established, requiring a retroactive accounting of the individual's genesis. Simondon instead provides a detailed analysis of the emergence of the individual. He articulates a philosophy of individuation, where the individual is constantly in a process of phasing into and out of itself through the force of nature. In other words, the individual is never sovereign; it is always more than one. The individual in this sense is always in excess of itself, cannot be contained, even as it momentarily and repetitively adheres to create an individual. "His objective," writes commentator Fillipo del Lucchese, "is to show that relation is not what happens between two substances but that relationality 'is' reality itself. From this it follows that Being is not what 'is' (and what eventually happens in the form of relations); Being is what 'becomes in and through relationality'" (2009, 181). Gilbert Simondon insists on relation as an alternate orientation to turn away from questions of being and identity. In this, Simondon says, being, or being as becoming, is always relational.

Brian Massumi expands this relational position in order to account for change. For if the positions of subject or society (as primary groupings) are presumed in advance they become fixed, implicitly fixing all other action or possibility. "These 'foundationalist' approaches [of modernism, transcendence, etc] have been roundly criticized, in particular since deconstruction, for appealing more or less explicitly to a

[34] Simondon says "If we compare these two approaches, we can see there is a clear opposition between the self-centered monism of substantialist metaphysics and the bipolarity depicted by hylomorphism. But despite this opposition, these two ways of analyzing the real nature of the individual have something in common: in both cases, there is the assumption that we can discover a principle of individuation, exercising its influence before the actual individuation itself has occurred, one that is able to explain, produce and determine the subsequent course of individuation. Taking the constituted individual as a given, we are then led to try to recreate the conditions that have made its existence possible" (1992, 297).

myth of origins" (2002a, 68). However, instead of really doing away with a foundationalist approach, Massumi argues, the foundation has merely shifted. "Society now figures as an a priori, a principle of intersubjectivity hatching individual subject-eggs. The 'foundation' in this case is not a mythic origin, but a foundation it is nevertheless" (2002a, 68). Social change, then, becomes a momentary rupture or disruption of social order that seems to appear out of the blue. The question becomes, especially for those concerned with social justice, how to make subversion or rupture consistent, to make its effects felt more deeply, over time. The way out of this problem is to provide a consistency for relation; it is to give up the fixed polarities of the debate to begin with, by "asserting the exteriority of the relation" (2002a, 70). Here, foundations can be understood not as essential or unmovable truths of the world, but rather as explanations after the fact for a set of movements, which then act as regulatory framings. Regulatory framings are useful devices for creativity to push up against, but these should not be misrecognized as foundational essences. Change, for Massumi, is a continual ontogenetic process of becoming that even as it is corralled into pre-existing formations constantly escapes and moves beyond.

Félix Guattari is primarily concerned with reconceptualizing subjectivity. He argues for subjects to be understood as processes of subjectification, furthering a lineage that privileges the subject becoming in-formation with the world. In *The Three Ecologies* Guattari argues for an ethico-political articulation called ecosophy to combat the "general movement of implosion and regressive infantilization" that currently characterizes the relationship between subjectivity and its exteriority (2000, 19). To do this, Guattari argues that the environment, social relations and human subjectivity, need to be

understood together (2000, 20). What this means is that the nonhuman part of subjectivity is crucial, for, Guattari argues, it is from this nonhuman that heterogenesis can emerge.[35] Guattari develops the conditions of possibility for different subjectivities through his ethico-aesthetics of new aesthetic practices (1995). Aesthetics here is not meant simply to signify plastic art or artistic practices per se, but broadly-defined practices of creation, "a dimension of creation in a nascent state, perpetually in advance of itself, its power of emergence subsuming the contingency and hazards of activities that bring immaterial Universes into being" (Guattari 1995, 102-2). Aesthetics as creation is privileged as an ethico-political orientation because of its ability to reproblematize the collective and the subject, to move beyond pre-established schemas "once again taking into account the fate of alterity in its extreme modalities" (1995, 107). The subject, then, is radically decomposed by its understanding as a kind of surface for events, a composition of multiple forces of individual-group-machine that nonetheless retains a certain consistency. This theoretical trajectory becomes important for me to be able to articulate the way Haha's use of the hydroponic garden is central to building other kinds of collectives, but underlines my approach to subjectivity throughout this thesis.

[35] Guattari defines heterogenesis as "processes of continuous resingularization. Individuals must become both more united and increasingly different" (2000, 45). The translators of *The Three Ecologies*, Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton, clarify that heterogenesis is "an active, immanent singularization of subjectivity, as opposed to a transcendent, universalizing and reductionist homogenization. Heterogeneity is an expression of desire, of a becoming that is always in the process of adapting, transforming and modifying itself in relation to its environment. Whereas the State works by homogenizing (macropolitical consensus), it is always already defeated by heterogeneous formations whose singularity cannot be represented (micropolitical dissensus). However much organizations attempt to homogenize desire, something always escapes or leaks out (the 'line of flight')" (2000, 95 n49).

Politics

These philosophical approaches of relational subjectivity demand a rigourous evaluation of adequate political frameworks. For if an individual is now being thought beyond the framework of liberalism, then a different approach to politics is also necessary. Chantal Mouffe (1988, 2000, 2009) begins precisely with this question of thinking democracy apart from the liberal individual. She frames this as a question of democratic agonism, where a model of difference can be accounted for by a shift away from politics in an adversarial frame – because I am a bounded 'I' the existence of difference is threatening – and toward the model of worthy opponents that marks difference as generative. Democratic agonism means that "ethico-political principles can only exist through many different and conflicting interpretations, such a consensus is bound to be a 'conflictual consensus'. This is indeed the privileged terrain of agonistic confrontation among adversaries" (2009, 103). Here, where a more open version of subjectivity is implied and demanded, space is made for political difference with the aim of avoiding both apathy and war (2000). She says "the main question for democratic politics is not how to eliminate power but how to constitute forms of power more compatible with democratic values. Coming to terms with the constitutive nature of power implies relinquishing the ideal of a democratic society as the realization of a perfect harmony or transparency" (2009, 100). These political frameworks are enacted in WochenKlausur's interventionist art that creates platforms of cultural autonomy. Using many of the same principles of non-hierarchical but engaged decision making, while refusing to flatten difference, they create social scaffolding for agonistic democracy, as I will argue in Chapter Three.

William Connolly (1995) argues similarly that politics would best be articulated, on a small scale, through the politics of friendship, and on a larger scale through Mouffe's democratic agonism. He attempts to work out a balance between a Levinasian model of infinite responsibility and the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari that see the subject as fully composed by forces, machines, plants, animals, humans and others. I pick up on this balance to articulate the different scales of subjectivity. Simondon, Massumi and Guattari all articulate a version of subjectivity that accounts for the multiple becomings of the subject in relation to the world (as composed of social forces and the force of 'nature' and the virtual). But the interpersonal gestures of hospitality, friendship, and intimate attachments, which are equally concerned with moving away from the sovereignty of the self as a form of ontological violence, are not as easily articulated in this tradition. The difficulty of expressing both these interpersonal affective ties and affect as it moves impersonally through the world is not easily resolvable.[36] However, thinking of these movements at different scales, where the interpersonal becomes a scale at which we can become inhabited by our friends, and the scale of the nonhuman can radically expand our sense of self, goes some way to thinking this two positions together. There is a heterogeneity to these approaches, but both seem necessary to articulate the

[36] Cultural theorists Mielle Chandler and Astrida Neimanis in their description of a proto-ethics of water argue convincingly that Levinas and Deleuze, despite their distinct differences, "Both…seek to elucidate modes of existence that facilitate the being of stratified entities. Levinas…associates this facilitative engagement with ethics, but, for Deleuze, the key term is "becoming." Processes of becoming—schematized as the intensive—are what allow one being to affect another, and through such affecting, enact a transformation…Yet, despite this common concern for the proliferation of plurality, there is also a significant divergence between Levinas and Deleuze. Being and a capacity to facilitate becoming are not, for Deleuze, distinct planes, as is the case in Levinas' formulation of ontology and ethics. Moreover, in Deleuze's schema, *all* entities are multitudinously and rhizomatically relational. The capacity to affect and be affected, and to bring other bodies into being, belongs to all bodies in the material world—not only human, but also animal bodies, chemical bodies, bacterial bodies, and certainly watery bodies. Hence, Deleuze implicitly challenges not only Levinas' separation of ethics from ontology (and Levinas' placement of ethics as prior to and the precondition of ontology), but also his privileging of the interhuman" (forthcoming).

complexities of the case studies that I am dealing with. It is in trying to find a way to think these divergent traditions together that multiple formations of relational subjectivity might be articulated and lived.

These conflicting lineages of philosophy, coupled with an ethnographic approach outlined in Chapter One, reveals that the subject is not self-evident, that it can be understood in a process of immanent unfolding with the world, held together with others through collective assemblages and, as I will argue throughout the rest of this dissertation, that this understanding is articulated through the expressions and practices of community-based art. The turn from community to collective praxis and from identity to relation unites this diverse body of literature. Relation, is found in the examples that follow first, as a way to intervene into everyday socio-political realities through practices of agonistic democracy as in WochenKlausur; second, in the recomposition of collectives as both human and other-than-human, through the connective tissue of Flood's hydroponic garden; and third, in Spiral Garden's use of friendship as a method for governing relation. The premise that relation precedes the subject implies a particular ethical orientation that I elaborate in each of the cases as a specific set of considerations which draws upon the diverse scholarship that I have just described.

I first examine the practice of WochenKlausur, whose non-hierarchical, collective method manifests principles of agonistic democracy to encourage alternate social infrastructures. I pick up here on the political frameworks articulated by Chantal Mouffe to indicate the importance of structures for framing relation. Radical democracy and relational subjectivity are not about the removal of structures, but rather about finding

more humane, just and equitable modes of relation with each other and the world. This is precisely the task that WochenKlausur sets for themselves with each project.

Chapter Three:

WochenKlausur's (failed) pedagogy

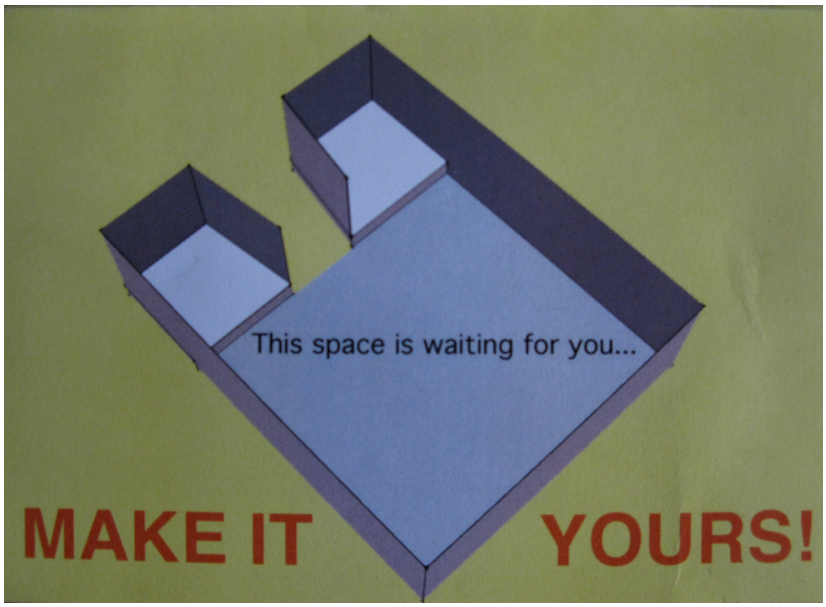

Figure 1 Postcard of WochenKlausur project in Alfred, NY (photo courtesy of the author)

The Vienna-based artists' collective, WochenKlausur, exemplify the move in contemporary art to practices of social intervention. Upon invitation from art galleries, museums or universities, and in collaboration with local artists, students and relevant organizations, the collective directs concrete strategies of effecting change. The group was founded by Wolfgang Zinggl and is composed of a rotating set of artists, operating out of a storefront in Vienna. Members who have been involved with multiple projects include Pascal Jeannée, Martina Reuter, Erich Steurer, and Stefania Pitscheider. Claudia Eipeldauer is currently the only year-round paid member of WochenKlausur, and she works part-time. But for each project the collective shifts to incorporate and acknowledge

local actors. They adopt an open collective structure where local artists are invited to work on a project, and for its duration all these artists compose "WochenKlausur."

Translated as 'weeks of enclosure', WochenKlausur sets precise tasks within a given time frame (usually four, six, or eight weeks) attempting to work out solutions to a particular, local problem. Since 1993 they have used this methodology to collaborate with local artists, government officials, activists and organizations to create sustainable interventions. They aspire for these interventions to be long-term. Their first project in 1993, "Medical Care for Homeless People," involved the creation of a roving medical clinic for Vienna's street population, which continues to serve approximately seven hundred people per month. To date, they have created thirty-one projects in cities and towns spread across eleven countries. WochenKlausur sets up infrastructural support, finds people willing to take on the daily management of projects, and leaves after the weeks of enclosure, hoping the projects will continue by means of the foundation they put in place. Through these social interventions and process-based events, they attempt to shift power in specific, local contexts.

Nonetheless, in 2010 when they were asked to teach a "learning-through-doing" class at Alfred University in Alfred, New York, the institutional university structure overpowered and overdetermined what was possible. Their project, entitled "A Room for Afterschool Activities," failed to create a collective experience amongst the participants, making painfully apparent the way in which particular kinds of structural framings, such as these intense weeks of enclosure, needs to be in place for a collective to arise.

WochenKlauser's pedagogical experience was largely considered a failure by almost all who participated. This included three WochenKlausur members from Austria,

a dozen Alfred University students and one faculty member. But, as failures usually are, it was nevertheless, quite generative.[37] What was explicitly revealed is that which distinguishes WochenKlausur's practice – that is, their methodology. In other words, what is unique to them is their way of working. WochenKlausur's working method, which they've established over their thirty-one projects since 1993, is to set down a rigid structure that they use to facilitate dialogue, exchange, and the social relations that, together, all lead towards a concrete intervention. In this, their artistic, collective practice can be seen as a practical model for radical democracy. More specifically, their art practice could be considered to correspond to Chantal Mouffe's definition of democracy as that which must "encourage increased self-determination and self-government for both individuals and citizens" (1988, 99). In its simplicity, WochenKlausur's method can be imported to many different contexts and terrains. WochenKlausur sets for itself the tasks of engaging with citizens in a democratic fashion and creating within the group itself an autonomous mode of organizing. This social infrastructure-building then allows for the creation of public spaces and of interventions intent upon social amelioration. Their work deliberately operates in the interstices of the public realm: entering into places that have been forgotten, overlooked, or maligned.

The Sculpture Department at the University of Alfred has been interested in expanding their curriculum to include contextual, research- and community-based practices as core elements of their pedagogy. This development has stemmed from faculty members' interest in socially-engaged and community-based practice, as well as a

[37] For an important overview of the place and role of failure as generative, especially in the realm of contemporary art, see *Failure! Experiments in Aesthetic and Social Practices*, edited by Nicole Antebi, Colin Dickey and Robby Herbst and *Failure (Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art)*, edited by Lisa Le Feuvre.

desire on the part of the department to 'specialize,' as a form of branding.[38] To this end, they have created a foundations course that focuses on site-specificity and research, a class that all sculpture students are required to take in their sophomore year. A third year class on art and ecology was developed in 2008-09 that also deals with many of the same issues of art in context and intervention. The course "Art and Ecology" was designed not for students to produce projects, but for them to create project proposals, a model that worked well within the confines of the academic calendar and curriculum. To continue developing this curriculum the faculty sought an artist collective to teach a 'learning through doing' class on socially-engaged art practice. Various interventionist and community-based artists and collectives were invited to submit proposals and WochenKlausur was chosen. The project sat somewhere – rather uncomfortably – between a usual WochenKlausur project and a university class. The space between these two domains, structures, sets of impulses, expectations and places of power, turned out to be, in this case, irreconcilable.

The aesthetics of intervention

WochenKlausur's art practice has been characterized by art historian and critic Grant Kester as 'dialogical aesthetics'. He opposes this version of art practice and definition of aesthetics to the modernist 'shock' that is advocated by Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht, Clement Greenberg or Michael Fried, which works directly on the body, in an a-discursive realm. Despite the obvious differences between these theorists, he writes, "the aesthetic" within this modernist lineage "is defined as an immediate (pre-discursive)

[38] Incidentally, Diane Cox, the head of the Division of Sculpture/Dimensional Studies, went to school with the members of *Haha* at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the late 1980s.

somatic experience" where "emancipatory aesthetic knowledge is equated with that which is prior to or beyond shared discourse" (2004, 84). Kester traces the notion of the aesthetic from Immanuel Kant, where it is defined as "a potential communicability that is not necessarily related to works of art per se" (2004, 89). Kester claims it was Hegel who narrowed the definition of art to cover only culturally fashioned objects, but it wasn't until modern art theory that aesthetics has been consistently defined through its difference from dominant cultural forms. Reducing the effect of art to only the pre-discursive cannot account for practices such as WochenKlausur's (or much of community-based art for that matter). I do not feel, however, that it is a question of siding with either a model based on dialogue and communication or one based on bodily affect, but rather that these two positions are both necessary to understand the potential and specificity of contemporary art practice, including WochenKlausur's, however much they may lean toward the dialogic.

WochenKlausur's practice can be traced through interventionist art, from the Russian Constructivists and Dadaists, to the Situationists and the Guerrilla Girls. Following this alternative tradition, art practice is at once given a special place, as a source of undetermined potential that carries the hope for change and works to dissolve its exclusive status, deconstructing the boundaries that keep art segregated and separated from everyday life, reserved for the privileged few. Wolfgang Zinggl, one of the group's founding members, states on WochenKlausur's website the group's hope for art:

> Art should deal with reality, grapple with political circumstances, and work out proposals for improving human coexistence. Unconventional ideas, innovative spirit and energy, which for centuries were wrapped up in formal glass bead games, could thus contribute to the solution of real problems. (http://www.wochenklausur.at/kunst.php?lang=en)

WochenKlausur simultaneously uses the discourses of art history while attempting to push these discourses in increasingly pragmatic and political directions. They go back to the roots of art in order to align it with a different trajectory, one that is closer to the definition of aesthetics that Kester attributes to Kant and Baumgarten. Martina Reuter traces the etymology of art to situate their practice:

> The English word comes from the Latin *arte*, which hadn't meant anything else than capability. In English there's this Arts and Humanities, this is much closer to the German use of the word *kunst*, because the word art meant originally the humanities without any connection to aesthetics.[39]

This instrumentalization of art, its etymological lineage as a set of skills or capability, allows WochenKlausur a purely pragmatic access to political and cultural resources. However, Reuter also recognizes the special status of art, one that maintains a certain freedom of movement, thought, and expression that is often limited in other occupations:

> So the use of calling it art is easy because art has a constitutional privilege: the freedom of art. No other profession or category has this freedom of opinion, freedom of speech – which is mostly for journalists, etc., but it's still different. The freedom of art, if you don't use it, it doesn't make any sense.[40]

What she points out is how artists can use their cultural capital to move into spaces with a little more ease than either social or government workers who are constrained by bureaucratic cultures, or ordinary citizens who do not gain the same attention and resources that a group of international artists do.

What WochenKlausur's interventions consist of is a specific structure, a particular way of framing social, political, and intersubjective relations. In this they create moments of what I will call 'cultural autonomy.' That is, they create particular social

[39] Martina Reuter in discussion with the author, August 14, 2009, Vienna, Austria.
[40] Martina Reuter in discussion with the author, August 14, 2009, Vienna, Austria.

infrastructures that supplant those of the state's by way of collective, participatory organizing. Their work relies upon and works within the interstitial spaces of the state, negotiating the terms of engagement by siphoning off money from institutions into small, local initiatives. WochenKlausur draws community members into active engagement as citizens, by asking them to provide insight, feedback and direction in terms of what kinds of improvements could be made. In this, WochenKlausur temporarily enacts moments of what William Connolly describes as 'deterritorialized democracy,' where "democratic politics [operates] as an ambiguous medium of enactment and disturbance" (1995, 103).

William Connolly's version of democracy, which resonates with WochenKlausur's practice of cultural autonomy, is concerned with how a 'cultural presumption of the normal individual' precedes and confines dealing with difference. As a corrective, he advocates a position of 'critical responsiveness' that implies the cultivation of generosity toward actual moments of difference in the public. The pluralizing culture that Connolly advocates pluralizes both sources and models of ethics, thus both an emphasis on a Levinasian call to responsibility (which I discuss in the chapter five on Spiral Garden) and a Nietzschean care for the abundance of being (implicit in my discussion of *Flood* in chapter four) are necessary. He says, "Friendship at micropolitical levels and agonistic respect and critical responsiveness at macropolitical levels mediate these relations in ways most compatible with maintenance of the constitutive tension between pluralism and pluralization" (1995, xxi). This description could easily be applied to the manner in which WochenKlausur approaches its interventions. Amongst their collaborators they cultivate a politics of friendship, and each (and potentially conflicting) party involved in any given project is dealt with as a worthy

opponent or ally, in an attitude of agonistic respect and critical responsiveness. I return to this concept of agonistic democracy later in this chapter.

Institutions

WochenKlausur uses the cultural capital of art and their status as artists to gain access to people and places where other professionals are constrained by organizational hierarchies and predefined practices. Even as WochenKlausur may work to subvert institutional structures and ways of working, their practice is fully embedded in and dependent upon the institutions that invite them. Gallery exhibition spaces become temporary offices used to provide an entry into the city, plan meetings and arrange funding. The host institution acts as a point of entry to networks of people and organizations, quite necessary as WochenKlausur usually works outside their native Vienna. The cultural capital of the host institution allows members of WochenKlausur to gain access to politicians, city planners, and other necessary officials, wooed by good public relations and potential publicity. Despite working within the parameters of art institutions and museums, implicitly assuming their structural limitations, WochenKlausur's practice subtly shifts the workings of these institutions, as if by contagion. Pascal Jeanée, a central member of WochenKlausur until her untimely death in 2002, brings attention to the fact that it is not simply WochenKlausur who may be seen to be conforming to the limitations of the invitational institution, but rather, "if WochenKlausur works at the invitation of art institutions, the institutions are acting to anchor Activist art practice in human consciousness" (2002). In this sense, the group's practice demands that institutions and museums take risks, moving away from profitable art objects (even as these arise from

performances and interventions) and into a supportive role for the transformation of socio-political structures. This type of practice has been framed by artist Pedro Reyes as making galleries and museums venture capitalists for alternative socio-political structures.[41] That is, galleries and museums provide the financial backing for experimental social practices. It becomes difficult to disentangle WochenKlausur's practice from this affordance in the role of museums and other art institutions.

WochenKlausur occupies the space of the museum, gallery or university for the duration of their weeks of enclosure, using these institutions to shift the definition of art. In opposition to the territory that institutions create, where to become "territorialized is to be occupied by a particular identity" (Connolly 1995, xxii), WochenKlausur's practice is a movement of deterritorialization of the museum towards re-territorializing the local community as a space of cultural autonomy. What WochenKlausur attempts to do is offer a smooth space, that is, a space of heterogeneity that can only be known through praxis. In this, WochenKlausur's activity could be taken as what Deleuze and Guattari call a war machine, where "each time there is an operation against the State – insubordination, rioting, guerrilla warfare, or revolution as act – it can be said that a war machine has revived, that a new nomadic potential has appeared, accompanied by the reconstitution of a smooth space or a manner of being in space as though it were smooth" (1987, 386). The importance of this insight is that these activities are not just activities made by certain actors, but they create whole spaces through their deterritorializing movements – remaking nonhumans and humans alike. WochenKlausur lays out a path that is always between the points of the institution or the state where "the in-between has taken on [a]

[41] From "The Manufacture of Surplus Realities" lecture delivered at the Banff Centre, May 12, 2011.

consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a direction of its own" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 380). WochenKlausur's formation by and reliance upon institutions reveal how practices of deterritorialization, creating something in-between is at once a form of pure exteriority, but is also reliant upon these state supports. "It is in terms not of independence," Deleuze and Guattari remind us, "but of coexistence and competition *in a perpetual field of interaction*, that we must conceive of exteriority and interiority, war machines of metamorphosis and State apparatuses of identity, bands and kingdoms, megamachines and empires" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 360-61). Similarly, the work of WochenKlausur, even as it operates as disruption, intervention, and supplement to regular state mechanisms, is in constant coexistence, competition and interaction with these institutions which they rely upon to work. In this they offer up a different mode of opposition, one that functions by using the resources of power to direct strategies of social change.

WochenKlausur's constructive disruption serves to cut loose the artistic institutions that continue to create bastions of elitism and cloistered wealth. By redistributing or siphoning, using the resources of these larger institutions for projects with people who may never have stepped foot inside a gallery, museum or university, WochenKlausur is not simply using their cultural capital as artists, but subversively shifting the role and value of art and its accompanying institutions. Just as "The traditional art world can only be renewed through rigorous practical efforts, through the ongoing promotion of a new concept of art that is not based on its materiality" (Jeanée and Zinggl 2004, 173), institutions themselves can be used to help change social and

political circumstances, but they will not be left untouched by these changes they participate in.

Alfred, NY[42]

The Alfred University class met twice a week, Monday and Tuesday mornings, for two and a half hours. For the first two months, students were broken into smaller groups of two or three in order to research a particular town or community in Allegany county. Their research consisted of examining statistics and historical records, reading newspapers, and gathering all data they could. But most formative in the research process were interviews with random people on the street about their thoughts on what could be improved.

In my brief time there I had the opportunity to observe the workings of the class first hand. I was also new to the town, a complete outsider. And as I crossed the border this imaginary national division became etched into the material landscape: a crossing into a land familiar but unrecognizable, transformed by the global recession.

> *One of the first stories I heard about the project was during the long drive from Buffalo to Alfred. Martina and Claudia had generously agreed to come and pick me up from the bus station and I asked them how things were going. They told me that one day as they were out doing research in a town in Allegany county they came upon a group of construction workers. Martina and Claudia explained that they were a part of an international artists' collective, planning a social*

[42] I should note that throughout what follows I refer only to Claudia Eipeldauer and Martina Reuter as they were the two WochenKlausur members who were in Alfred at the time of my stay. Eipeldauer was there for the entire time, as the primary 'instructor,' Reuter for over six weeks intermittently, and Christian Gmeiner was present as an instructor for two weeks.

intervention. When asked if there was anything the workers felt needed improving in their community, anything that they lacked or were missing, one man happily answered 'no, there was nothing that they were missing,' that life in the town and surrounding county was pretty near perfect. As he spoke, Martina and Claudia noticed for the first time that this man, who appeared to be in his early thirties, had no front teeth.

The students expressed frustration that during their interviews with store owners, clerks, mothers, teenagers, retirees, and whomever else happened to be around, many people felt nothing should, or could, be improved upon. In the case of Angelica (another town in Allegany county), townspeople requested that cobble stone streets be added to enhance the heritage quality of the village. The students were frustrated by how, generally, residents in the county wanted things to remain the same, or even go backwards. When I asked Brett Hunter, a professor of Sculpture who was instrumental in bringing WochenKlausur to Alfred and who subsequently followed and participated in the class, about the insistence of people in the area of the county's perfection, he replied:

> They're not going to say something to someone they don't know. But, the people that are in these towns, and particularly in the downtown part of the town, tend to be very patriotic about their town, you know? And people really love it. But because of the politics and land here, it's also easy enough to move anyone you don't want out of the town. You have a village like Alfred which is maybe a mile in diameter, and that's a certain tax burden right there. But then you go five hundred feet off of that and it's a different tax burden, it's lower taxes. So you generate a certain demographic within that village and then it's all lovely and you just stick all the lower income people outside. That's not necessarily by design, but it is what happens. And maybe it is by design. I don't know. But there's so much poverty in this area that to say that everything is great here is in some ways completely absurd. But all the poverty is in the woods. It's hidden away here and there. And so it's not even like in the city where you still have to walk by the homeless person to get to the train, you know? You don't even necessarily see that because everything is hidden. You

know, it's a car kind of place. You drive past everything and you go, well that's a shithole over there, I don't want to go over there.[43]

Despite, or maybe because, I was such an outsider, I understood what he meant.

The poverty and obvious struggle in the area was quite striking. Even as I entered Buffalo, it was immediately apparent that years of neglect, a lack of urban planning, and the current recession, all created conditions which had led to the emptying of the downtown. The recession itself, a somewhat abstract entity that had covered front pages in economic jargon for weeks, suddenly materialized itself before my eyes. As I rode into the city by bus (admittedly not the most prestigious form of transport) I was a bit stunned to see a billboard demanding city councilors and the state governor to 'fix our skools'- the deliberate provocation made all the more emphatic by the fact that the message was posted on an abandoned and dilapidated industrial building. The glass was gone from the windows, in places boarded up with plywood. Allegany County was less immediately stark, surrounded by rolling hills and small towns, which although they contained a significant proportion of boarded up, abandoned, or run-down houses, obviously used to be a place of much wealth. Big homes with wrap-around porches from the early nineteen hundreds lined the streets, and although many of them looked a bit tattered, paint peeling off, the houses tilting slightly at an odd angle, there was a distinct charm in this faint decay. The woods, however, were indeed populated with multiple trailer parks, which seemed relatively proper, but also shacks built out of leftover materials and houses that sloped so much it was a miracle they were still standing. All of this barely spotted through

[43] Brett Hunter in discussion with the author, April 26, 2010, Alfred, New York.

the trees as I whizzed by on the highway, making me wonder if I really saw it at all.

After two months of research, running through topics and ideas for projects as divergent as bioremediation of a local pond; reinvigorating a local women's shelter; putting into place recycling and other systems of ecological waste treatment at Alfred University; converting all the empty storefronts (of which there are many) in Wellsville, the largest town in the county, into temporary galleries, studios, or community spaces; developing a public transit system for the county; the group finally decided to build a teen centre for younger teens.

Figure 2 Completed Chill Stop Teen Center (courtesy of WochenKlausur)

Throughout the decision making process, Reuter and Eipeldauer reminded the students that the final decision should be made on the basis of what they would be able to accomplish within the given time frame, asking them to consider the restrictions they would face. For example, the idea of public transportation was discarded because after some research it was discovered that the county was working on public transit and that some small initiatives existed and more were being planned. As the students expressed it, there seemed to be a consensus across all the towns in the county that people were worried that the teens, especially the younger ones, had nothing to do and nowhere to go

(except, of course, to hang out on the streets in public view, or in someone's parent's basement). Each team of Alfred students had run across this complaint during their research. A teen centre did already exist in Wellsville, but it was run by the Youth for Christ, obviously not the most neutral or inclusive space.[44] Added to this, a room became available in the community centre, through the support of the director, which could be converted into a teen centre. It was decided, quite quickly and unanimously, to work on the teen centre. Reuter, however, expressed the more cynical view that the students chose to create a teen centre because they didn't really know what to do, had no sense of passion or commitment to the project, and coincidentally, the last project listed at the time on the WochenKlausur website was a teen centre in Goldegg, Austria.[45]

Regardless of the reason, the students of the WochenKlausur class decided to create a teen centre in Wellsville, the most populous town in Allegany County. From there they needed to recruit teenagers to work on the project with them. They went to two schools, one public and one Catholic, and presented the idea to the teenagers. The young people seemed enthusiastic and a preliminary meeting was planned to take place the following Saturday. No one showed up. The group quickly learned that Saturdays were perhaps not the best time, and instead rescheduled the meeting for directly after school on a weekday. This time a number of really enthusiastic youth came out, bursting with ideas and suggestions on how to create the teen centre, who would run it, how it would operate, what it would look like, and what kinds of activities should happen in it.

---

[44] Although I have no knowledge of what this teen centre did or whether they engaged in proselytizing, the fact that it was so heavily associated with Youth for Christ (which was marked on the front of the building in large letters) made it a space that youth did not go to.

[45] See http://www.wochenklausur.at/projekt.php?lang=en&id=30 for a full description of the Goldegg project.

Postcards were designed for the youth, with a layout of the space pictured and the words ‘make it yours!’ stamped across the front (see figure 1). On the back of the cards was written ‘Create a space for you and your friends together with WochenKlausur, an international artists’ collective and Alfred University Students (see figure 3). The majority of the suggestions that came out of the postcards were for roller coasters, skate parks, water parks, smash-up derbies and mythological creatures. But, the youth seemed content to settle for the slightly less grandiose plans of a DVD player, a sound system, a room that they could decorate as they pleased, and some autonomy. A small group of dedicated teens met regularly to plan the organization of the centre, named it, The Chill Stop Teen Center, and came up with a list of possible activities.

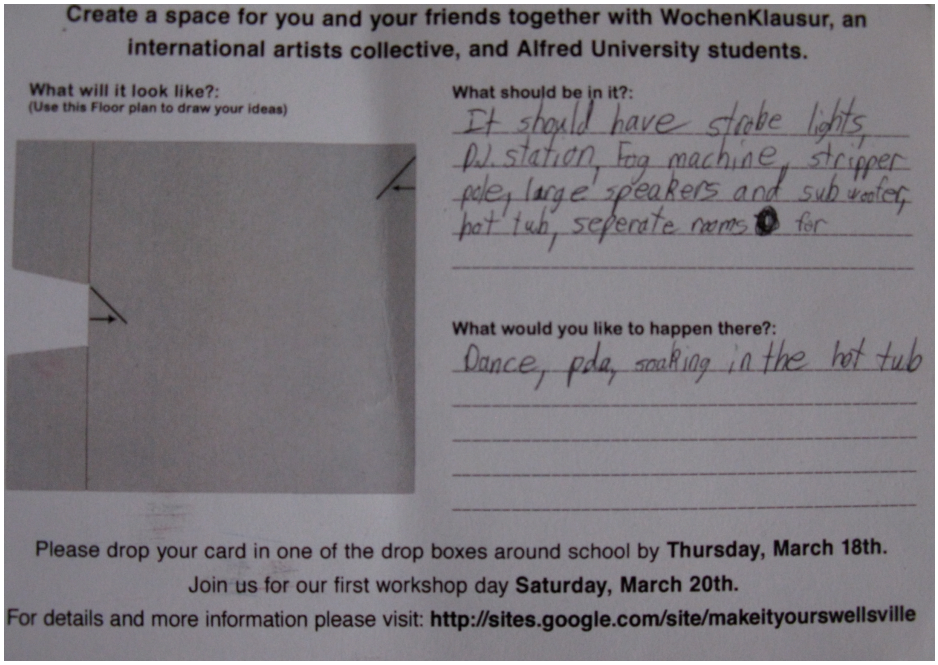

Figure 3 Postcard filled in by teen expressing their desires for the centre (photo courtesy of the author)

These meetings were held with the teens and Reuter, Eipeldauer, and students from Alfred who were available to decide upon what needed to be done and how to go

about doing it. It was agreed that the teen centre would be open twice a week, that there would be a board composed of two teens who would schedule and run the centre with the support of two adults who were to be hired to oversee the project. During the week Reuter and Eipeldauer spent a lot of time securing funding and putting together possible workshops, the first of which was a sushi workshop conducted by students of a local chef school. These planning and organizational meetings were often not attended by the Alfred students, due to conflicts in their schedules. It was in these moments that the methodology of WochenKlausur – to work intensively and collectively to realize a project – and the restrictions of the academic calendar were in direct conflict.

Pedagogy and collectives

The most important aspect of WochenKlausur's practice, as I have already indicated, is their method. It involves working intensively for a short period of time, completely immersing oneself in a project and figuring out every possible and impossible way to get something done. It is a time set apart from daily life, from other commitments and attachments that allows for a unique focus on the task at hand. This method often involves clever and imaginative strategies. WochenKlausur employs tricks and creative pressure tactics, such as the promise or threat of newspaper coverage, or forged agreements from opposing political parties, to make projects happen. Jeanée illustrates:

> Realization of the projects thus often requires cunning strategies and trickery. In Ottensheim, a small town in Upper Austria, WochenKlausur developed a model for involving residents in communal political decisions. One part of the strategy for realizing this concept was the construction of a skater ramp for the local youth. The group thought that a youth sport facility would not have any opponents at all. That was true, but agreement among political parties with regard to the location of the

> skater ramp could not be reached. Without hesitation, WochenKlausur set up the wooden ramp in the town's historic center so as to bring about a decision. Three days later, the mayor announced its permanent location on the banks of the Danube. (2002)

Art's ability to provoke a response, a capacity revered within modern art, is here deployed to create a small improvement, in this case, the building of a youth skate park. The group employs a strategy of "aesthetic distance, or 'defamiliarization,' typically achieved in a modernist painting through the manipulation of representational conventions [but which] is created here through collaborative production itself" (Kester 2004, 93). These defamiliarization tactics may not be as recognizable as those within cubism, for example, that take place solely on the plane of representation, but WochenKlausur's use of defamiliarization shifts the possibilities for art.

The capacity to work critically and creatively across disciplinary boundaries in order to purposefully incite reaction are well-established skills within expanded art practice. And it is precisely the engagement with these skills – strategies of creation and incitement – that most of the students at Alfred missed out on. The students would arrive for class in the mornings, but their commitments often did not go beyond this. To be fair, this had less to do with the initiative of the students and a lot more to do with the precise structures that they were habituated to and were working within. The WochenKlausur class was one among three or four others that each student was required to take. On top of this, they often had to spend many hours in the studio working on their projects for these other classes and preparing for their final year. As well, the financial pressures of attending school where tuition costs run between fifteen to twenty thousand U.S. dollars per year make it necessary for almost all students to work while completing their education. These other burdens, and the lack of an intensive environment for the course,

resulted in the students missing out on most of the organizational and creative problem solving work, and therefore, the core of WochenKlausur's practice.

Hunter commented on the difficulty of integrating alternative pedagogies, art practices and a commitment to community into the pre-set structure of the academic schedule: "that's the tricky thing thinking about community in an academic schedule. We're here for sixteen weeks and then we're gone. And we're here for sixteen weeks in a different group and then we're gone."[46] What he highlights is not only the incompatibility between the intensive methodology that WochenKlausur has laid out and the school calendar, but the ways in which the school calendar in a sense forecloses a real sustained commitment or engagement on the part of students with the surrounding community. This division seemed to be exacerbated in a town where most of the students leave for the summer. During the school year students spend most of their time on campus, aside from frequenting the restaurants and cafes just off-campus, with little or no interaction in the larger town, much less the surrounding county.

Another fundamental division in WochenKlausur's methodology and the structures of the university were found in the ways of working *together*. In their normal practice WochenKlausur works as a collective. That is to say, they operate through consensus, by drawing on each of the strengths of the members, and through core and fluctuating membership. WochenKlausur took this methodology into the classroom in Alfred, declaring to the students on the first day that they were all now WochenKlausur. But, the lack of an intense and condensed collaboration with students also meant that the possibilities for working collectively were diminished. Hunter comments that "there

[46] Brett Hunter in discussion with the author, April 26, 2010, Alfred, New York.

again with the schedule [it becomes]: ok, you need to do this before next Monday and you need to do that before next Monday and once you get into that then things can happen."[47] But this kind of directive shifts the dynamic completely. Vrani, one of the students who took the class, remarked that Reuter and Eipeldauer never took attendance, nor did they seem to care whether or not students showed up. She went on to say that

> …they just never put a lot of pressure on us to do things. They have never really treated it like a class – which is interesting – in the sense of 'you have to do this or this is due then, you are required to do this' or whatever. I think if I was them I would have utilized that [authority] a lot more.[48]

Her comment reveals how profoundly the traditional structure of university classes and schedules pre-determines the kinds of interactions that become possible, especially as it relates to the power dynamic between students and teachers. As Hunter puts it:

> And so I think the struggle, I don't know if Claudia or Martina would acknowledge this or not, but I think the struggle has been this issue of the students not really knowing how to deal with the class. Or in a way deal with the fact that it's not really a class in the traditional, mid-term, deadline kind of situation… Claudia and Martina are so good at trying to involve everyone, whereas the students are just looking for someone to tell them what to do. [49]

What this example highlights is how traditional institutional and pedagogical models are set up not to encourage, enable or empower students to act on their own, but how, within this model, students are encouraged to figure out how to pass, how to give answers or produce material that will please and be in accordance with the teacher and curriculum.[50] They are implicitly learning to be docile to authority. At the moment we are confronted

---

[47] Brett Hunter in discussion with the author, April 26, 2010, Alfred, New York.

[48] Vrani in discussion with the author, April 27, 2010, Alfred, New York.

[49] Brett Hunter in discussion with the author, April 26, 2010, Alfred, New York.

[50] Paulo Freire calls this the banking model of education. He says "Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes the deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" (1970, 72).

with an opportunity where authority within a pre-established system of hierarchical control is given up, we have no idea how to act.

Michael Hardt draws attention to this problem of engaging in collective, autonomous decision-making in his discussion of Thomas Jefferson's writings on democracy. Hardt argues that democracy is not innate or pre-given, that the conditions for radical democracy need to be fostered, that they require training and that particular frameworks need to be in place. He says: "No conception of democracy is viable that does not foresee such a process – a *training* in freedom – to generate continuously the intelligence and wisdom of the multitude" (Hardt 2007, 66 my emphasis). I would argue that this is especially the case with students who enter a university classroom with a lot of training, since kindergarten, to be subservient. Even with this habituation though, other possibilities, and other pedagogies emerge and are called forth. As Hardt says, "the multitude of social singularities, even though they are born ignorant, are capable of wisdom, capable, that is, of autonomously forming a stable and coherent society. Freedom can be defined as the primacy of the resistance over sovereignty only because there is an autonomous social formation as the basis of political expression" (Hardt 2007, 74-5). Although I would take issue with the normative description that we are born 'ignorant,' I do agree that the structure of social reality does not foreclose, but does tend to pre-determine, the kinds of relations that are possible therein. If we want change, if we want an engaged citizenry, then one of the conditions seems to be this training – not

necessarily with a preset outcome, but simply the exercise of our democratic muscles, so to speak.[51]

WochenKlausur's work as a collective is firmly rooted in a particular vision of non-hierarchical decision-making, furthering the ways in which their method could be used to rethink democracy. Their conception of leadership resonates with the definition provided by Deleuze and Guattari as "a complex mechanism that does not act to promote the strongest but rather inhibits the installation of stable powers, in favor of a fabric of immanent relations" (1987, 358). In this formation, the collective becomes a type of pack or band, a group "of the rhizome type, as opposed to the arborescent type that centers around organs of power" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 358). WochenKlausur's practice works through the interstices of local realities, picking up on and working with the forgotten, overlooked, or presumably irresolvable social problems. They do this not through the implementation of an organ of power, but through the rhizomatic re-distribution or siphoning of power from well endowed host institutions into given communities. Using the energy of local artists and collaborators means that the work is also not completely attributable to WochenKlausur, but is dispersed throughout their collaborative method, including all those involved. In this sense, they can be seen as operating as a collective assemblage, where

> The most fundamental advantage of the politics of collective assemblages is that they enable action in concert through the locality, the regional assembly, and the state without intensifying monistic pressures for the perversification of diversity built into the pursuit of the normal individual, the realized community, or the unified nation. Collective assemblages relax those pressures. (Connolly 96)

[51] Lauren Berlant says, in relationship to this metaphor that "in order to make a muscle you have to rip your tendons" which involves "change without trauma, but it's not change without instability. It's change without guarantees, without knowing what the other side of it is, because it's entering into relationality" (2011).

Collective assemblages then involve the creation of particular techniques to foster collaboration of the rhizome type, ones that could presumably be transplanted or re-enacted in multiple situations by multiple actors. Part of the reason the project was a failure in Alfred was precisely because Reuter and Eipeldauer refused to assume their power over the students. Instead, they operated from a place where power was immanent to the collective, where any actor in the situation could call for a turn in course. However, because of the conditioning of the students and the university schedule, this didn't work – especially as the course was designed as a 'teaching through doing' class, not meant to directly engage with questions of pedagogy or differential power relations between students and teachers.

The university structure here seemed to severely inhibit the possibilities of the rhizome or collective assemblage. This becomes clear through WochenKlausur's experience teaching at Alfred. As Eipeldauer comments:

> I think you could not teach them how to really work within a collaboration, because with the students I still had the feeling that it was more on an individual basis. I mean, they all did something; they went to appointments. But as they could not make all their time available at the same time – besides class – it was like they did their individual task and that's it, you know? And this is something different when you are constantly working together… And I think this would be really great if [university classes] could teach them how to work within a group. I think this works only if you have to work very condensed together over three weeks or four weeks. Then I think they can really get something out of it. It's different if you work individually or if you work within a group. And I think, unfortunately, we could not get to them this experience, how collaboration also means sometimes fighting a little bit. But it's important. It just means that you come to another step in the end. And this is what [I mean by identifying] myself with the project when I come to the point where I say, 'no I want to make it this way because I think it's important to do it that way.' And so this is how a project gets created, not by

> someone telling 'let's do it that way or that way.' You have to come together and discuss things constantly and find the best way to do it.[52]

As Eipeldauer indicates, the collective is central and not incidental to the potential emergent political structures in WochenKlausur's work. In order for a project to really come together, every member also has to begin to 'identify' with the project. The project needs to slip under the skin, which means that fights may break out between members about particular visions. However, rather than seeing this as a negative aspect of collective decision-making, WochenKlausur identifies it as a positive development, as it illustrates a level of commitment and involvement on the part of each member (they care enough to fight). The fact that a decision was made so quickly in this project may illustrate a certain distance or apathy that the students felt as a result of the fact that it was framed as one class, among many, interspersed with other work and life commitments. This raises a number of really important questions, especially for educators. Hunter puts these questions most succinctly: "how do you incorporate a collaborative model, a less hierarchical model of teaching and still have it be viable?…How can we do things that are collaborative? And do things that empower the students as well as empower other people, but also have enough structure that they are comfortable in it?"[53] WochenKlausur's project did not resolve any of these questions, but did help other thinkers and practitioners to be able to articulate them, by way of failure.

[52] Claudia Eipeldauer in discussion with the author, April 29, 2010, Alfred, New York.
[53] Brett Hunter in discussion with the author, April 26, 2010, Alfred, New York.

Democracy

WochenKlausur's practice can be characterized as an exercise in radical democracy – that is, it enables people, as active citizens, to create viable, small improvements in their locales, and demonstrates a model of direct political engagement. Stephan Willats, a UK based community artist, provides a description of his work which resonates quite strongly here. He says, "My practice is about representing the potential self-organizing richness of people within a reductive culture of objects and possessions. In a society which reduces people, I'm working to celebrate their richness and complexity. I see this as a kind of cultural struggle" (quoted in Kester 2004, 91). However, WochenKlausur goes further, not just representing the "potential self-organizing richness of people," but providing a model for this to be enacted. In other words, the democratic project that WochenKlausur creates is one of cultural autonomy. This version of radical democracy seems to lend itself to the plural, agonistic model advocated by Chantal Mouffe. What would a version of democracy look like, for example, if one of the principles of its inception, that of the liberal individual, were no longer its corner stone? In other words, how can we think of democracy from the point of view of relational subjectivity?

This vision of the political aligns itself more closely with Chantal Mouffe's agonistic democracy. Mouffe sets up a different understanding of what subjectivity and community can be. She makes no *a priori* claims about the status of subjectivity except that it is created in the discursive field as always precariously and provisionally fixed. But even this fixity is momentary, contextually located, and therefore is constantly

shifting.[54] In her later work, specifically *The Democratic Paradox*, she elaborates on this position of the subject and her description of 'agonistic democracy.' She continues to erode the liberal individual in favour of a subject increasingly in relation or in solidarity. She states that antagonism is inherent to the political, so the job of democratic formations is not to eliminate conflict, but to generate ways in which conflict will not erupt in violent or irreparable formations. As Mouffe states "In the field of the political we are always dealing with a 'we' as opposed to a 'them.' Contrary to what some pretend, democratic politics does not mean the end of the we/them distinction but the different way in which it is established" (2000, 68). It is necessary and inherent, she argues, to the political to have conflict. This agonism, the space for genuine difference, has been lessened under a moralizing liberalism that reduces everything to rational discussion and leaves the law as the arbiter of political unity.[55] Mouffe goes on to suggest that much of the apathy toward democratic politics in Western, liberal democracies and the rise of various fundamentalisms are both due to the fact that no room is made for engaged debate, or engaged opposition. Rather, there is a call for 'tolerance' of differences, leading to a flattening out of particular stances where the choices for average citizens then seem to be either to adopt the model of the liberal ideal, to stand radically, often violently, outside of it, or to completely disengage. The aim of democratic institutions, she says, is then not to

[54] Mouffe states "Thus, the subjectivity of a given social agent is always precariously and provisionally fixed, or, to use the Lacanian term, sutured, at the intersection of various discourses." She goes on to clarify that "interests never exist prior to the discourses in which they are articulated and constituted; they cannot be the expression of already existing positions on the economic level" (Mouffe 1988, 90). What is important, then, is not to reify particular identity positions, but to multiply them, to have each identity implicated in others through ever-expanding networks of solidarity. It is to the extent to which a movement can multiply or proliferate its solidarity networks that it can also call itself democratic.

[55] This term is in part inspired by Foucault who says, "Rather than speak of an essential freedom [especially in relation to an opposing power], it would be better to speak of an 'agonism' – of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation" (Foucault 1982, 222).

establish rational consensus, but democratic channels of expression for conflict that does not lead to warfare (2009, 73).

WochenKlausur is guided by a similar set of concerns, although on a different scale. They identify a point of conflict and try to find a solution among divergent parties, which is formulated along the lines of recognizing the legitimacy of the other's position and using it as a productive source of tension. This is not done to harmonize political opinion, but to work within existing realities, finding a mode, through listening, of dealing seriously with the concerns of many opposing views. This political understanding can best be seen in the intervention "Public Debate" (2000) which took place in Nuremburg, Fürth, and Erlang, Germany. The project brought together a number of groups who had engaged in bitter debate, often only through the media. WochenKlausur created three small houses built with pallets in highly visible public places in each of the towns. Media and the general public were barred entry from the houses themselves, but outside a large sign listed the meeting schedule and explained the project. Although the meetings were closed and private, the fact that they were happening was very public. The opposing members would enter the houses with a mediator (or in the case of people who wanted to remain completely anonymous, without) to debate. Food and drink were served as the participants debated within these small houses, decorated like a miniature kitchen.

The justification that WochenKlausur provides for creating the project resonates quite strongly with Mouffe's understanding of agonism. They state:

> Harmonizing always means uniforming and norming as well. Important differences are inevitably evened out during this process. Precisely these differences are crucial in many instances where there is a crossover to contrary positions… In democratic systems, differing views, ideologies and positions should also be able to exist unlinked next to one another and still be parts of the greater network. (Zinggl 2001, 122)

The project was not meant to solve the problems of the conflicting parties, nor for them to come to consensus or adopt identical views. Rather the intervention "stands for a careful search for acceptance of the opponent" – in other words, this is the transformation of enemy into adversary. "The project was intended to contribute toward letting heated animosities become dialectical democratic processes" (Zinggl 2001, 123). However, it is important to note that this did not always occur. Some people stormed out, others ended in deadlock. "And many parties categorically rejected any rapprochement with their adversary" (Zinggl 2001, 124). The point, however, is not to create a consensus, but to recognize the other's opinion as worthy, and in the best case, generative through its irreducible difference.

What Mouffe's concept of democracy allows for is a new understanding of subjectivity. She explicitly argues against a version of deliberative or representative democracy that holds the liberal subject, based on the ideals of equality, freedom, and rational universality, as central. Deliberative democracy, a commonly cited ideal associated with the thought of Jürgen Habermas and John Rawls, is the venue for which various liberal subjects can enter into dialogue with one another. Grant Kester, as I've already mentioned, positions WochenKlausur's practice within 'dialogical art,' drawing from this philosophical tradition of Habermas and Rawls. A commitment to dialogue, Kester argues, signals the reliance of these projects on some "common system of meaning within which the various participants can speak, listen, and respond" (Kester 2004, 85). What is elided in this description is the fact that although the projects do rely heavily upon dialogue, and dialogue, as in the case in Ottensheim, is often seen as the way to transform relations, the definition of a 'common system of meaning' is never fully

enunciated. In fact, Zinggl is careful in his elaboration to posit the project as a way to put into contact divergent opinions and ideologies which remain fundamentally "unlinked, next to one another" which compose "parts of the greater network."

Additionally, what is overlooked in the emphasis on dialogue is the materiality of WochenKlausur's projects, the use of materials to create affective atmospheres. The opponents in the case of Ottensheim didn't simply come together to debate, but did so within very specific parameters – in a small, cramped space, without any fear of public reprisal for what they said, and with the goal not just of discussing, but also sitting in close proximity eating and drinking with each other. The kitchen atmosphere invites a turn from adversary into opponent, for it evokes a kind of home, a roof for everyone. Each of these factors significantly complicates and expands what could be understood as 'dialogical,' a movement away from a strictly rational form of debate to one that could be understood more within the realm of setting up particular kinds of affects and intimacies that move beyond language even as the encounters are dependent upon dialogue. What I see established through WochenKlausur's actions, and what can perhaps be analyzed most clearly in their failed pedagogical attempt at Alfred, is rather that their work is not only about dialogue, but about a particular replicable methodology, a kind of virus against antagonistic capital.[56]

WochenKlausur's mode of working presupposes not a system of common *meanings*, then, but a system of common *practices*. WochenKlausur, through their method, gets people who often disagree to commit to a practicable project. Instead of ending up at a place that affirms the consensus of a community or a common system of

[56] See Zach Blas "Virus, Viral" for an insightful discussion of the ways in which the virus as metaphor both works to sustain capitalism and is used in framing opposition.

meaning, WochenKlausur's practice provides a model for thinking through how agonistic pluralism may work. This is highlighted through their explicit valorization of conflict as a measure of personal investment. Mouffe points out the value of practices to the democratic project she advocates:

> …what is really at stake in the allegiance to democratic institutions is the constitution of an *ensemble of practices* that makes possible the creation of democratic citizens. This is not a matter of rational justification but of availability of democratic forms of individuality and subjectivity…The failure of current democratic theory to tackle the question of citizenship is the consequence of their operating with a conception of the subject which sees individuals as prior to society, bearers of natural rights, and either utility maximizing agents or rational subjects. In all cases they are abstracted from social and power relations, language, culture and the whole set of practices that make agency possible. (2009, 95)

Where I see the importance of WochenKlausur's practice is that they make no such *a priori* claims. The individual does not precede society, nor does it exist in opposition to it. Instead, they approach each situation as a particular milieu, with its own set of relations, power structures and social, political and economic conditions. This is why, despite their insistence upon a very stringent methodology, their projects are never conceived in advance or in abstraction from their context. Instead of insisting upon agreed understandings of the world, their way of working is entirely about a particular *practice*. They set up conditions for enabling democratic practices and subjects, ones that are always and inevitably contextual and relational.

What then becomes possible is a political terrain where to intervene into society, create a project, or build a youth centre, there does not need to be a consensus on the common *meaning* of this activity, but on its agreed upon activity. The WochenKlausur method explicitly leaves room for, anticipates, and encourages conflict and disagreement, with the knowledge that they still need to make something happen. It is through the

practice itself, the setting up of a particular frame that their work can be regarded within this model of agonistic pluralism. The goal of the project is not to create a normative abstract consensus between conflicting parties, but simply to create a viable solution that everyone can live with. It is a matter of practices versus transcendental principles or identities.

Democratic practice then becomes the "call for political invention, for creation" (Critchley 1999, 276). Politics is the moment when a decision is made, when the decision takes those who make it, where the utter singularity of a context and situation calls for a break, a pull in a particular direction. Politics means "each decision is a leap of faith made in relation to the singularity of the context" (Critchley 1999, 277). In this it does not presuppose an individual, liberal subject, nor does it presuppose this subject as existing before or outside of a social context. Political practice then has no pre-given conception of justice or moral law. It cannot be known in advance or determined from outside of a context, but is created in the moment of the context, of the event, that creates a cut, which then is the moment of politics. And, this is not a decision that is made by someone, the decision makes the actors in it, the decision creates a singular situation.

This is the mode in which WochenKlausur takes up the task of intervention. Starting from the singularity of the context, their method allows for a fluctuation and attention that necessarily responds to, and comes from, the particular community they are working in. As Hunter pointed out: "if you do something for a community, the community needs to want it, and so it needs to come from them."[57] And so the project cannot be anticipated in advance or outside the community, the context itself. The

[57] Brett Hunter in discussion with the author, April 26, 2010, Alfred, New York.

network of actors, circumstances and power is what makes the political, makes democracy, and re-makes the actors within the situation.

Subjectivity in Dialogue

Kester, who also recognizes the distinct limitations solely relying upon discourse in the public sphere, turns from this tradition to an explicitly feminist emphasis on listening. Listening, here, can be understood as an aesthetic, an aesthetic that moves away from the pre-discursive shock and into the social. It is in this modality of aesthetic experience that WochenKlausur's practice can be situated. Kester is careful to point out that the meaning that is generated through dialogue is not universal. He states "A dialogical aesthetic, for its part, does not claim to provide or require, this kind of universal or objective foundation. Rather, it is based on the generation of a local consensual knowledge that is only provisionally binding and that is grounded instead at the level of collective interaction" (2004, 112). In a dialogical aesthetics it is possible to "locate the moment of indeterminateness, of open-ended liberatory possibility, not in the perpetually changing form of the artwork qua object, but in the very process of communication that the artwork catalyzes" (2004, 90). What these practices highlight are a shift from art based in self-expression to communicative exchange, where the "identity of the artist and the participant [are] produced through situational encounters" (2004, 90) and therefore open to questioning fixed identities and perceptions of difference. In order to be accountable to the other, he sees this open dialogue as a compelling method to follow.

What Kester then proposes is to focus on discourse not as *langue*, fixed, hierarchical, but as dialogue or *parole*. In this sense he shifts the terrain from one of the

supposed universality and predominance of reason to contextual intersubjective relations that leave open affective forces and aesthetic invention. It is in this notion of dialogue that he situates the radical potential for dialogic practices. "A dialogical aesthetic" he says "suggests a very different image of the artist, one defined in terms of openness, of listening… and of a willingness to accept a position of dependence and intersubjective vulnerability relative to the viewer or collaborator" (2004, 110). In this, the creation of collective art is fundamentally about a shift in the terms of subjectivity. This shift is primarily located in the relational, empathetic moment of listening.

Listening can be understood, following cultural theorist Gemma Corradi Fiumara, as a creative practice. As she describes it, listening itself occupies a crucial element of communication and dialogue, one that is often overlooked. However, it is through listening that the possibilities of shifting subjectivity seem to emerge in dialogue. Within a project such as WochenKlausur's so much of the action is premised upon listening to the needs of a community. This creative act is not limited simply to what happens before the formation of a project, in the research phase but is what draws the whole project together, underlying it as a condition of possibility. Almost all of the students that I interviewed were surprised, and in some cases a bit impatient, about how long the research process took. In the case of their work at Alfred, research occupied half of the semester. This is fairly standard for a WochenKlausur project and is central to their ability to create ethical and viable interventions. This practice of listening to the needs of others also goes some way not simply in being able to create interesting projects, but to transforming all of those involved.

It is primarily through the modality of empathy that Kester figures the potential of listening. Empathy, as art theorist Jill Bennet characterizes it "is a distinctive combination of affective and intellectual operations…by a dynamic oscillation, 'a constant tension of going to and fro' as Nikos Papastergiadis has put it, '…empathy is about that process of surrender…but also the catch that transforms your perception'" (Bennet 2005, 10). Although empathy is usually figured within the confines of pre-established subjectivities meeting one another, what this definition suggests is that empathy can also be a thought-feeling that is created in-between oneself and another, in relation. Empathy allows this thought-feeling to overcome and impose into one's sense of self, privileging relation through a collaborative framework. Listening, as an empathetic gesture, leads to us being able to "see ourselves from the other's point of view and are thus, at least potentially, able to be more critical and self-aware about our own opinions. This self-critical awareness can lead, in turn, to a capacity to see our views, and our identities, as contingent and subject to creative transformation" (Kester 2004, 110). WochenKlausur's interventions can then be seen not simply as practical interventions into daily life, but as a structure for the transformation (even if ever so slightly or temporarily) of our sense of self towards an increasingly collaborative or relational subjectivity.

Figure 4 Youth paint tables and walls for the future teen center (photo courtesy of the author)

Limits

On Wednesday we met with the kids to paint the room. They were quite excited to get going, spurred on by pop and pizza. A couple of teens sat in the corner, one not feeling well, the other flirting with him, wanting to be near him. They sat and talked, laughing. The energy of these young people filled the room, overflowing, and it seemed that in five minutes the room and furniture were all primed. At the end of the day two kids, brother and sister, lingered in the hall. Martina and Claudia were anxious to leave as we were invited to Brett's house for dinner and needed to clean up before we left. The teens obviously didn't want to leave. Claudia insisted that they call their parents to figure out how to be picked up. There was some confusion around this. The story was a bit muddled, and it took a good fifteen or twenty minutes to figure out where the teens should go. Finally, they admitted that they were normally picked up a few hours after school ended

outside the cafeteria. Apparently, their parents didn't know that they were coming to help create the teen centre. After some cajoling, the teens finally left for the school. We got a call about half an hour later from their mom (who got the number when the teens called her using Claudia's cell phone) saying that they were missing and asked if we knew where they were. Martina replied that they had left the teen center to wait at the school. The phone call ended, the mom went to look for her kids. Martina told us that she didn't think it was the teens' mom at first, that the voice sounded like a little girl's, very hesitant and remote. As I left the car, the phone call and the teens' hesitation to go home left me with a sick feeling. The youths were found half an hour later, outside the school. But the moment didn't exactly pass - a residue of the exchange seemed to stick to everything. It was an abrupt reminder of how frustratingly small the impact of these interventions seem, how each action solicits and calls for more. I found myself in my hotel room, alone, looking into my bag of nice clothes, and wondering about the lives of these youth.

There is a deep frustration here that is sometimes dismissed by WochenKlausur, a critique leveled by Kester, who states that "At the same time, the realism that allows WochenKlausur to so effectively respond to specific problems can also tend to foreclose a political vision that could link these concrete solutions to a broader emancipatory movement among those who have been strategically disempowered" (2004, 6). The intervention in the town to create a teen centre goes some way to ameliorating the lives of these young people, providing them with a semi-autonomous space and an opportunity to exercise their own powers of judgment and organization. However, the poverty in the

area, the overriding issue that came up again and again, could not be addressed. This is not to say that the action should not have been taken, but is a poignant reminder of the limitation of local intervention.

The strength of the project seems to lie, then, not within the intervention itself, as useful or appreciated as it may be, but in WochenKlausur's method, in the demonstrable effects of a small group of people working intensively over a relatively short period of time, with resources and capital to support their actions. Due to the rather ideal conditions that WochenKlausur works under, as internationally recognized artists, with institutional support, they are able to create a temporary space for, by, and with local residents. The project demonstrates the possibility of collective action, of the ability of people to self-organize and work through official and unofficial channels to create change. As WochenKlausur says "every successful, concrete improvement becomes a supporting argument for general political demands" (2004, 193). And so, even if the teen center will ultimately not shift the underlying economic structures in the county, and even if the pedagogical aspect of the project failed, what was left after Reuter and Eipeldauer flew back to Vienna was a model for action, the suggestion for pedagogical creativity and improvement, and a particular vision and insistence upon people's ability to organize and to create spaces of cultural autonomy.

What WochenKlausur's project reveals are the kinds of political structures that enable collectivity through a model of agonistic democracy. It is through their practices, their enactment of cultural autonomy that WochenKlausur show the ways in which subjectivity is formed in and through socio-political structures. The failure of their project reveals how collectivity also requires particular methods or structures that enable

it to form, that normalizing pedagogy, for example, creates a hierarchy that forecloses collectivity. I turn now to Haha's project *Flood* to complicate these structures of collectivity by thinking of collectivity as involving both humans and other-than-humans. They created a hydroponic garden in a storefront in Chicago to distribute greens to people living with HIV. The garden served as the connective tissue for a wide variety of concerns, creating a collective united not by common identity or even belief, but practices that revolved around the demands of this garden. Additionally, as the nonhuman remains at the heart of the individual, as I will show, this serves to complicate the picture of subjectivity derived by Chantal Mouffe's democratic agonism and WochenKlausur's practice. Instead of positing society as pre-existing the subject, *Flood* exhibits the relations and immanent *becoming-with* of the individual, collective and other-than-human.

Chapter Four:

Growing Collectives: Relational Ontology in the work of *Flood* + Haha

The project *Flood* by Haha reveals how collectivity, as an open-ended structure, can be produced not only amongst humans, but that necessarily happens at the conjuncture of human, virus, plant, machine, neighbourhood. This was explicitly revealed in Haha's project *Flood* as a hydroponic garden became the expressive and connective feature of a group of people whose concerns and interests varied widely. And through this collectivity, subjectivity was transformed from primarily individual to relational, being composed *with* our natural, machinic and socio-political environments.

Figure 5 Window of storefront (photo courtesy of Haha)

The storefront's simple appearance, located on an unremarkable street, defies classification. Stenciled onto the front window in plain white font reads "*Flood*:" (and then in smaller type) "A Volunteer Network for Active Participation in Healthcare". Below, in the same lettering, this pronouncement is helpfully re-printed in Spanish: "*Diluvio: Una Red de Voluntarios para Participation Activa en el Cuidado de Salud*". Through the glass can be seen a plain white room, the centre of which is occupied by rows and rows of carefully ordered plants. Each plant reaches slowly towards the two one-thousand-watt halide lamps overhead, sprouting from individual holes cut in white plastic tubing through which nutrients are fed. The trays are suspended three feet above the floor on a basic, wood-framed table, "You can wave your arms under the tables like a magician demonstrating the emptiness between two pieces of a woman sawn in half. The connection to the earth is gone, the earth as a source: unlimited, magical, deep. The plants are fed rationally" (Palmer 2008, 58). This gives a general antiseptic air to the place. Nutrients, excess tubing, and other supplies are stored on one shelf while the opposite wall is full of pamphlets, ranging in subject matter from hydroponic gardening to alternative healthcare treatment for HIV/AIDS. There are some people tending to the plants inside, others milling about, browsing through material or talking to one another. The question of what this place is seems to hang in the air ushering visitors in like a welcoming host for a party you didn't know was happening, much less were invited to.

Partial Answers

Flood was created by the artist collective Haha in 1992 for Sculpture Chicago's *Culture in Action* exhibition curated by Mary Jane Jacob. *Culture in Action* was a "watershed

exhibition that opened up floodgates of possibility for the intersection of contemporary art and community-based practice" (Temporary Services 2008, 18).[58] The exhibition's importance in the development and emphasis on community engagement into the art world helped to deconstruct the relationship between artist and audience. The integration of new audiences and venues outside of the institutional space of museums was not simply about expanding the potential reception of art, but of shifting the definition of art itself, and what art could do. Through the refusal of object-based, commodified, and museum-centred production, the exhibition managed to reverse power relations, even if momentarily through *Culture in Action* bus tours:

> Encountering the artistic collaborations in neighbourhoods, members of the gallery and museum worlds were the outsiders. To experience the eight projects, people affiliated with the institutionalized art worlds had to understand something of the foreignness that residents of these neighbourhoods may feel in art institutions. (Brenson 1995, 19)

In this power reversal, and in its active collaboration with a broad range of people, *Flood* was perhaps the most successful of the projects developed through the exhibition.[59] Its success can be found in the project's openness: allowing for the formation of collectives, heterogeneous times, and an ethics based in praxis – a continually evolving process of working with others – answering to and cultivating the unexpected.

The project involved the creation of a storefront in Rogers Park, Chicago, far away from the gallery and art districts of the city. The members of Haha, wanting to respond to the HIV epidemic that had severely affected their community, started growing

[58] Haha was an art group formed in 1988 that originally included four members: John Ploof, Laurie Palmer, Wendy Jacob and Richard House. Richard House's participation in the group ended in 1998. The group itself recently disbanded, following the publication of *With Love From Haha* in 2008, a beautiful and evocative collection documenting their successes and failures with fourteen collective projects in twenty years of working together.

[59] See Miwon Kwon (2002) for a detailed description of some of the failures and problematic aspects of the show.

hydroponic greens (kale, collards, chard) and medicinal herbs to be distributed to AIDS hospices and people living with HIV. Demonstration gardens were built outside, and the back of the storefront was used as a meeting space (Temporary Services 2007, 18). The storefront collective also provided biweekly meals, educational activities, public events, as well as information and a place to garden. They hosted school and art tours, initially organized by *Culture in Action*. Through the creation of the project Haha dissolved into *Flood*. *Flood* became its own collective. Originally relying mostly on art students, the collective eventually became quite mixed, expanding to include a fluctuating and diverse group of twelve to thirty-five dedicated members, which continued to challenge and transform the definition of 'artist' (Palmer 2004a, 134). Although Sculpture Chicago funded the project for only one year, it lasted for three due to the enthusiasm and commitment of this larger group.[60] As a 'seed project' *Flood* has continued in various forms, such as gardens in other cities, a comprehensive HIV/AIDS facility in Rogers Park and volunteers who continue to work with various HIV organizations in Chicago.[61]

The garden became a way to understand and connect to the immediate community, but also to HIV and the ways it had reshaped so many people's lives. *Flood* operated as a resource network for people concerned with HIV, providing information, support groups and condoms. But it was necessary for Haha to do something beyond simple service provision. So they built a hydroponic garden as a metaphoric and literal

[60] However, after the withdrawal of financial and institutional support by Sculpture Chicago, it was difficult to maintain Flood. As Miwon Kwon writes, "Haha and Flood had to relocate the garden with the expiration of their lease on the storefront space at the end of the summer of 1993, which had a profoundly destabilizing effect. They never fully recovered, although other volunteer activities besides the maintenance of the garden continued for many months" (2002, 134).

[61] Discussions begun between community and social service organizations at the storefront eventually led to a comprehensive HIV/AIDS facility that opened in 1997. Its services include a food pantry, an alternative high school, a community center, and administrative offices for four community organizations. *Flood* also worked to develop gardens appropriate to the local context and concerns in Dekalb, Illinois and Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Jacob, Palmer and Ploof 2008, 57).

intervention and response to HIV. Particularly at that moment in history – as rates of infection were still quite high in North America (especially in Rogers Park, which at the time had the highest infection rates in Chicago) and protease inhibitors had not yet been invented – hydroponic vegetables had the advantage of limiting potentially harmful bacteria found in soil. In addition to reducing bacteria in food, which is important for people with compromised immune systems, the garden's function was equally expressed in its capacity to reveal the network of relations between people and the other-than-human. It presented the opportunity to think of the necessity of interconnection in people's lives, for instance, the ways that healthcare is delivered through relating to the needy plants. Laurie Palmer, one of Haha's members, draws attention to the garden as metaphor for the impacts of HIV: "A body with a compromised immune system can be compared to a plant growing in a highly controlled system without dirt as a buffer or resource, in which every substance that enters the body must be subjected to scrutiny, distrust, excessive consideration" (Palmer 1994, 55). The tenuous, close-circuited system offers an opportunity to rethink the interconnections of plant, virus, microorganism, human, water, and nutrients. It does not privilege one relationship over another, but shows the way in which the system depends, for its survival, upon all of these factors functioning in a manner that can sustain life. And frequently, the tenuousness of the system was revealed through its collapse. Its success as a project rested on the garden operating as a visual metaphor for the fragility of life and necessity of connectivity to sustain it.

Flood was not a store, nor a social service agency, nor an education facility, although it borrowed from and blurred the lines of each of these categories. It was a

collective art project, adopting "the essence of cooperatively catalyzed events [which] is to defy single narratives" (Holmes 2007, 275). It was the project's excessiveness, as an open-ended proposition, the fact of its being unfixable, that made it effective, as social intervention and as art. Palmer notes: "We could have tried to specify limited goals and outcomes in grant application style – so many school groups visited, so many video screenings, so many bags of greens delivered. But what we couldn't define or locate was *Flood*'s anomalous existence – not a school, not a clinic, not a store, not a factory and no one drew a salary" (Palmer 2004a, 136). *Flood* operated in excess of all these categories. It offered a way to think about relations differently because it could not be categorized. And its unclassifiable status made it more welcoming, both because it presented an object of curiosity, and because the project was not pre-determined, it left space for people to engage in multiple unforeseen ways. The plants, at the centre of the project, tied everything together.

Figure 6 Hydroponic greens (Photo courtesy of Haha)

Flood enabled new connections between people in the neighbourhood and the wider city. The storefront created "an intense constant social involvement with the audience and also a blur as to how people are involved: they're not just spectators or people who are going deliberately to an art space" (Temporary Services 2007, 24-5) but random passers-by, people interested in hydroponics, or people concerned about HIV. Some would stay and become involved in ongoing meetings, with discussions ranging from using natural medicine to manage HIV/AIDS to the sustainability of hydroponic food production; some would become key members helping to extend the life of the storefront beyond its first year of funding provided by Sculpture Chicago; some would merely drop in for a bit of warmth on a cold day. For example,

> The log recounts the visitors for a typical day (Saturday, May 29, 1993): a small boy interested in hydroponics, an elderly man interested in hydroponics, a neighbor to talk about HIV, three men admiring the garden, a Spanish-speaking couple and their small daughter to look at the AIDS literature, a tour, a student who had read about the project in *The Reader*, a family from Milwaukee directed here by their Chicago-resident son. (Jacob 1995, 96)

It becomes obvious, by looking at the daily life of the storefront, that what drew people in was not necessarily a common interest or goal. Rather, the strength of the project was in its open-ended ability to connect to many divergent desires, interests, and levels of commitment. Through these random connections of people living in a lower-income and racially diverse community, the storefront helped to establish ways of working between people who would not otherwise meet. As Palmer describes, the storefront became a neighbourhood hub, a meeting point:

> One of the really effective parts of the project – if effectiveness is even relevant – is that the people on that block gradually came in. We met people who either hadn't known they were positive or had just discovered

> they were positive…This kid who was living with his family as a gay teen who hadn't come out and was positive… And all of this was in an immediate area of a few hundred yards and was focused through the garden. It was only maybe a handful of people, but it was huge. (Haha quoted in Temporary Services, 24)

The rootedness of the garden brought out the ways in which many different issues converge, tangled together in the web of the neighbourhood. The garden became a source of undetermined potential, even as its effects were quite circumscribed.

The garden itself, though, existed in an evacuated state, completely dependent upon supplements for its survival, threatened by unseen blights, such as the transference of tobacco mosaic virus from a smoker's hand. But because of its fragility, the neediness of the system, it offered an opportunity to rethink the interconnections of plant, virus, microorganism, human, water, and nutrients. The plants, however, were not always cooperative. The garden completely collapsed a couple of times during the years, sometimes the cause of the collapse was known, other times not. These sterile conditions made clear the necessary dependence, and mutual interdependence of multiple systems, plant, virus, human, social, biochemical, machinic. It depended on the interconnections and individual components to function. It required constant attention, monitoring, learning from its human participants. Hydroponics works despite its reduction from the complexities of the soil environment, but through this stripped down interaction, it also begins to reveal the ways in which technologies, practices, and collective assemblages are necessarily in play to keep the plants alive and that slight shifts can cause their demise. In other words, "the hydroponic system as a whole can also be seen as a larger social body (or an urban community), a system of intimately interconnected parts, each root intertwined with the next, sharing the same water, the same nutrients, the same

contaminants: a system of mutual support and shared concerns" (Palmer 2008, 58). And the stripped-down system leaves less of a margin for error, demanding more from its humans, leaving their expression more open, more on the surface. Here, I think, is where the question of the storefront really begins to be answered.

Collectives

Flood produced a heterogeneous collective. The subject here is re-framed as a term in a relation, a term of collective relation that pushes the boundaries of and extends beyond any single individual. The project emerged from the middle, from its being in-relation, not from one particular idea, or any one person: "it was a gradual teasing out of ideas. When they arrived and clicked, fully fledged, nobody felt any personal ownership except collectively" (Haha quoted in Temporary Services 2007, 20). In fact, Haha members describe their projects, especially *Flood*, as a liberatory depersonalized gesture, defying the sovereignty of the self:

> We did in the end take full responsibility. But it was not really ours. So part of the group process is its thorough disentanglement from our individual selves…whatever resulted, each project felt "so not mine," which was incredibly freeing. At the same time it was ours in a wonderfully owned way. It was also like having multiple selves. It was great to be able to do work that you wouldn't have recognized as yours otherwise. (Haha quoted in Temporary Services 2007, 21).

The project, the ideas, the ways of working, all emerged from the collective, and the collective from the project.

The notion of the collective is central, then, to thinking through the possibilities of art with gardens in this context. A collective is normally defined as a cooperative enterprise, performed by people acting as a group, but it also lends itself to thinking

through the group as aggregate, as assemblage. Félix Guattari provides a very useful definition of the collective, where "The term 'collective' should be understood in the sense of a multiplicity that deploys itself as much beyond the individual, on the side of the socius, as before the person, on the side of preverbal intensities, indicating a logic of affects rather than a logic of delimited sets" (Guattari 1995, 9). In this, the affective resonances and nonhuman forces, as well as plants, virus, microbes and social power structures all come together to form the collective. The collective emerges from these relations, material and affective, human and other-than-human. In this sense, a collective is not necessarily based on consensus or agreement, but privileges, in its best iterations, difference in its encounters as a form of becoming, an opening onto the yet unthought and new forms of practice. It moves away from pre-scribed notions of identity and place, instead allowing for an emergence between people, environments, plants, animals, minerals and abiotic components. It is about compromise, contradiction, and contamination.

A collective, is, in a sense, always pre-given, a way to understand our relations to others as inherent, although potentially suppressed, or elided. We are always in relation with others, non-human and human alike, always in a form of collectivity. Despite the difficulty of working together, collective practice can usefully pose a mode of consistency to challenge established political regimes and ideologies. Artists' collectives have responded by transforming collectivity from a style to a strategy, working not from identity, but from modes of identification corresponding and fluctuating according to particular concerns and contexts (Block and Nollert 2005, 29). New artistic experiments in collectivity strive to take heterogeneity as their model: "Rather than fighting against

the inevitably heterogeneous character of all group formations, collectivism after modernism embraced it" (Stimson and Sholette 2007, 10). The realities of working in this manner are challenging, but can open up new possibilities for being-in-common, undermining conventional assumptions about the relationship of the self to society. Palmer explains, "There is an ethic in collaboration that forms a base for *Flood* that is more radical and troublesome than simply *learning to play together*. It is troublesome because it goes against the individualist ethic that, especially in America, defines self in opposition, through competition rather than relation" (Palmer 2008, 61-2). Instead, the project offers a way to think of our selves in relation, asking what enables the constitution of an individual self, and how these relations can also produce difference. It is our differences that actually create the conditions for us to operate collectively. Sharing, for example, becomes redundant if each person is bringing the same values, qualities, talents, aesthetics (even if this were possible). And the difference of plants in a garden, or viruses such as HIV demand collectives to adequately address, combat, and care for them. The demands of the other-than-human world force a response that inevitably moves a person beyond their individual capacities, drawing them into a collective. Here, the concept and enactment of collectivity does not rest upon already determined practices and beliefs, but instead can open up ways of being in the world that allow for increased and embraced variation and difference.

If art practices such as *Flood* highlight the ways in which we are always already in relation with others, in processes of forming collective assemblages, then how is it that these formations can be used politically? I take up the notion of the collective because politics relies upon a version of collectivity. Political action necessarily happens through

the collective, as displayed in WochenKlausur's projects, which does not mean that there are no individual politics or political effects via individuals, but that the category of the political is only legible in its collectivity. Only by way of collectivity does politics have any meaning, or weight. It is through collective action that we enter into the political, and the political, as a series of collective assemblages, always exists before us. It is most frequently expressed in the name of collective rights or injustice that political organizing becomes necessary. The collective is central, then, to thinking what politics can do and do differently.

The collective here is not about what is in common, but is based on the idea of technicity or praxis. As relation emerges through the middle, through specific series of co-emergences, a vocabulary that talks about the framing of this emergence is useful. As cultural theorist Erin Manning provides the term of techniques, as a way of bringing people and other-than-humans together in and through relation without relying upon a commonality. She says,

> The common claim is to know in advance what is at stake. To predefine the project in this way subverts any potential for creating a new set of problems. The project, in these terms, can only be deciphered, categorized, judged within the frame of its preexistence. Techniques, on the other hand, are always immanent to the event in its unfolding. (Manning 2009, 1)

The idea of technicity, as articulated by Manning, leads away from some of the theoretical stumbling blocks associated with collectivity, and even more so, with community. Specifically, the communal and common have been undermined by the fear and critique of communitarianism or transcendental wholeness – a homogeneity that would effectively act as benign censure and comfortable conformity in the best scenario,

and brutal violence and intolerance in the worst.[62] However, if collectivity, or collective assemblages can be understood as an immanent response to a set of problems, the question turns to techniques rather than commonality. In other words, what are the emerging practices of collectivity? Or, as philosopher Isabelle Stengers suggests, "Spinoza might say to us, we do not know what a practice is able to become; what we know instead is that the very way we define, or address, a practice is part of the surroundings which produces its ethos" (2009, 187). In this way, it is possible to understand the collective not as communal, but as a way to enable people to diversify themselves, through the assemblage. *Flood* engages with this idea of technicity, articulating an assemblage, in its insistence to maintain itself as "an open proposition…exploring how and in what ways its initial structure might be taken up and used (as opposed to…fully determining its use from the start)" (Palmer 2004a, 136). *Flood* becomes an event: its techniques are determined through its constant evolution, thoroughly out of the control of its progenitors.

Relational Ontology

What is striking in this turn towards collective artistic practices is the reconceptualization of the components of subjectivity that they imply and the kinds of concrete strategies offered to think and do subjectivity differently. Highlighted within all of these practices is the idea of the subject as relational, as always entwined, enfolded, enmeshed in and with the world. In other words, it is not about putting pre-existing subjects into relation, but that relation itself forms a consistency that subjects emerge with. Often, there is a clear

[62] This legitimate fear is discussed in more detail, along with the move from community to collective praxis in Chapter Two "Reviewing the Literature."

distinction made between society and the individual (even if this is merely a conceptual move, made for clarity it has since hardened into a kind of hegemony). Where the two poles of individual and society become solidified and stratified most commonly as a kind of harmonious utopian position or an inherently antagonistic one, where both tend to reify existing subjectivities, power structures, and modes of interaction. Generally, the individual is assumed to either precede society (where society is composed of already individuated individuals), or society precedes the individual (where the individual is constituted through their coming into being in a society). What this binary understanding of our relations with society does is to endlessly pit one against the other.[63] These two poles figure largely in the contemporary imagination as caricatures of capitalism and communism. Capitalist ideology, exemplified in the virulent forms we see in America today, opposes the individual to all else; while communism, in its failed manifestations, subsumes every expression of individuality into the 'common good' (or centralization of power). In order to think politics differently, we need to think beyond these models. Cultural theorist, Brian Massumi points out that the danger of this way of thinking is its inability to account for or recognize change. As he puts it:

> The problem arises when no way is provided to conceptualize the in-between as having a logical consistency, and even ontological status, of its own. The necessary connection to the already-constituted then becomes a filiative dependence to which the 'subversion' must continually return in order to re-engender itself. The foundation eternally returns. What would it mean to give a logical consistency to the in-between? It would mean *realigning with a logic of relation*. For the in-between, as such, is not a middling being, but rather the being *of* the middle—the being of a relation. A positioned being, central, middling, or marginal, is a *term* of a relation. (Massumi 2002a, 70, my emphasis)

[63] Although structuralism offers an understanding of how society and the individual emerge together, it reduces the complexity of this operation by not accounting for its genesis, and therefore misses out on the individuation of the collective. As we will see, Gilbert Simondon seeks to account for all individuations, including that of the collective.

In other words, what happens when instead of positing a subject *in relation to* another, being itself becomes a term *of relation*? This shifts the groundwork completely from pre-conceived terms to immanent emergence in the moment. Instead of taking the individual as primary and relation as secondary, relation becomes primary, and an individual arises out of the multiple, complex, series of relations. The subject emerges from the middle. Relation is not external, but a corollary to being itself:

> A relation must be understood in its role as a relation in the context of the being itself, a relation belonging to the being, that is, a way of being and not a simple connection between two terms that could be adequately comprehended using concepts because they both enjoy what amounts to an independent existence. (Simondon 1992, 312)

The hydroponic system in *Flood* makes the being of relation concrete. People are not independent of food; plants are not independent of nutrients; relation is not external to the being of these things, but internal and necessary to their continued existence. Being is being *as* relation, not being put-into relation. There is no being for any of these things outside of their relations, and they emerge differently, in each iteration, precisely because of their immanent relations.

Significantly, what Massumi and Simondon both point to is relation as ontology, foregrounding change. The question then seems to be what kind of change and in what direction, what techniques can be developed to push and expose these relational subjectivities further. In this, the terms of becoming and belonging can also be reconceptualized as terms of a collective assemblage, where becoming subtends all of these operations, attempting to move towards a form of belonging that would not solidify relations, but that would manifest as forms of attachment, attunement or commitment.

Through the techniques of Haha and other contemporary artists, a relational subject comes to the fore. This implies that the self cannot be known in advance of its emergence in a particular situation, with particular others, meaning that what that self is composed of, its plane of consistency, is the proliferation of difference, within and through others. Subjectivity "involves taking the relation between subject and object by the middle and foregrounding the expressive instance" (Guattari 1995, 22), where the subject is not bounded, not known or articulated in advance. It is in the "multiple exchanges between individual-group-machine" that new subjectivities can emerge (however briefly). The point of highlighting relation is not to understand a completed individual pre-formed, but the ways in which the individual is consistently being individuated, emerging from the pre-individual, and carrying these excessive components with it.

Simondon provides a detailed examination of the ways in which subjectivity and collectivity can be seen as processual, as relational. He states: "we must begin with individuation, with the being grasped at its center and in relation to its spatiality and its becoming, and not by a realized individual faced with a world that is external to it" (1992, 309). He develops the concept of individuation to understand this process of being, being in relation to all the factors that create it. "Instead of grasping individuation using the individuated being as a starting point, we must grasp the individuated being from the viewpoint of individuation, and individuation from the viewpoint of preindividual being, each operating at many different orders of magnitude" (1992, 311). In other words, instead of a pre-formed individual, he understands being as a continual process of individuation, one that is constantly informed through its relation to its

surroundings, which is also not static, but similarly undergoing a process of perpetual individuation.

Simondon's elaboration of the process of individuation can be instructive in thinking through relation as ontology, particularly in attempting to work out new ways of conceiving and doing collectivity. Individuation is a system of accounting for the ontogenesis of the individual as singularity. He critiques previous understandings of individuals as they start with an already formed individual and then ask for the processes that lead to its creation to adhere, in retrospect, to this assumed position. Through understanding an individual through individuation (rather than the other way around) Simondon is able to reconceptualize some key elements in how we think of individuals. Within this framework relation is the unfolding of being through ongoing processes of individuation.

But what does individuation do and how does it work? Individuation is primarily an inventive, future-facing process. Each new individuation is not simply a new level, but a kind of quantum leap, a bringing into existence of what otherwise did not exist. The milieu and the being pose a question, which creates a tension. An individual arises as a solution to this tension. However, just as with any solution, it is temporary. The problem does not go away; it is not solved. Rather, the solution is an invention – it creates something new. It creates the possibility for matter's new forms. The tensions of each individuation remain, as a kind of excess that is the infinite problem-posing condition of nature. This future movement of the individual is the force of life. If there is not enough potential in each of the energetic fields, no invention will be created; no individuation

will take place. There needs to be in place enough of a resonance, a remainder of the preindividual charge for the emergence of the new.

What this system of thought implies is the constantly changing, evolving and immanent status of both the individual and the milieu. Relation is thoroughly reconfigured as the ground of change. Central to this idea of a relational subject is a notion of *becoming*. "Becoming is not a framework in which the being exists; it is one of the dimensions of being, a mode of resolving an initial incompatibility that was rife with potentials" (Simondon 1992, 301). The subject's being is conceived of as becoming, where becoming is a processual event. Process refers to a cosmology of unfolding that is governed not by a series of underlying substances or laws, but united through a network of relations (Whitehead 1978). Becoming also refers to the process of continually evolving and differentiating difference, to the ways in which we become different through our encounters with others, and, for Simondon, through the constant processes of individuation that we go through in order to resolve the tensions that create us as living creatures.

It is through this process of natural invention through individuation that the collective comes into being. For, the collective is brought about through disparity, due to the fundamental incompatibility of the subject to itself. The remains of the pre-individual within the subject, which are also beyond the subject as they arise from nature, cannot be resolved within the subject alone. A larger field of resonance is necessary to resolve the tensions between the preindividual and the individual. It is here that the collective is created. "Le problème de l'individu" says Simondon,

> est celui des mondes perceptifs, mais le problème du sujet est celui de l'hétérogénéité entre les mondes perceptifs et le monde affectif, entre

> l'individu et le préindividuel; ce problème est celui du sujet en tant que sujet: le sujet est individu et autre qu'un individu; il est incompatible avec lui-même. (2005, 253)[64]

It is because of the inability to actualize the preindividual in and before the subject that the collective arises. The collective is the response to this incompatibility, it is the way in which the metastable system creates a mechanism to resolve the tension or problem that the preindividual poses for the individual. The collective, as that which is larger, enables the individual to invent with this tension. The tension, as a disparity, calls for a larger scale, a new level in which to express itself.

The collective is connected to the preindividual through what Simondon calls the transindividual. The transindividual is the process of the collective, the way the collective brings together disparate elements and multiple individuals. It is the way in which the individual can move beyond itself. It is a movement which extends and pushes the individual even as the individual is de-phased, put out of phase with itself, as it becomes other, becomes deindividuated. It is this primarily impersonal, affective force of the transindividual that links the collective to the preindividual, and also to nature, which lies at the heart of the collective. As Muriel Combes says "le transindividuel ne nomme en somme que cela: une zone impersonnelle des sujets qui est simultanément une dimension moléculaire ou intime du collectif même" (1999, 87).[65] The collective is then a primarily impersonal force; it is a force of life that creates through the proximity of molecules to one another. The collective functions only insofar as it can link between these registers,

---

[64] "…the problem of the individual is the perceptive worlds, but the problem of the subject is that of the heterogeneity between the perceptible worlds and affective world, between the individual and the pre-individual; this problem is the problem of the subject qua subject: the subject is individual and other than individual; it is incompatible with itself." All translations provided by the author, unless otherwise noted, with thanks to Fabien Rose for his assistance.

[65] "the transindividual is only that: an impersonal zone of subjects which is simultaneously a molecular or intimate dimension of the collective." See previous footnote.

of the preindividual and the individual, as a resonance below the threshold of the individual. It is the moment of decomposition, a fundamental de-phased being that allows for the emergence of the new, not simply in the individual, but also in the collective. The collective, then, is primarily composed of forces beyond the individual and also beyond the human, but that simultaneously bind us together, impersonally. This speaks to the description that Haha gives of the way in which the project arises from the middle, without being able to be attributed to any one person. The transindividual makes individuals communicate, coincide; but they communicate primordial information, the information of change and becoming, not solidarity in the normal political sense based on functionalism (2005, 192).

This is where the radical political gesture of Simondon lies: thinking the collective beyond the human, as the incorporation of phaseless being with multiply phased being, as the primary incompatibility, the irresolvable tension of the forces that move through us, making us both human and other-than-human simultaneously. As Massumi states:

> For me, a Simondonian ethics of becoming is best to be found not in a next 'posthuman' phase, but in the nonhuman at the 'dephased' heart of every individuation, human and otherwise. What I mean by the nonhuman is the ontogenetic clinching of the preindividual that catapults it over the threshold of becoming. I mean the individual – that nondecomposable solidarity of occurent existence – at the brink. (2009b, 45)

The transindividual is the nonhuman passage that enables the possibility of the collective. In other words, the collective only works because of the nonhuman. It is the charge in the preindividual that creates the possibility for communication, for invention, as it remains a tension that provokes further individuations. The collective is formed in and through

affective transduction at the level of the preindividual. It is fundamentally composed of this extension of the individual, as a push into and from the nonhuman.

Nature, for Simondon, is not simply the world 'out there,' what is not-God or not-human. Instead, nature, in Simondon's careful elaboration, is the field of potentialities already partially actualized in the world but left as a reserve for individuation. He says "On peut nommer nature cette charge d'indéterminé; il ne faut pas le concevoir comme pure virtualité…mais comme véritable réalité chargée de potentiels actuellement existants comme potentiels, c'est-à-dire comme énergie d'un système métastable" (2005, 313).[66] Nature is both matter and potential, or the potential of matter, as the fully actualized potential that exists as energy, which changes and is transformed as it individuates. It is the energy of a metastable system, where the 'meta' operates as a delineation of the perpetual movement of relation between the individual and the milieu. Nature creates the conditions for resonance within the rest of the world. Nature, as the surplus of indeterminacy is what gives rise to this ontogenetic system of difference through disparity. In other words, because of the irresolvable tensions that nature already contains, forces are brought into individuated being; an individuation occurs. Nature is the principle of individuation animating all form-taking of matter, the potential that is the preindividual. The field of this potentiality is nature. *Nature is then the condition for and name of change*. It is what provides the possibility of difference in the system, the motor of the ontogenetic process, so to speak.

Flood is an example of the manifestation of this process of relation as change. For, the project highlighted the way in which nature remained at the heart of the process,

[66] "We can name nature this indeterminate charge; it is not necessary to conceive of it as pure virtuality…but as a genuine reality charged with actually existing potentials as potentials, that is to say as the energy of a metastable system."

the way in which it provided an impetus for further movement and further elaboration. This is most easily seen by they way plants were included in the expanded notion of collectivity proposed by the project, the way the plants, in a sense, *produced* the collective.

Figure 7 A day at *Flood* (photo courtesy of Haha)

Subject as Individual and Nature

Flood makes visible nature as the dephased centre of its collective practice, literally placing the garden in the middle. Collective praxis as art provokes a politics and an ethics of difference that is based on the heterogeneous relation between human and nonhuman activity. The implications of this version of becoming as processes of individuation lead to a radical re-thinking of 'nature' and 'culture'. As Simondon says, "Le sujet est plus qu'individu: il est individu et nature, il est à la fois les deux phases de l'être" (2005,

307).[67] Within the thought of Simondon, the distinction between the nonhuman and human is not classically determined, rather, he re-posits the nonhuman as central to human individuation.

Thinking through these processes as ones of individuation, the nonhuman and human can no longer be strictly differentiated, nor can an individual and the collective. This is not to say that the singularity of each individual or collective is not preserved or does not exist, but rather, the individual is constantly formed, in-formed, re-formed in relationship to the forces of different magnitudes that enable a particular (and temporary) individuation. This force of matter provokes a creative response from humans:

> It is matter, the thing, that produces life; sustains and provides life with its biological organization and orientation; and requires life to overcome itself, to evolve, to become more. We find the thing in the world as our resource for making things, and in the process we leave our trace on things, we fabricate things out of what we find. The thing is the resource, in other words, for both subjects and technology. (Grosz 2005, 132)

In other words, the thing, as matter – or as individual in Simondon's non-hylomorphic schematic – pushes further individuations, to produce increasingly different subjectivities, and to have this process continually evolve. For example, the HIV virus has caused in us different subjectivities (think of how it has shaped people and culture) and has caused new technologies.[68] These individuations ripple through the natural world into the cultural world, failing to recognize the border between the two, but at each step causing new kinds of individuations and collectivities to emerge.

---

[67] "The subject is more than an individual: it is individual and nature, it is both of these phases of being at once."

[68] By different, I align myself with Elizabeth Grosz's understanding of Darwin's sexual selection, where the increase of literal biological difference operates in excess of survival (and sometimes threatens it), but is the engine of difference and becoming. She says "The haunting beauty of birdsong, the provocative performance of erotic display in primates, the attraction of insects to the perfume of plants are all in excess of mere survival, which Darwin understands in terms of natural selection…Each affirms an overabundance of resources beyond the need for mere survival, which is to say, to the capacity of both matter and life to exchange with each other, to enter into becomings that transform each" (2008, 7).

In thinking through relations with the other-than-human, gardening, as a practice, inevitably takes on these collective relations. Gardening often re-inscribes already determined power structures between the human and other-than-human worlds through control and domination, but, because of the garden's excess, the ways in which it is constantly demanding different responses from human participants, can also force us to think in new ways about these relations. And this demand or pressure from the plant world to modify our behaviour is increasing in a world where food insecurity and the destruction of biodiversity are spreading due to anthropogenic climate change. What is at stake, then, in artistic projects that take gardens or practices of gardening as a way of working or as artistic medium, is an opening or challenge to think of our relationships to the 'natural' world differently. The power structures, characterized by domination and oppression vitally need to be rethought and our patterns of behaviour altered. Cultural theorists Laurie Anne Whitt and Jennifer Daryl Slack bring these power dynamics to the fore in their assertion that "the tendency of Western societies to parse out humans as separate from and dominant over nature is a habit of thought and a pattern of action which buttresses the tendency to parse out certain humans as separate from and dominant over others" (1994, 5). The possibility of thinking of collectives as involving forces, subjects and beings that are other-than-human allows for a radical rethinking of the ways in which dominance and power are currently played out in our society. It allows us to recognize the ways in which "Geographical and ecological features of community are rarely incidental to political and cultural struggle: they contextualize – enable and constrain – relations of power" (Whitt and Slack 1994, 6). And, as was displayed in *Flood*, to address inequalities amongst humans, we must also take into consideration

these other-than-human elements and relations that operate not only as conditions of possibility, but also as the dephased heart of the human. "As the group remarked at one of its weekly meetings: 'the experience of interacting with the garden is like reading a book: one is not necessarily changed by it, but the condition for change then exists'" (Jacob 1995, 96).

Art as Collective Practice

Artistic practice can provide a way of thinking and doing relations with each other and the other-than-human differently. Its ways of working, which privilege creativity, can allow for a kind of gap, a space to rethink what was previously thought of as 'known', by taking the everyday and moving it beyond itself. "What this kind of work can best offer are imaginative linkages, if not solutions, that reshuffle the existing ways in which people see and understand the world, to make new relationships and meaning within it" (Palmer 2008, 65). Here the garden, as mundane, habitual practice, becomes an object of curiosity, displaced and excessive. As Grosz says "Art enables matter to become expressive, to satisfy, but also to intensify – to resonate and become more than itself" (2008, 4). In the case of *Flood,* the garden is allowed to intensify as it exceeds, and never quite fits into, its assigned parameters. The storefront, as garden and as art, creates a territory, which, as Deleuze and Guattari describe in relation to art more generally, "implies the emergence of pure sensory qualities, of sensibilia that cease to be merely functional and become expressive features, making possible a transformation of functions" (1994, 183). In *Flood,* the function of growing food shifted from merely one of supply and production, through its inability to meet these needs, instead entering into

the realm of pure sensory expression. In fact, the garden was only able to feed seventy-five people every six weeks, a production level far below what could actually sustain the community of HIV positive people it was intended for. The artistic aspect of the project is most resonant in this non-functioning garden network. For if the garden's 'function' was to provide food, and as it didn't manage to fulfill this function, the garden instead becomes an expressive feature, adding a kind of question mark to the ways in which plants are typically related to. In this way, the garden became incidental to the working of the project, and yet these plants inserted themselves wholly into the collective. The garden became a site of resonance; it was a field of intensity, whose purpose was not pre-defined and therefore left enough space for people to be welcome and find some kind of meaningful connection, bringing many specific interests and concerns that could not be anticipated in advance. The garden became a kind of connective tissue, an expression of an emerging collective that involved all these complicated elements, from architecture, to subjectivity, to virus, to food.

It is in the sense that the project is excessive, that it exceeds its boundaries, that it can also be thought within a system of individuation as becoming. The garden is a mode of the preindividual, constantly individuating, changing, and emerging as individual plants. But it is also a part of the transindividual, becoming a kind of visual reminder, and demanding collective member, of the way in which these tensions and problems need to be worked out through an individuating collective that necessarily contains this force of nature at its centre that is radically impersonal. The garden can then be a making-visible of the processes of belonging and becoming in a collective defined through practice and interest, in heterogeneity, as molecules resonate next to one another.

The artistic component of Haha's work emerges through their commitment to this open-ended process, to work in an indeterminate zone, rather than towards a particular goal. Palmer explains "In all of these projects, and in valorizing potential as a precursor to change, the element of unpredictability keeps the results radically open…What it has to offer in the best sense is something other than what we already have or know" (Palmer 2004a, 139). Art, in their work, is about the creation of a gap. It is a gap in the everyday, "the gap or abstraction or distance that is necessary to see something twice – as what it is and something else" (Palmer 1994, 3). This gap is not only about a kind of remove from the demands of life as usual, but is expressed as an aesthetic project.

These beings of sensation formed, amongst groups of people, through a system of distributed aesthetics, making it impossible to understand or contemplate in one moment, unlike a traditional aesthetic experience. Instead, *Flood* should be seen as an example of distributed aesthetics: "To say that *Flood* has distributed aesthetics is to say that the work cannot be defined in reference to a center point, but only to a social situation…There was no whole or undivided aesthetic experience that could be readily known and consumed" (Bloom 2008, 26). The aesthetic component of the project was the experience of it, the network of relations, the everyday working of the storefront, and the compelling, expressive force of the garden itself, as a visual metaphor and as the incitement of a particular collective. It created a form of sensuous immersion, as artistic and collective activity. The artistic aspect of the project lies in this unclassifiable, excessive register to re-imagine relations between people and other-than-humans within a neighbourhood.

Heterogeneous Time

In order for these connections to be made, for an open process to explore its possibilities, time has to be made for them. The time of the garden, like the time of social connection, is different from the scheduled times of more traditional service provision. As Palmer points out

> It takes time for indirect and qualitative projects to gather enough critical participation to contribute to their course; it takes time for potential to realize itself through indirection. Unsensational fragments accumulate insistence over time, allowing not just for 'execution' but also for evolution, participation, growing wisdom, changing understandings, shifting participants – development, but not along a pre-determined narrative – and invention. (2004b)

And I would add to this, the time of the garden itself demands a different approach outside of scheduled activities. The time of growth, the time of watering, feeding, the time of tending to the other-than-human, all occupy their own times. The time of microbes, microorganisms, insects, infestations, the time of gardening forces both a more insistent and often slower time into modern, urban, human time. The garden time is not one that cares about deadlines, although it does matter when the halide lamps were turned on and how long it has been since nutrients were pumped through the system. The garden will go to seed; it will begin again. Garden time introduces a radical heterogeneity, one that humans respond to, manipulate, and as we are forced to accommodate ourselves to the garden, that gives the project a different edge. It forces many people to be there, to take care, as it is often too much work for one person. The collective becomes multiplied through the demands of the plants, it introduces a plurality of times working congruently, and forces the collective to commit to a longer period of operation than standard in contemporary art practices. Possibilities are foreclosed through tight timelines, as under

these conditions it is often much easier to fall back on pre-established patterns of behaviour, modes of interaction, and ways of working. In order to begin to imagine and create spaces of difference, time needs to be made for them, time that is not scheduled, time that allows for growth, planting and re-planting, outside of a pre-determined narrative. The advantage of this slower time, the insertion of heterogeneous time, is that it draws people together – someone needs to be present every day to care for the plants – and it allows for the project to develop laterally, making space for difference and the unpredictable.

Figure 8 Intrigued passers-by (photo courtesy of Haha)

Collective ethics

What *Flood* illustrates is the radical potential in artistic practice for creating new kinds of collectives. This approach to the political follows from Deleuze's articulation as "organizing good encounters, composing actual relations, forming power, experimenting" (1988, 119). These form an ethics of the richness in the possible "an ethics and politics of the virtual that decorporealises and deterritorialises contingency, linear causality and the pressure of circumstances and significations which besiege us. It is a choice for processuality, irreversibility and resingularisation" (Guattari 1995, 29). In other words, the project created the time-space to imagine ways of becoming together, differently. It allowed for the possibility of thinking about HIV as a metaphor of fragility and connection; it allowed diverse people to come together who otherwise would have no reason to do so; it allowed for the possibility of re-signifying food from simply something to eat, to the network of relations that enable its existence. These "events…can be conceived as *actualizations*: what they offer is a space-time for the effectuation of latent possibilities" (Holmes 2007, 279). *Flood* provided an opportunity to experiment with processuality, never knowing in advance what the work will do, what kinds of territories it will create, but allowing for a resingularization of the collective, of the individuals and plants involved, through creating the space-time for re-patterning to emerge.

Perhaps an open-ended proposition to make relation visible, between human and other-than-human worlds, is what comes closest to answering the question of what the storefront was. *Flood* was a construction that enabled a reterritorialization of a neighbourhood. It became a hub of activity to open up possibilities of what HIV could mean and how to deal with it, through direct community involvement. The project

produced a collective of difference, a group of people and plants joined in mutually supportive activity, rather than through identity. And their activity, their diverging attachments, roles and avenues into the project only heightened the connective tissue of the collective. "*Flood*'s value (for me) was its perpetual potential, like an open door, and what this allowed people to see and imagine into, in order to come to their own solutions" (Palmer 2004a, 137). And it is this openness that is so valuable in art practice, to render visible what might lie just under the surface of everyday experience. Collective art enables a technique to come together in difference, to create a gap, to make visible the nonhuman centre at the heart of our being (together).

Collectivity, configured as a formation that is primarily composed of impersonal forces, creates a frame for humans to come together differently, without the homogenizing impulse of community. Through Haha's *Flood,* relation is configured as unbounded, yet entangled, a becoming together of plant, virus, human, neighbourhood. Friendship offers a similarly open-ended structure, but one which resonates between people, an ethics of love which destabilizes the self, moving beyond itself to become inhabited, but also responsive, to others. This politics of love is echoed in Chela Sandoval's commitment to theory, in Lisa Tillman-Healy's approach to methodology and, as we will see, is also articulated by Michael Hardt as a way of re-framing the social.[69] Friendship has been used as a political concept throughout Western thought because of its undetermined quality. It creates an affective tie that splits and inhabits the self, moving beyond and before it. This structure of friendship provides another way of thinking through a relational subjectivity, in particular when friendship is considered a

[69] Despite Hardt's insistence on the differentiation between love as a romantic ideal and friendship, I take the position that a politics of love and friendship are not so disassociated, but rather that friendship can be seen as a form of love.

structure of relation rather than simply a marker of intimacy. In other words, the question of how to be friends with people who aren't your friends is elaborated in Spiral Garden, as an open-ended structure of relation.

Chapter Five:

Friendship in the living story space of Spiral Garden

> *One must keep an open mind. The series of events I will relate will demand much from the listener not the least of which is the suspension of disbelief. In fact, suspension of many things: judgment, logic, convention, and certainty are required to encounter the unknown on its own terms. This encounter with the unknown, the mystery, is at the heart of many a good story…*
> — Cosmic Bird Feeder's Summer Story

From the first moment I stepped foot in the garden I knew it was unlike any other place I had ever seen. There was something indescribable about the place, a certain kind of magic. Its twenty year history revealed through the well-tended vegetable and native perennial gardens, the slightly overgrown paths, the trodden grass around the spiral, but especially in the little creatures, puppets, clay figures, ornaments strewn throughout. Many small, subtle painted sticks, stars, wheelchair sculptures and tiny amorphous animals were hidden under leaves, quietly awaiting discovery. Others, like the giant butterfly puppet suspended between two trees and flaps its wings when someone pulls on the string, were prominently on display. But this feeling wasn't simply about the physical artifacts, remarkable as such an eclectic collection of hand-made articles were, in their diversity, skill and charm. It was if the intention, the stories and feelings of all those years had been trodden into the ground, composted, turned over, still emitting joy. Amber Yared, a former staff member, says "I mean you can feel that, you can feel the magic of the place without any people being there…You can feel that history, you can feel all of

it."[70] And stepping foot into Spiral Garden is like stepping foot into a parallel world, one inhabited by a full band of other-worldly creatures and people, each of the objects containing a story within them, or rather, multiple stories, stories written and rewritten, waiting to be written over again, held together through friendship as a structure for relation.

Figure 9 Photo of the new site of Spiral Garden, August 2009 (courtesy of the author)

I returned to Spiral Garden in late August, 2009 as returning to a dear and sorely missed friend, having worked there previously for one year, at Cosmic Birdfeeder, its sister site, for four years, and intermittently with various Open Studio and March Break programs at Bloorview Kids Rehab for three years.[71] I returned out of friendship, out of love, out of commitment to a place and program that I felt reflected so many thoughts and questions that registered and reverberated for me in the realm of philosophy and critical theory. The garden seemed, in some sense, to be a place of enacted thought. As Charles Stivale demonstrates, "the status of the friend as a conceptual persona who appears in

[70] Amber Yared in discussion with the author, August 20, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.
[71] The hospital has since been renamed Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

philosophy stands 'for a presence that is intrinsic to thought, a condition of possibility of thought itself'" (2008, 2). Between oneself and the friend, thought emerges. The friend gives reason, meaning, consistency to thought. And this register of philosophy in the garden seems to speak to the roots of philosophy itself, "which after all bears influential etymological traces of *philia* in its own name and purpose" (Gandhi 2005, 28).

Spiral Garden remains a unique program fostering a way of being-in-common rarely found.[72] Here, friendship operates as a mode of consistency – that is, an open-ended structuring of relations that provides certain normative parameters and modes of interaction but does not fix people in place.[73] Imagining friendship in these broad terms, as an open-ended structuring of relations, can provide possibilities for collective process and the kinds of platforms that art may offer to renew thoughts and practices of subjectivity. More specifically, friendship's openness allows for thinking subjectivity in a way that is less constrained by pre-conditioning, which is inherently and always about relation.

The beauty of friendship is the way that it operates in our lives so simply, so centrally, creating a kind of paradox where the self is extended in relation whilst guarding the alterity of the other. As philosopher Giorgio Agamben asks, "Indeed, what is friendship other than a proximity that resists both representation and conceptualization?" (2009, 31). Friendship creates a relation that carries the mystery and complexity of life in

[72] It is one of the only children's programs worldwide that employs a reverse-integration model, that is a model where able-bodied children are brought into the environment of differently-abled children. This is just one of the multiple reasons why it has drawn such international acclaim and attention from educators, therapists, artists and activists.

[73] By consistency, I mean it in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari employ in their two volumes on capitalism and schizophrenia. Brian Massumi clarifies, "'consistency' – not in the sense of a homogeneity, but as a holding together of disparate elements (also known as style). A style in this sense, as a dynamic holding together or mode of composition, is not limited to writing" (1992, 7).

a way that allows space to think with. I ask, following Deleuze, what can friendship do?[74] What are its conditions of possibility? How does friendship work in the context of Spiral Garden? And, can friendship be extended beyond friends? All these questions lead towards the central question of what kind of structures can be put in place through artistic practice to begin to think and enact subjectivity differently, as primarily relational.

In what follows, I analyze how friendship provides a structure to foreground relation through the study of Spiral Garden. I focus particularly on what is important in that setting for cultivating friendship's openness, and the kinds of constraining forces that are at play. What, in the particular consistency of friendship, could provide different understandings of the self and the collective? I begin with a description of Spiral Garden, draw out some of the philosophical implications by using Agamben's notion, stemming from Aristotle, of what friendship can do, which includes both a politics of conspiracy and an ecology of practices. From there I identify a few of the contingent factors for friendship's operation which include time, scale and trust. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a discussion of friendship as unconditional hospitality, as a politics of love and as proximity through distance.

A brief history of Spiral Garden

> *On the night of our group discussion we ate dinner together, clustered around a long wooden table in a spacious kitchen cloistered in an upscale, hippie neighbourhood in Toronto. Mid-way through the preparation of the meal, the power went out. A purple evening sky suddenly lit up against the cacophony of a*

[74] Charles Stivale notes, "In distinction to Derrida's question of 'who is the friend?,' Deleuze asks 'what can friendship do?'" (2008, xiii).

summer storm. Jessica arrived completely soaked, and immediately stripped in the hallway, changing into Michaela's clothes. With the luck of a gas stove, we still managed to cook up a feast. Guests arrived. We ate and discussed in candlelight, wind and rain raging outside. Everyone leaned in towards one another, exchanging bowls and plates, jokes and gossip, across the table. It was as if the magic of the garden had followed us here, as we sat to reflect upon a program that has deeply touched and shaped all of our lives.

Despite the complications of friendship, the push and pull, the estrangement and coming together, it was in the delight of returning to old and dear friends that I found myself again at Spiral Garden. Research at Spiral cannot but begin with friendship, as it is in friendship that the garden operates. Michaela Chandler, who grew up as a child participant and is now a staff member with Spiral, puts it most succinctly: "I'm just thinking about how many people in my own community have come from the garden, like, how many of my closest friends I've met through that space and we're all connected through this shared experience that we've all helped cultivate. For me that's one of the most important things."[75] What she aptly highlights here is that the sense of belonging, of cultivated joy and intimacy that comes about through the experience of creating and sharing the gardens. Or, as is stated in the Garden's Annual Report, the garden "is as much a time to make art as it is to make friendships and to see diverse ways of being and doing" (Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder 2004, 7).

Spiral Garden is a long-term community art project, sustained by a committed but rotating group of artists. Based out of Bloorview Kids Rehab in Toronto, it began as a

[75] Michaela Chandler in discussion with the author, August 20, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

reverse-integration art-garden-play program for differently-abled and able-bodied children. At the heart of Spiral is a communal story that develops throughout its eight-week summer session. This story is integrated and extended through all of the artistic media and practices on site, turning Spiral into a world where the boundaries between imagination and reality are blurred, "where an imaginary reality…does not supersede, but coexists beside, a more mundane reality…this play between realities allows us to move beyond the limits of our daily existence" (Davis 2005). It is a space of endless possibility, a venture into the impossible.

The gardens were created in 1984 as an initiative of the Creative Arts Department of Hugh MacMillan Centre. Nancy Brown, an educator and play-space designer, Paul Hogan, a painter particularly interested in story and myth, and Michelle Jennings, a special education teacher who had been working with children in Hugh MacMillan's school, together created Spiral Garden. It was intended to be a counter-institutional space, designed to balance the experience of the rehab hospital, where children could be outside in a child-directed environment, away from the restrictive schedules and appointments that override children's lives generally, but especially those that are dealing with illness or disability. It was and is a place for children who are clients of the hospital to play with and meet community children. It is located on the grounds, in the backyard, so to speak, of the rehab centre. In 1996 Hugh MacMillan and Bloorview, another children's rehabilitation hospital, amalgamated, creating one institution whose services were distributed over two locations. Parents at the Bloorview site (in North York, a suburb of Toronto) requested that a similar program be developed there. The Cosmic Bird Feeder was then created as a temporary site before the ultimate merger. This new garden was

brought to life by Bohdan Petryk, an artist and educator, and Jan MacKie, artist and program coordinator, as well as through the efforts of many others. As the story goes:

> The Cosmic Bird Feeder landed in a quiet corner at the back of the Bloorview site in the spring of 1997. It fell from space…forming a star-shaped garden which is quite otherworldly by all accounts. Not surprisingly, the stewardship of its growth and cultivation has fallen on a band of equally space-worthy characters. (Cosmic Bird Feeder 1998, 9).

After eleven years, in 2007, the two sites merged, and the cosmic legacy of the Bird Feeder came to an end. Situated on the old Hugh MacMillan site, the institution became Bloorview Kids Rehab, a new garden was carved out and Cosmic Bird Feeder was folded back into its progenitor, Spiral Garden.

Figure 10 Condo garden at Cosmic Bird Feeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

The creation of its own culture coupled with the encouragement of parents and children over the years meant the program has gained international attention. Spiral's

methodology has been studied and transplanted to numerous other sites, most notably the Butterfly Peace Garden in Batticoloa, Sri Lanka and Under the Willows in Hamilton, Ontario. Created in 1995 by Paul Hogan in collaboration with Health Reach, a McMaster University program, and the Canada Fund, the Butterfly Garden adapted the holistic healing and play model from Spiral Garden to address the issues of a population torn apart by years of civil war. Closer to Toronto, Under the Willows was created by Julie Jarvis in collaboration with Lynwood Hall Child and Family Centre, Interval House Women's Shelter and the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton for children who have experienced trauma or violence in their lives. Spiral Garden has also been an active collaborator with Médecins Sans Frontière's More Than Bandages Program, resulting in the *Spiral Garden Resource Book*, an initiative to spread best practices and spark interest among the intersections of health, healing, creative arts, and play. Over the years many people have visited the gardens, gaining inspiration that have taken its seeds all over the world.

As part of the new building and site merger in 2007 a year-long Centre for the Arts was opened, expanding the possibilities of arts programming at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital. These opportunities, however, have also come with increased budgetary pressure. In the fall of that same year, Jan MacKie, artistic coordinator of Spiral Garden for over twenty years and initiator of the Centre for the Arts, retired. Her depth of experience, knowledge of, and passion for the programs remains unparalleled. It was during this transitory phase, from the birth of a new site, to the creation of year-round arts programming, to the addition of a new artistic coordinator, Sarah Dobbs, that I re-entered Spiral Garden.

It is hard to disentangle and strictly differentiate between all these various activities, programs and intentions. Although distinct cultures were created in the two sites – Cosmic Birdfeeder and Spiral Garden – their ways of working, philosophy, and staff members overlapped. Throughout this chapter, I will, when speaking of broader methods and approaches, refer to the 'gardens' meaning both of these sites. However, in particular instances it makes more sense to affirm the specificity of place, and here I refer to each site separately. Further, the scope of this research does not take into consideration the broader activities of the Centre for the Arts, but instead focuses on the outdoor programs, Spiral Garden and Cosmic Birdfeeder.

Figure 11 Henrietta Dodoshplunker at Cosmic Bird Feeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

It is so hard to describe Spiral and it's incredible cast of characters, the rhythms of the day, the bonds between people. This is in part because of the importance of art, the way in which the story emerges from the middle of relation that becomes hard to translate out of its daily context. And so it remains, and reveals, the primary affective nature of the site. But a story must start somewhere.

The day starts early. Some of us gather together at Michaela's house to begin the twenty minute bike ride up to Bayview and Eglinton. The air is cool and heavy, laden with moisture. It creates a kind of density, liquefying everything as we bike through back alleys and parks, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, catching up and waking up with each other.

We arrive on site and everyone moves quickly amidst greetings. Staff begin to plan for the day, activity areas are set up, coffee runs are made inside. A horn calls and everyone gathers together around the spiral for morning stretches. We move through a series of yoga, tai chi, gym class, and invented postures accompanied by laughter, heckling, and at least one toilet-related joke. The raucous energy is quieted as, finished with stretching, we move into a circle, holding each other's hands to sing a song of healing. It is sung four times, for each of the cardinal directions. The mood oscillates between solemnity and hilarity, there is usually someone who bursts out laughing, trying to suppress it, sputtering, tears run down her face. We move on to a group game of 'pass the rock' accompanied by drumming and vocalizations. We begin to sync ourselves to one another, to the site, creating sometimes harmonious, sometimes dissonant noises in the collective sounding. Ceremony, the ritual of starting each day with the same series of activities, allows us to enter into the space consciously, leaving our other lives and worries temporarily behind. Each day's ceremony seems to set a register or tone for the rest of the day. Some days are quiet, solemn, others joyous and buoyant. We move through these rituals to mark the difference of this place from the rest of our lives.

As staff members break away to greet children and continue setting up, the musicians begin the morning circle, drawing children in through drumming and singing. Eventually, everyone gathers round and we begin the day together. We sing songs, mostly those written by musicians at the garden, narrating the sagas of summers past. A bird appears, out of breath; it is Alice Kilgour and she tells us she has just learned to fly. With her new found perspective, she noticed as she flew over the old river that it didn't have the same sparkle it used to - in fact it looked downright dried up! It was explained by the children that Mmms (who are good and evil at the same time) had hypnotized construction workers to pour concrete over the river. After much discussion on how to fix the problem, children go off to make protest signs (despite this activity being dismissed as 'hippie stuff') and to other daily activities. There is woodworking, puppet making, dress up and costumes, gardening, food, clay, kite making, some sit to continue drumming, others rehearse dances together. Children move freely between activity areas, characters and yarns emerging as they go, bringing play and story into everything on site.

Lunch and true stewies happen simultaneously, then off to the playground to run, roll and jump.[76] *Half an hour later we re-convene at music circle, announcing changes in activities, interrupted by two very bossy circus performers, Gigi and Mac, who have somehow got stuck under the ocean, appealing for our help in their obnoxious French accents, as fishes swim by. Children are eager to suggest ways of coming to their rescue, muddling through*

[76] True Stewies are a collaborative oral story telling game similar to exquisite corpse where each person in a circle tells a story related to a particular theme, an older child or adult then writes down only part of each story to create a collective, hilarious, and non-sensible tale.

how this might be related to the problems that Alice Kilgour noticed about the river nearby. In the heat of the afternoon, a group of Fountain of Youth (a program designed for older children) is busy collaborating on a 'threadle' infomercial, one child is sawing a triangle that is twice as big as he is, and many are found simply playing with the hanging percussive instruments, with the water in the sandpit, or resting under a tree.[77] *One child helpfully pulls around a trolley full of glasses of water, delivering them to one and all across the garden, purely for the joy of pulling the trolley. At the end of the day, we gather again at the spiral to plot out our adventures for the next day – how to solve the peculiar problems of Alice, Gigi and Mac, and the river. The end of the day is marked by thanks: to the earth, the sky, and each other.*

Figure 12 Portrait of Gigi and Mac (photo courtesy of Brenda Spielmann)

[77] Threadle is thread and a needle together. It can be used to sew up your dad's shaving cuts, make piercings at home, or tie together a baby's diapers.

Friendship beyond community

Community arts practices, of which Spiral is exemplary, are distinct because of their duration, the length of involvement in people's lives. For instance, it is not unusual for children in the program to become volunteers as they grow older and later, in some cases, staff members. In this way, although the time spent at Spiral is quite circumscribed, it is woven into the lives of many people as they grow up and find their way in the world (adults and children alike). This duration tends to differentiate community arts from other forms of contemporary arts. In this, it expresses how friendship functions by way of sharing the passage of time in each other's company. Laurie McGauley uses friendship to think past the impasse of the romantic utopianism found in much community art literature and practice.[78] She describes this utopianism as a drive that limits the ability of practitioners to think critically about their practice, as facilitators of community relationships as well as artists. Basing her argument on the French theorist Miguel Abensour, McGauley points to how friendship, because it avoids the pitfalls of both a social contract as well as an unquestioned affirmation of community, can become a fundamentally political principle. She states that "Friendship is, among all the passions, one of the most sublimated and rational human connections, the least likely to inspire romantic idealism…friendship instills a connection in separation, or a tie that knots us together, while preserving the separation between the members of the community" (McGauley 2006, 85). Although I would disagree that friendship is primarily rational, or the least likely to inspire romantic idealism, I do think that its workings provide a much more nuanced way to think through relation, connection and belonging. Counter to the

[78] See *Utopian Longings: Romanticism, Subversion and Democracy in Community Arts* for a full elaboration of the insightful critique that McGauley makes of community art practices.

blinding faith of romantic love, or the perfected oneness so often vaunted by uncritical accounts of community, friendship offers a way to think about human relation as distance in proximity. "Pure friendship," says Maurice de Gandillac, "does not exist any more than pure love," but in contrast to love, friendship remains "the ideal form of the specifically human relationship" (1945, 67). "This attitude allows us to greet a friend simply, without drama, without fixed agenda…making room for change, for silence, for inspiration, even for absence, this is perhaps the secret of an accord that defies any technique" (1945, 64). *An accord that defies any technique* – this means that, when I think of my friends, despite my attachments (my love and dedication) they are never subsumed into me. In friendship, my identity is not necessarily pre-determined, nor does it govern the structure of my relation with others, as can sometimes be the pre-requisite for entry into a community. Jean-Luc Nancy explores this at length, making a useful and sustained critique of both the reliance upon the indivisibility of the individual within conceptualizations of community and the ways in which community needs to be dissociated from both communion (which would lead to a fascistic annihilation of community) and from work, as work is necessarily produced and completed (instead of a process of becoming). This is in part where I see the concrete yet open-ended structure of friendship, its consistency. The structure of friendship allows for a certain openness, to the other, to oneself, and to a critical space in-between. The distance in friendship is what, paradoxically, also makes our ties stronger, generating proximity, and is precisely the place of relation.

Friendship maintains this complex distance partially through its non-categorizable quality, as Agamben argues. "I maintain, rather, that 'friend' belongs to the class of terms

that linguists define as nonpredicative; these are terms from which it is not possible to establish a class that includes all the things to which the predicate in question is attributed" (Agamben 2009, 29). To call someone a friend is therefore not a description, it is simultaneously empty and full, performing a relation that functions in the same manner as an insult, as well as occupying the category of words that simply signify being. Being, here, is not a body divorced from its environment, but a being-there, a being-in-common, a being-with-others – in short – it is a being whose whole insertion into the world defies strict delineation or categorization. Being in the garden takes up this modality as people slip in and out of the imaginary world, becoming characters, empathizing with a lost slug, or challenging stereotypes or one's own conceptions of ability. It is existence, where existence necessarily implies an other, the other, the friend. Being, in this sense, does not privilege the individual, but instead the relation.

Friendship is being, shared. And this sharing is not a giving of one to the other, but rather a splitting, eliding and expanding identity. As Agamben maintains

> Friends do not share something (birth, law, place, taste): *they are shared* by the experience of friendship. Friendship is the con-division that precedes every division, since what has to be shared is the very fact of existence, life itself. And it is this sharing without an object, this original con-senting, that constitutes the political. (2009, 36, my emphasis)

In other words, the experience of friendship, as a sharing of one's life, requires no social contract, nothing that binds one to the other except the mutual enjoyment of passing time together. Friends do not have to share the same goals, desires, common ancestry or identity. Rather, friendship defies objectification, it is a sharing of existence itself as the simple force which defies classification drawing people together and apart from themselves at the same time.

This togetherness of the relation goes beyond each self. Friendship is a mode of multiplying the self, through the experience of sharing. Existing, as sensing and thinking together, already implies a bifurcation that is a pluralization, where thought and sensation are multiplied through sharing. Following Aristotle,

> …ex isting [*to einai*] means in fact sensing and thinking. Sensing that we are alive is in and of itself sweet, for life is by nature good, and it is sweet to sense that such a good belongs to us…For good men, 'con-senting' [*synaisthanomenoi*, sensing together] feels sweet because they recognize the good itself, and what a good man feels with respect to himself, he also feels with respect to his friend: the friend is, in fact, an other self [*heteros autos*] (Aristotle 1170a28 quoted in Agamben 2009, 32).

This is the good of having friends. The friend enables a moment, wrapped around a sensation, to extend, to become distended, to reach beyond the self. This is another aspect of friendship's constancy and open-endedness, similar to but different from the time of friendship. The friend, the experience of sharing existence together, creates this multiplication: the ability to experience more with variability, through the experiences of this other self, the friend. Friendship implies an extension of duration, both across the time of months, years, decades, but also through the way an instant can stretch out almost to infinity, a shared moment that is multiplied in the presence of friends.

But we should be careful that this extension of the self through a friend implies not an increased power of the self, but its dissolution through the relation of friendship. Friendship is this movement of doubling and splitting existence, revealing relation as primary. We find ourselves caught up in the relation of friendship, and at the same time swept away by it. As Agamben observes, existence itself necessarily implies the friend, just as thought does. Being, shared existence, as always in relation, becomes more apparent through friendship.

> *Friendship is the instance of this 'con-sentiment' of the existence of the friend within the sentiment of existence itself.* But this means that friendship has an ontological and political status. The sensation of being is, in fact, always already both divided and 'con-divided', and friendship is the name of this 'con-division.' This sharing has nothing whatsoever to do with the modern chimera of intersubjectivity, the relationship between subjects. Rather, being itself is divided here, it is nonidentical to itself, and so the I and the friend are the two faces, or the two poles of this con-division or sharing. (Agamben 2009, 34)

What friendship is, then, is the reflective, refractive point between two (or more) people. It is relation, the experience itself, the movement in between the two poles, which themselves are both between and within the friend. This movement is beyond and before the individual, revealing the more-than-oneness of subjectivity, its composition or adherence as moments of relation. Being loses any presumed wholeness, becoming more or less consistent through different modes of existing, through being in relation differently. We become inhabited by our friends. This experience of togetherness as the sharing of existence, suggests that the boundaries of the self become less easy to differentiate, become populated by others, blur at the edges. As Deleuze asks,

> …what precisely is an encounter with someone you like? Is it an encounter with someone, or with the animals who come to populate you, or with the ideas which take you over, the movements which move you, the sounds which run through you? And how do you separate these things? (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 11).

As Deleuze implies, the experience of friendship cannot be disentangled from the moments of the multiple others that run through sharing existence, the multiple worlds that unfold and fold again through encounters that are immanent to, yet not contained within, the self. The sense of one's self is multiplied through the sharing of existence, not to be re-found in the larger ego of the group or community, but to simply dissolve into

itself, becoming a component of the friendship. Agamben describes this movement of dissolution as an event:

> The friend is not an other I, but an otherness immanent to selfness, a becoming other of the self. The point at which I perceive my existence as sweet, my sensation goes through a con-senting which dislocates and deports my sensation toward the friend, toward the other self. *Friendship is this desubjectification at the very heart of the most intimate sensation of the self*. (2009, 35, my emphasis).

This desubjectification allows for an opening onto the world, a multiplication of the self's possibilities, specifically because of the intimacy of the relation. Friendship is this relation which becomes *consistent* through trust, across time, emerging as a becoming-other of the self. It is an opening to the alterity of the other, and through that to the forces, animals, plants, minerals, that share our existence. As I encounter the sweetness of existence, I reach out to share it with my friend, literally or imaginatively: splitting, doubling experience, where subjectivity multiplies, above and below the individual. Relation moves in this space where I and the friend cannot be disentangled.

Politics by way of conspiracy

As friendship privileges relation and cannot be reduced to a particular ideology or identity, a playful indeterminateness can emerge, which can aid in political visions and organizing. Our friends become our co-conspirators, dreaming up wildly elaborate games, and sometimes revolutions. The garden's modes of operating, it's method of creation (as in the story), is one where adults playfully enlist children, conspiratorially bringing them into a world they create together. This sense of engaged play, coming together to create an alternate world, creates a joyful scheming that can extend into life-long attachments. These modes of friendship are everywhere evident at Spiral Garden. As

Jan MacKie comments, the notion of community itself becomes textured, multiplied, and divided via the figure of the co-conspirator:

> I think a lot of really beautiful friendships have come out of working together because you've got people who've been looking for an environment in which they can work a little differently. *And they find it and they find their co-conspirators*. And isn't this fun. Oh, ok, why don't you come on over for dinner, maybe we can just continue to play here. I like the way you play. And it's how things happen, I think.[79]

The idea of working as co-conspirators, with the kids and amongst the staff, creates an atmosphere where the garden becomes one long, running joke – a hilarious but meaningful, slightly clandestine dream that we get to play out with one another. This way of working seems to inevitably tip over into the rest of our lives. For those invested, it shapes people in a way that cannot be undone.

This conspiratorial aspect of friendship is not unique to Spiral, but operates as a mode of consistency, as a central characteristic of friendship in and of itself. Friendship can be a powerful political force, which has characterized revolutionary and oppositional movements.[80] I mean political here in the sense of intervening into and using power as it

---

[79] Jan Mackie in discussion with the author, August 22, 2009, Bruce Peninsula, Ontario, my emphasis.

[80] In particular, friendship has often become a mode of political engagement for queer activists. This is because in large part, many gay, lesbian, trans, bi and other queer folk have been effectively kicked out of or estranged from more naturalized communities of culture, or family. In friendship, then, queer culture finds both its personal foothold as well as a structure of consistency from which to challenge heteronormative culture. However, friendship within queer culture importantly does not demarcate sexual from platonic relations, frequently mixing the terms in multiple combinations and as yet to be named relations. See Michael Warner *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*, especially pp. 115-116 for a more detailed explanation of the role and importance of friendship, non-normative couplings and intimacies in queer politics and sexuality. See also Michel Foucault's eloquent intervention into queer theory by positing friendship as a primary form of love and attachment, as a way to understand queer life not as a static identity, but as a proliferating form of pleasure. He says we have to invent "a relationship that is still formless, which is friendship: that is to say, the sum of everything through which they can give each other pleasure" (2001, 298). Leela Gandhi has also discussed friendship as a political form, one that created a consistency from which to resist colonial expansion at the turn of the century in England. She argues that a 'politics of friendship' brings together a heterogeneous 'internationalism,' "weaving together the disparate energies of Marxism, utopian experimentation, and continental anarchism, these individuals and movements facilitated the mutation of 'internationalism' into a series of countercultural revolutionary practices for which I claim the name 'politics of friendship.' I will

runs through and shapes our subjectivities, our institutions and our daily lives. Regardless of the seriousness of the situation and the earnestness with which actions are undertaken, there is a sense of playing, of sharing experience, which extends the individual but does not solidify it into a communal identity, rather friendship folds into, moving before and beyond the individual whether the individual is more than one. Obviously Spiral Garden, an outdoor play program for children hosted by a wealthy institution does not share the revolutionary splendour of more militant friendship, but I think it shares a similar logic. This is the paradox of friendship, the way it resists the presumed incorporation of kinship or of lovers, whilst at the same time cultivating a form of intimacy which makes this relation political, traversing and contaminating the division between public and private. This political consistency of friendship can be found through loyalty, in the commitment one has to sharing, to existence, to the other as other.

Friendship can become a driving force in politics, a mode of consistency that defies identity, a co-conspiratorial connection. Friendship becomes politically valuable because it enables people to express an intimacy that works as a mode of consistency without identity. "L'amitié est cette forme spéciale d'affection *où l'horizon du monde ne se perd pas*. "L'amitié, dit Hannah Arendt, n'est pas intimement personnelle, mais pose des exigences politiques et demeure référée au monde'" (Parti imaginaire 2007, 19).[81] It is also a recognition that change, despite the revered and well-deserved celebration of great people, happens only through relation. In other words, change, in a manner that should remind us of Agamben's description of existence, is generated in-between people,

---

argue that this politics rendered metropolitan anticolonialism, albeit briefly, into an existentially urgent and ethically inventive enterprise" (2006, 9).

[81] "Friendship is this special form of affection *where the horizon of the world is not lost*. Friendship, says Hannah Arendt, isn't intimately personal, but raises political demands and stays connected to the world." Translation provided by the author, with thanks to Fabien Rose for his assistance.

from the consistency of friendship itself.[82] This is not to say that a group identity can never take over, or that particular leaders or personalities don't emerge, obviously they do. But what precedes and moves beyond identity is the *experience of sharing*, the collaborative and conspiratorial aspects of working with others to produce something that could not be done solo. It is about a particular mode of understanding oneself as always primarily in-relation. Friendship is then always a political relation, but also an attitude whose hopes defy the conditions of oppression.[83] Friendship, as it is based on sharing, aligns itself with a power system that is more egalitarian.[84]

Politics, in the context of Spiral Garden is a generative force, an ontogenetic relation of creating together. It strives to create an entire autonomous, anti-oppressive culture. As Michaela Chandler points out:

> We make our own cups and eat our own vegetables and make our own art, there is no outside world. We have our own history and our own legends and stories. In fact we are living through stories all the time while we're there. …We are taught how to weave our own story and how to play. How to through [sic] a party and how to mourn someone who has passed away. I think we go there and children come there because it's a place where many things happen but in the end no one really knows what's going on, maybe it's the closest thing to the truth we have (2005).

---

[82] Poland's Committee for Workers' Defense (KOR) illustrated the power of friendship to transcend and transform the political, bringing politics into our most intimate ways of being: "politics [was conducted] via unpolitical means: a bohemian community sharing things, money, food; a 'warm circle' which provided a sense of security and an awareness that 'you can risk everything because there will always be people who love you, who will help you and who will be with you to the end'" (Witoszek, 106). This sense of solidarity generated between friends is fundamental to any kind of sustainable attempt at fundamental change.

[83] Jacques Derrida suggests that "A friendship that has become steadfast, constant or faithful (*bébaios*) can even defy or destroy tyrannical power" (1997, 15). What Derrida points to is the way in which the consolidation of power in any context does not sit well with friendship.

[84] However, even as Derrida makes explicit the inextricable relation between friendship and democracy, he crafts a sustained critique of the fact that this relation is based on fraternity. In other words, women are and have been excluded from this vision of friendship and of democracy. He asks "what would then be a politics of such a 'beyond the principle of fraternity'. Would this still deserve the name 'politics'?" (1997, viii). Unfortunately this observation still seems quite accurate as Spiral was also split by androcentrism and sexism. For a number of years Jan MacKie was not recognized as capable of leading the garden because of her gender. This eventually culminated in a division of the garden staff.

The force of the conspiracy at Spiral and Cosmic creates a whole world. In this world, we have the chance to be more conscious, to build up cultural autonomy, to learn to cultivate practical skills, and to live in a manner whose delicate scale and values nurture peace, difference, and ecology – definitively utopian impulses which also lend themselves to the critiques of utopia as complete and insular. In fact, this utopian impulse in both its positive and negative senses, often plays out at the gardens, especially for those who were involved in Cosmic. The ecstatic qualities of communion spill into an exclusionary practice whose gentleness seems to defy criticism. This creates a certain kind of hegemony within the confines of the gardens.

Although the practices at Cosmic and Spiral do not necessarily transcend its borders, they do provide an opportunity to practice and participate in autonomous culture. However, there are obvious limitations to this autonomy, foremost amongst these is the reliance upon the Bloorview institution for immense amounts of funding.[85] Yet within the space of the garden itself, ways of living arise that resist dependence on systems of exploitation based on principles of mass production. These ways of living and sharing provide a brief glimpse of what might otherwise be. Politics in Spiral is taken up as a "praxis in a situation that articulates an interstitial distance from the state, and which allows for the emergence of new political subjectivities" (Critchley 2007, 114). Because friendship at the garden is formed within the confines of a children's program, this move may not immediately register as political, but what does become more evident are the ways in which friendship at the garden provides the time and space for new subjectivities to emerge, for resingularization and that provides a consistency for relation.

[85] Liz Rucker noted that Spiral is definitively the richest community art space she has ever worked in, in a 15-year career of community-based theatre.

One of the things I always wondered about at the garden was the way in which the structuring of friendship did seem to overlook our differences – the ways in which even though we worked daily with differently abled people how few of the staff, much less those who would be invited to dinner, fit into these categories. I couldn't help but notice and wonder about how staff and able-bodied children seemed to come from quite similar backgrounds: mainly white, well-educated, left-leaning, middle-class. And the hiring practices, putting together those who would get along, did not necessarily always reinforce this social capital, but rarely challenged it. In fact, people who held certain political positions or reinforced a corporate or capitalist ideology were explicitly not hired. Of course, this is important to generate culture autonomous from our daily reality, but it made me wonder about the limits of what we would accept as different. But, as Lauren Berlant says, preaching to the converted is underrated. It creates consistency and resistance to this larger, dominant culture even as we end up reproducing some of its normalizing violences.

Figure 13 Ceremony to honour strawberries at Cosmic Bird Feeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

Friendship: an ecology of practices

The collective formations of Spiral Garden and Cosmic Birdfeeder, the plurality that comes about through friendship and which emerges from the non-human and human worlds is based in what Isabelle Stengers would call an 'ecology of practice'. In other words, the ways in which the story and culture emerge from the entanglements and interrelated elements of the natural-cultural worlds, the meeting of the institution with the de-institutionalized play, is part of an ethics based in practice. "Each achievement in the ecology of practice" Isabelle Stengers says "that is, each (always partial) relation between practices as such, as they diverge, must be celebrated as a 'cosmic event,' a mutation

which does not depend on humans only, but on humans as belonging, which means they are obliged and exposed by their obligations. Such an event is not something that can be produced at will" (2005, 192). This ecology can be seen in the garden as the way in which we become exposed and attached to each other in and through events beyond our control. The attentiveness to the natural world, or sometimes the complete obliviousness which then imposes itself – as, for example, when groundskeepers redesigned the Spiral site and left the lowest part of the garden without any drainage, turning the spiral at the garden's heart into 'bog town' full with fearsome anaerobes – is what defies our will, but also provides inspiration.

Jan MacKie recounted a story illustrating this ecology of practice, this openness to the force of the world, a metaphor of how staff attempt to structure Cosmic and Spiral. She described how before the conquistadors in Peru there were three thousand varieties of potatoes. And because the Andes are so steep, their mode of farming depended on terraces built on the side of the mountain, each with its own particular ecology and set of conditions, shifting with altitude and direction. A different variety of potato would be grown in each location. The farmers would leave a margin between terraces and they would wait and see what grew in the in-between space. What was it that wanted to be there? This would give them an indication of what would grow well in the next terrace. "I saw it as sort of an analogy for life and society" she says, "the garden [Spiral] in a way was in that margin. What's happening there?…What thrives? That we could cultivate, or not even cultivate, but encourage, you know?" She goes on to explain how this ethic permeates the entire garden, from its inception:

> So, you've got the institution there, you've got the ravine there and the garden was this place in-between. So, it wasn't totally connected to the

> institution, and it wasn't totally connected…I mean, we weren't living in the wild, right? It was somewhat tamed, but it was that in-between place. And what's in the in-between? And I think if you think about that generally, I mean I'm here now and now I'm here, but what's in-between there, like what is that opening in-between, and can we make that in-between space a little more spacious so that something different can happen?[86]

The in-between at Spiral is given a logical consistency, recognizing that this is the name and place of change. The in-between is valued as the site of difference, a force to move beyond what is commonly held to be true or acceptable.[87]

The particularity of the in-between can only be felt in its practices, in the moment and through the interactions that emerge from a situation. The ethic of the in-between can undergird a general approach, but it is up to a particular moment, emerging from the event of the garden, that these practices can truly be felt. Isabelle Stengers explains that:

> An ecology of practices may be an instance of what Gilles Deleuze called 'thinking *par le milieu*,' using the French double meaning of *milieu*, both the middle and the surroundings or habitat. 'Through the middle' would mean without grounding definitions or an ideal horizon. 'With the surroundings' would mean that no theory gives you the power to disentangle something from its particular surroundings, that is, to go beyond the particular towards something we would be able to recognize and grasp in spite of particular appearances. (Stengers 2005, 187)

The in-between allows for ethics to emerge from the middle, from the situations in which people find themselves.

The in-between constitutes a certain kind of structure for the garden, one that is always slightly shifting, always in flux. There is no pre-determined path, no goal, no

---

[86] Jan Mackie in discussion with the author, August 22, 2009, Bruce Peninsula, Ontario.

[87] The in-between is given a consistency through relation which then becomes the force of change. As Brian Massumi makes clear "The terms of a relation are normally assumed to precede their interrelating, to be already-constituted. This begs the question of change, because everything is given in advance. The interrelating simply realizes external configurations already implicit as possibilities in the form of the preexisting terms" (2002a, 70). The way out of this problem is precisely by giving up the fixed polarities of the debate to begin with, by "asserting the exteriority of the relation" (2002a, 70).

standards, no outcome (although a good story is hoped for). Nothing is completely forbidden—with the exceptions of violence and pop culture, and even these can be twisted and played with—and nothing is held up to be completely sacred.

Play becomes the way in which this structure emerges, as an ethic and practice of the in-between, that comes about not through the solidification of the self, but from its displacement, from relation, through an event. "Play is to be in between yes and no. This type of activity not only plays within a set of rules but also plays with the rules themselves. This creative play writes its own logic and we are challenged to enter into this world on its terms. We don't play so much as we are played" (MacKie and Petryk 2009, 2). This understanding of play recognizes the way that collaborative play is not about the solidification of the ego or the individual, but about it's expansion. 'We don't play, we are played,' played by the collective creative energy that emerges in-between.[88] A child who had attended the garden for many years, expressed it quite well: "I think the really neat thing about Spiral Garden, just in terms of the magic, is that you're able to kind of suspend reality for a while and you're just kind of able to separate from your self" (Petryk 2005, 12). Part of what this separation from one's self means is a certain kind of openness to the world around us, recognizing that even within the heart of downtown Toronto there is an abundance of other life. "The play at the gardens involves surrendering to a larger trajectory. 'It's very easy to enter into play without expectation, without direction, and then it sort of takes its own direction as an independent thing which you sort of forget that you're imagining or creating because you're just doing it as a part of what's already going on.' The life of play is outside of ourselves" (Petryk 2005,

[88] I don't mean this in the colloquial sense of 'being had,' but rather that play is an activity that takes you over, that you are not the agent of play but that its force plays with you.

11). What this sense of abandon entails is also an opening to a multiplicity, a recognition that the world constantly exceeds its boundaries, that biological metaphors reach out into new territories of imagination and possibility and that each person's singularity remains as a part of this ecology. And the consistency of friendship and trust allows for a return which creates more freedom to play.

Time: Sharing life

Figure 14 The world upside down and backwards: image from inside an adobe hut as camera obscura (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

Over at woodworking, I am asked to hang out with a child who is intently engaged in one activity: screwing. Endlessly screwing a screw into the woodworking table. Sometimes it goes in and sometimes it turns around and around without making a dent. When it goes in too far, he begins to screw it out. There is no point or goal to the movement. It is simply movement itself. There is a

careful concentration, a gentle, but determined, insistent repetition, creating a quiet rhythm. This activity spans the entire morning.

The active cultivation of space and time to simply be, to exist with others, goes against much of the logic of advanced capitalism, where the injunction to be productive is instilled in children from a young age, reinforced through appointments, regulated by the clock. The freedom, then, to experience time's passing together and in the process have fun, involves a displacement and re-configuration of the logic of much of dominant society. "There is intention in the program to balance our society's preoccupation with doing and activity. We leave room for and sometimes actively encourage doing nothing. It is habitual to move quickly from one activity to another – the gardens nurture spaces for reflection, daydreaming, silence and stillness" (Petryk 2005, 8). And the ability to incorporate these slower times allows for an opening to others, and the other-than-human. Intentionally leaving room creates a space to pay attention to detail, a moment of observing what we are otherwise hurriedly passing by.

> I feel that this place also gives you the opportunity to stop. And that's a great thing to give kids, to be at the table painting and you see this little bug come across, and then, 'Ok everybody stop, wait, take care of the bug!' And to take the bug around everywhere so everybody can experience this little bug." The staff intentionally look for opportunities to connect children to the world around them. We often take time to watch bugs, listen to birds and strain to see invisible monkeys. As well, we sit on the grass trying to cultivate the rare skill of doing nothing. (Petryk 2005, 13)

The time of friendship emerges in relation to the times of others. Invisible monkeys and the pace of a beetle are given form as experience through the simple acts of sharing time together. In the garden time is made for interruption, for engaged distraction, and often these things fuel the imagination, allowing us to open to the external world.

It is the attention that is paid to each other, in the time that we have, and the sense of intimacy generated on site, that creates a space for friendship to emerge. Aristotle was sensitive to this. "Nothing is so characteristic of friends as sharing their lives" (1157b20). It is the sense of time and duration, of coming into friendship without knowing it, suddenly finding oneself there, which provides a way to think though human relation without pre-determining what that could be. Friendship is this open-ended structure of sharing life. Time is central to what this indefinable proximity is, and can be. It is the passage of time, that bonds people together, and this often happens without it being apparent. Spending time in each other's company, sharing the passage of time together, creates a friendship. For Simon Critchley, "The temporality of the future in friendship is an experience of slow protraction, the future tense as distension, as stretching out" (Critchley 1999, 257). Friendship arises through the passage of time, and becomes a way of marking time, an awareness of its passing. The time of the garden is not merely composed of particular events, or identifiable moments; it is also experienced in friendship as elongated, procrastinated, aimless time together. This is what Critchley means by distension. It is in this present-ness, that time is experienced as such, not as a means to a particular target or end, but as shared.

So, the passage of time also contributes to the consistency of friendship, allowing for friendships to emerge, for trust to be established, for working relationships to deepen, for histories and mythographies to develop. Micah Donovan comments, "I don't think this program would work if it were part-time staffers who were gone at the end of the year and never came back…community definitely needs some kind of

consistency…some stability."[89] It is through the passage of time together, over time, that consistency and stability are built, providing a framework from which the gardens and their activities can become limitless and fearless.

Figure 15 Counting down to now at Cosmic Bird Feeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

> *One summer at Cosmic we counted down to 'now', as a kind of chant, as a group celebration. And in the moment when the word was spoken, it was instantly repeated, a chorus of non-synchronous 'nows' resounding throughout the garden. Each enunciation becoming less a marking of the moment and more an understanding of its having already passed, created in the joyous celebration of an instant that occupied a kind of duration that at once expanded to infinity even as it was slipping by. This is the time of friendship as protraction, as extension to*

[89] Micah Donovan in discussion with the author, August 31, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

a futurity, a recognition and activation of the virtual, a way of building between one another an ephemeral, and always contingent, togetherness.

How Many? The question of scale

However, in order for this method of working to succeed it must have certain parameters, a certain scale, not only in terms of a relation to time, but also a relation to space, to how many. Derrida raises the question of friendship in relation to numbers, to the number of one's friends. *How many?* This question is crucial. For, as Derrida says, "one must not have too many friends, for there is not enough *time* to put them *to the test* by living with *each one*" (1997, 20). Numbers put a certain pressure on the time of friendship. Friendship in Spiral Garden is necessarily expanded beyond just friends precisely because it is not possible to live with everyone who participates in it. The question of the degree of intensity, the amount of care and attention that can go into a relationship is determined by scale. One of the things that makes the program at Spiral unique is the ratio of children to adults. This ratio produces an environment where magic can grow and thrive. As Micah points out, it comes down to staffing:

> Staffing. You know the biggest difference is people think that if you're in a room you need one person or two people to host 10 or 20 or 30 or 40 kids because that's what rooms typically hold. And the proportion of, the ratio of people here, is just extraordinary. I remember at Cosmic it was like one adult to two or three kids, when you counted the facilitators and the volunteers and supporting staff.[90]

In other words, it enabled a certain freedom for the children – for a six-year-old to use a hand drill; to create a tetra-uber-lope out of sticks and branches;[91] for children to move about at their own pace, sometimes very quickly and sometimes so slowly as to be barely

[90] Micah Donovan in discussion with the author, August 31, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.
[91] A tetra-uber-lope is a type of mythical deer-horse, usually constructed from branches and pieces of cedar.

perceptible; and the opportunity to encounter real differences in people's abilities, because there are adults to provide facilitation for the children who need it.

Figure 16 Tetra-uber-lope at Spiral Garden (photo courtesy of the author)

In the gardens, the question was never how big could we become, but rather, what the right balance for the site was, how many of us could there be before we became too dispersed. The program is quite popular, and sometimes getting a child in can be difficult. There are waiting lists of up to two years. Under these circumstances, it would be entirely conceivable for a program to just keep growing and growing. However, the knowledge that the program would be diluted was something that staff paid close attention to. Unfortunately, this is an ongoing concern. The pressure from the institution to be more financially dependent puts pressure on the program to increase the number of participants. This is one of the key differences between Cosmic, which was much more

intimate and small-scale, and Spiral. During my research, Robert Vine, who has worked at Spiral for twenty years, expressed concerns that there seemed to be too many people at Spiral. He asks "how many people do I know that I feel really connected to? The size of the group, right now, I think we're too big here. I can go through a session and I didn't even meet that kid, we're just too big."[92] To which Micah promptly adds, "it's like when you become a service, you know?"[93] The question of 'how many?' comes up here. How many people can you develop a relationship with? How many people can be a part of one group before it starts to crumble, shifting away from a meaningful, collective experience of sharing, towards strict service provision? In the garden, the ideal size of the program is often gauged by ensuring that "we know each other by name. The numbers of participants are kept reasonable and people are not numbers or 'just another camper'" (Noor 2005). Scale is also fundamental to whether new subjectivities can emerge, whether or not relation itself can be privileged. We need to know each other by name, at the very least, to be able to extend hospitality, or friendship. In order to push our understandings and enactments of subjectivity beyond what is pre-determined, or already known, these practices of scale and trust need to be in place. Collectives, as established through relational subjectivities need these governing structures of time and scale. They need them primarily in order to preserve that magical quality of friendship which is the experience of distance in proximity.

[92] Robert Vine in discussion with the author, August 31, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.
[93] Micah Donovan in discussion with the author, August 31, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

Trust: structuring friendship

One of the conditions of possibility of friendship, one of the things that seems fundamental to its opening in more egalitarian directions is trust. Trust is central to the structuring of relations in friendship generally, and in the garden in particular. Trust is understood here not just as a marker of familiarity, loyalty, or 'keeping one's word,' but is the generation of belonging across and between strangers. Trust provides a consistency for people to feel held by the world, for there to be something to fall back on that allows them to leap into more vulnerable and open positions, to abandon the haven of sovereignty. Trust at the garden is fundamental to the process of becoming-friends, of maintaining friendship. This was highlighted throughout the interviews that I conducted with staff at Spiral Garden: the garden could not function properly when the staff didn't trust one another. Jan MacKie expresses this sentiment in blunt terms: "I think there's a real issue at times with trust…there's a real thing that the staff have to trust one another, implicitly."[94] One of the differences between the two sites, during the time that I worked at Cosmic, was this issue of trust. At Spiral, the trust between members of the group had eroded. This in turn caused noticeable friction while working, leading to the formation of cliques and deep division amongst staff. These divides were not just personal, but inevitably transferred over to what was able to happen with the story, how far it could go. Decisions started to be made without the entire group's input, by only a few key people, fanning the flames even more. This division caused a disengagement from the site, a movement away from the possibilities of new relations and towards a regular child care program.

[94] Jan Mackie in discussion with the author, August 22, 2009, Bruce Peninsula, Ontario.

Bohdan Petryk describes how at one point in Spiral's history, the register of friendship was used as an exclusionary device, how under the direction of Paul Hogan, key people were invited to story meetings after work, which would then determine the trajectory of the story and the work environment in the days and weeks to come. People were invited based on friendship. And friendship here operated as a way to exclude others. As the meetings were not formal, simply a meeting of friends after work for beer, it became difficult for those excluded to adequately address the issue. This eventually resulted in the creation of two parallel story groups for one site, a clearly disruptive and untenable way of working.

At Cosmic trust was central to its success. Partially, this was due to careful attention to hiring (people were picked who were genuinely open and excited about collaboration and who would get along). Partially, it was due to a smaller site where an ethic of group decision-making was reinforced and put in place from the beginning. In contrast to Spiral Garden during this time, decisions at Cosmic were chiefly made through consensus.[95] And the culture of the program, story, and artistic creation flourished because of the trust between staff. People were able to take more risks in their artistic skills when the pressure of judgment was removed. "We are so very good at working collaboratively," Amber Yared, an artist with the gardens for five years, comments. "I think this is partly because, as a group, we are very good at trusting each

[95] Bohdan Petryk put into place this consensus model from Cosmic's inception, in part as a response and remedy to the frictions that had developed at Spiral. But, this collaborative model was really developed by Micah Donovan, Artistic Coordinator at Cosmic. Even then, in certain situations, Donovan would use his authoritative power to make unilateral decisions, although in the few occasions where this happened, it caused significant friction in the group. Further, the structure of the hospital is very conventionally hierarchical meaning that a collaborative ethic at the gardens operates within very circumscribed limits.

other. We are comfortable expressing ourselves around each other…we encourage each other with as much enthusiasm and warmth as we try to give the kids" (2005).

Resisting hierarchy by working with models of consensus and collective-decision making is part of what creates trust between people. It is an attitude that can lead to the creation of a space where mutual strengths and concerns will be valued without one person always gaining recognition for the work of many. When there is no hierarchical advantage between being quiet or outspoken, between working with clay or with puppets, competition is limited. Micah Donovan expresses how this non-competitive and non-hierarchical atmosphere can encourage a collaborative ethic: "You can also stroke the community ego by having different types of people, an extraverted theatre person and then a quiet clay person, you can create a community way of thinking, in our left right brain schizophrenic multi-voiced writer kind of a way."[96] Here, the community becomes a network, tied through friendship, where each person becomes populated by a host of others. Instead of promoting identity, or common unity, this form of friendship promotes difference – a productive disparation is produced between different elements, even as these are tied to a shared ethic, philosophy, and way of working. The primary condition of this commonness is defined by providing a sense of belonging across and between strangers, or trust for short, as expressed in the 'multi-voiced schizophrenic writer' kind of way.

Trust between people allows for risk-taking, it creates an atmosphere where (almost) anything can happen. Amber Yared expresses this sentiment well by describing how working at Cosmic allowed her to learn "to let myself go to some other place and

[96] Micah Donovan in discussion with the author, August 31, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

that feeling of learning, oh I can be this, I can do that. So, there's a kind of feeling of empowerment there. And everyone trusting, feeling trust. I never felt like a freak no matter what I did, except for once."[97] This feeling of trust allows for the becoming-other of the self through friendship. The self can be extended, played with. You can find yourself in a place, in a role never imagined, because it is created through the consistency, the trust, of friendship. Trust provides something to return to, implicitly allowing for more experimentation. It allows people to feel ok in their non-sovereignty, in a vulnerable and open state, composed of multiple others in and through relation. New and diverging subjectivities are then fostered within a structure where trust enables not only the risk of individual subjects, but also the exploration of collective forms of subjectivation. As Guattari explains in relation to his psychiatric practice at La Borde:

> One creates new modalities of subjectivity in the same way that an artist creates new forms from the palette. In such a context, the most heterogeneous components may work towards a patient's positive evolution: relations with architectural space; economic relations; the co-management by patient and carer of the different vectors of treatment; taking advantage of all occasions opening onto the outside world; a processual exploitation of event-centred 'singularities.' (1995, 7)

Guattari here importantly points out that these exchanges of trust, openness, splitting and sharing happen through the materials of expression, the components of the socius, the affective, the non-human that pass through and re-compose subjectivity.

Unconditional Hospitality

Friendship, the being-friend – what is that anyway? Well it is to love before being loved.
– Derrida, The Politics of Friendship, 8.

[97] Amber Yared in discussion with the author, August 20, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

However, regardless of the scale of the program, developing intimate friendships between all people on site is both impossible and undesireable. The question is then how to become friends with people who aren't your friends, how to create structures for relation that are consistent while preserving the openness of friendship, the space for difference. One way of approaching these questions is through an ethics of unconditional hospitality (Levinas 1969). This formation of welcoming the other, extending unconditional hospitality also seems to be the most apt description of the philosophy of the garden. Unconditional hospitality offers a way to think beyond the implied intimacy of friendship, how friendship could be extended to those who aren't your friends, to those for whom you don't have time to share a life with. It implies an ethics that brings with it the understanding of sharing existence through relation. But this ethics addresses the fact that it is not possible to be friends with everyone. There are people one does not get along with. There are fights, irreconcilable differences, the emergence of distrust. What ties the garden together despite the inevitable conflicts, however, is the extension of unconditional hospitality. Regardless of whether or not we get along, there is an ethic of hospitality. This is possible, in part, because there is not one host: hospitality is extended and received by everyone on site, modeled by the staff. And the material site also carries this implied hospitality through its nooks and crannies, the lack of fences, the creatures, sculptures, instruments strewn throughout, the gardens filled with flowers and vegetables. It is quite common to find people sitting or playing in the gardens when programs are not taking place. It is this sense of openness that transcends any kind of strictly equal reciprocity. In other words, unconditional hospitality is extended regardless of a person's willingness or ability to 'give back' in the same manner.

To love before being loved is the ethical act of friendship. It allows the borders of whom we call 'friend' to expand. Unconditional hospitality means extending a welcome, bringing out the cake, making a parade, and through these activities imparting a sense of ownership to everyone on site. This ethic is especially important in a place where the range of disability extends the full gamut of special needs, "from kids that you would not recognize as having a disability at first glance to those in power wheelchairs with life-support systems and a nurse in attendance at all times" (MacKie, quoted in Levine 2002, 47). An ethic of unconditional hospitality means that each person will be accommodated and valued, regardless. One child described how she often gets stared at, how people make disgusted faces at her out in public. The stigma attached to children who are oddly formed is distinctly felt. The collaborative relations at Spiral, structured through friendship and hospitality, creates an atmosphere where different kinds of bodies and different abilities multiply and where questions and curiosities about differences are not suppressed. This is made easier because children are often not yet trained to be polite or pretend not to notice the range of bodies on site. One child I interviewed described how,

> at least here people aren't afraid to ask what happened to me kind of thing like [another child] just did. Like I know what will often happen on the street, what happens there is they'll be walking by and they'll be like [she makes a face], and I'll look at them and kind of smile and be like 'what are you looking at?' And they'll jump. Whereas at Spiral people are a lot more open and I feel generally happy at Spiral.[98]

Although the sense of acceptance and unconditional hospitality is important for anyone, it is particularly important for children who face this kind of discrimination on a daily basis. However, despite a long history and great attention to integration, one of the

[98] Child in discussion with the author, August 19-27, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

continual challenges of the program is to create an environment where everyone feels welcome, where everyone feels connected.

Figure 17 Music Circle at Cosmic Bird Feeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

What we are left with, then, is the extension of unconditional hospitality. We will take you as you are. This gesture of unconditionality is both practical and preserves space for difference. One child, who was not marked by any visible sign of 'difference,' commented that at Spiral she felt, as she walked on site, 'normal'. When I asked what that feeling felt like she described it as 'just normal like' and then when asked if that's how she felt in other parts of her life, responded with a distinct 'not really.' What seems expressed in these phrases is not the invocation of universal categories, that they might in other contexts imply, but affective relief from the brutalizing structures of discipline and normativity that we all face, to greater and lesser degrees. Community-based arts offer people a structure where those anxieties and pressures are relaxed, where participants can simply feel 'normal.' And through this affective relief it is then possible to enact different versions of collectivity and subjectivity.

This sense of acceptance, as an affective sense of relief, can be central to learning how to move beyond oneself, to becoming more open, to produce different kinds of subjectivities based on relation. Acceptance is cultivated by not adopting a moral attitude towards behaviour. One youth who had attended Spiral for many years describes this movement of acceptance:

> At the Spiral Garden children who do not know how to behave are accepted and loved. An example is a boy who had an electric wheelchair that he drove around the garden on the highest speed. He didn't want to be part of activities and his driving was dangerous. Finally the counselors came up with a great idea. They got him to carry full buckets of water to every corner of the garden for watering the plants. Of course he had to slow down or he would spill the water. Even more important he felt as if he were helping the camp. (Upshur quoted in Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder 2004, 57)

To creatively shift potentially harmful activity to productive activity, transversally, and without a moralizing stance, is demanding and not always successful. But, in the space of the gardens, it is usually the only way to proceed. There is rarely a sense of what is 'wrong,' but rather, what can we do with a particular gesture? It is this space of unconditional hospitality, like a door propped open, that leaves room for singularity. As a guest to the garden described:

> No violence is done imposing other identities, other agenda on the child. The powerful spirit in the child is allowed to take its course according to what it requires. There is a deep spirituality here. No interferences. No interventions. Just the creation of an environment where the seed expresses itself through its own nature: whatever is within will unfold. (Fr. Paul Satkunanayagam, Garden Report 1995, 3)

The singularity of each person is respected, given space, so difference can flourish. A parent comments: "In describing acceptance at the gardens there is a sense that it is unconditional. The children determine how they want to be accepted. "He was allowed to grow here and accepted here on his terms for such a long time. That had to have been

helpful to his development and to him becoming a much more open person to things" (Parent quoted in Petryk 2005, 6). Through unconditional hospitality each person is able to become more open to the world, implying increased relation, rather than being enclosed through a rigid sense of self, individuality, or identity. It is precisely the ethic of friendship, as a structure that encourages intimacy without flattening difference, which allows for an unconditional hospitality. It is the work of the staff to create this structure that then can move and expand through the children and youth on site.

Our encounters with each other move us beyond ourselves, to a space where "the condition of possibility for a life of cooperation and solidarity with others is a subjective transformation, a self-killing that renounces the killing of others" (Critchley 2009, 150-51). Unconditional hospitality, being for an other, is about "the training and submission of free will in order to recover a condition of commonality that overcomes it, namely love" (Critchley 2009, 148). In the space opened for singularity, the space where a fixed identity used to sit, love enters. In descriptions of the best years at the gardens, what is prominent is that there was a drive that emerged from the collective itself, rather than from one person. Robert describes how "for me the year [Spiral] really flew was the year that Galen [a former staff member, great friend to many of the staff, and Jan MacKie's son] died, because there was a sense everybody put their egos away."[99] In the moment of putting aside one's self, there was a feeling that the story, the collective, became uninhibited. What moves in to the space of the self, is love, and this love allows for a fearless expression that creates crazy, inspiring, joyful stories. In order for the garden to work, as Sarah Dobbs says, "everybody needs to be on the same page, there can't be

[99] Robert Vine in discussion with the author, August 31, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

resentments and battles, power battles going on, everybody has to give up their power and I think their ego about their own practice."[100] Collaboration opens within the space of unconditional hospitality. In order to meet the other, in their difference, the self must defer, and in its place collaboration can flourish through relation. But this is not the same as repressing one's ego or giving over completely to the collective, but recognizing the in-between, more-than-one always relational character of what we call our 'selves.'

Figure 18 Puppet heads at Cosmic Birdfeeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

Friendship: proximity through distance

One of the people who I got to know quite well for a time was a child I met the first year I worked at Cosmic. She had just suffered a brain injury and as a result

[100] Sarah Dobbs in discussion with the author, August 26, 2009, Toronto, Ontario.

of this went from being a very mobile, lively, capable child to a child whose most common expression was a blank stare, whose communication abilities were limited to eye movements (she has since regained quite a bit of mobility as well as the ability to use sign language) and who was then almost completely paralyzed. My friendship with her troubled me, as much as it touched and moved me. I felt troubled precisely because of what I thought she had lost, reflecting conventional understandings of the relation of the able-bodied to the differently abled. But also, through her presence in my life, I came to understand at a much more profound level, the way that the ground on which we walk can fall out, without notice, in a split second. I was troubled by my friendship with her because despite the fact that it was obvious that she was paying attention, that she knew who I was, how was I to define a friendship where she could have so little input, conventionally understood? How was I to know when she had had enough of me or when she completely disagreed? Over time I learned to read her expressions, but the questions persisted. Despite these doubts, I felt my connection with her deeply, and I believe the pleasure I found in her company was mutual. We spent a lot of time staring at the lily beetles on yellow cornflowers. The contrast between the red beetles and the yellow and brown flowers in the bright sun of the afternoon was truly beautiful. I have no idea how much she could see, but I think what my closeness with her made me understand is that, ultimately, it is in the space and distance of friendship that we are paradoxically connected to others. We can ask how particular shared experiences make our friends feel, but what that feeling is, is beyond comprehension.

Although we try to accommodate everyone at Spiral and Cosmic, the knowledge that many people there cannot share their experiences through language always makes me question the limits of accommodation generally. It is true that it is a program designed for reverse-integration, which structures the program in a particular, ethical, manner. But it is also true that there are many parades, puppet shows, and gatherings where numerous children look bored, disinterested or verbally express their discomfort.[101] *There have been so many moments while working there that I am left astonished at someone else's experience, with no way to close that gap, and no way to express my bewilderment, pain and sorrow for the perceived pain of someone else.*

Friendship, as relation, paradoxically comes about through the distance it preserves between friends. Silence, distance, and absence can and frequently does enter into friendship without necessarily causing a fundamental disruption. At Spiral this is heightened because so many children interact without language, or primarily through the use of a facilitator. It is sometimes hard to differentiate between a child's decision or expression and the facilitator's. This seems to highlight how we are completely intertwined with others, ultimately made up of relations, complicating any notion of individuality while recognizing the danger of this vulnerability. Carol Breckenridge and Candace Vogler argue that the figure of the disabled adult in particular draws attention to

[101] As Petryk noted in his study of Spiral Garden "Despite the high level of integration we achieve it continues to be the greatest challenge of the programs. 'I think the process of still trying to connect everybody is still a challenge, is still a reality, and it still doesn't always work as well as you would like to see it work.' There is always a struggle to find new and deeper ways to connect people together. The impact of this ongoing struggle becomes shifts in perception and attitudes" (2005, 7).

the ways in which Western contemporary versions of democracy, subjectivity, and citizenship are all tied into a sovereign, able-body. They say,

> Disability studies teaches that an assumed able body is crucial to the smooth operation of traditional theories of democracy, citizenship, subjectivity, beauty, and capital…However, the mere possibility of a severely cognitively disabled adult citizen disrupts the liberal equations of representation and voice, desire and interest…More generally, the intricate practical dialectics of dependence and independence in the lives of many disabled people unsettle ideals of social organization as freely chosen expressions of mutual desire (2001, 350).

The limitations that are presented through different types of disability display in dramatic ways the vulnerable ties that bind us to others, whether we like it or not. These bodies are troubling in part because they reveal the construction of individuality and free choice as myths.

Friendship, as an approach, can become a way to structure these relations more ethically, one that preserves the friend's otherness. It is the distance preserved that allows for difference, for becoming-other. Maurice Blanchot fleshes out the implications of this idea, where friendship

> passes by way of the recognition of the common strangeness that does not allow us to speak of our friends but only to speak to them…the movement of an understanding in which, speaking to us, they reserve, even on the most familiar terms, an infinite distance, the fundamental separation of the basis of which *what separates becomes relation*. (Blanchot 1997, 290, my emphasis)

The separateness of friendship *is* the relation. Separateness can then be understood as another form of the open structure of friendship. Friendship is the way in which two people can share a life together, recognizing that that sharing does not subsume the other to them, to their knowledge. It is the bifurcation of experience that then centres relation, the experience of relation, rather than the person experiencing. It is this sense of a gap

that allows friends to be so free with one another. Friendship implies loving the other without reducing that other to a facet of the self.

The relation as sharing of existence, a mode of experience that allows for distance in proximity, is one that is cultivated in the garden. And friendship, as sharing, also does not reduce the other to a particular position, even as it acknowledges differences in skill level. As one former staff member commented, "It doesn't feel like we're teaching the kids anything when we're working with them. It feels like we're sharing it with them and we're learning from them…It's more of a friend and helping someone out and showing them how to do something"…Artists and children enter into creative projects as co-conspirators on an adventure" (Petryk 2005, 9). And this sense in the joy of creating something together brings with it a sense that it reaches beyond the self, expanding collective possibilities.

A politics of love

Love, as I described earlier, is fostered by unconditional hospitality at Spiral Garden. Another way to think about this would be to say that the work of the garden engages with a politics of love through friendship; a politics that still hopes for another world, that attempts to lay out the foundation for people to take these ways of relating, of unconditional hospitality, of friendship, into other aspects of their lives. A parent notes that "It is almost as if the Garden has presented [my daughter] with an alternate set of interactions that came out of love and acceptance instead of all of the other things you could encounter" (parent response quoted in Petryk 2005, 6). And she goes on to describe how the child was then able to bring those skills into other aspects of her life. What the

friendship of the garden makes possible is a parallel world, where a relational openness allows for the abandonment of the supposed haven of the sovereign subject where in the in-between something new can develop.[102] This may be hopelessly utopian, but "to abandon the utopian impulse in thinking is to imprison ourselves within the world as it is and to give up once and for all the prospect that another world is possible, however small, fleeting and compromised such a world might be" (Critchley 2009, 154). And this radical political love is essentially an expression of opposition to the conditions under which we find ourselves in the rest of our lives.

What is to be learned from Spiral Garden is the importance of friendship in structuring relations, valuing and showing how a collaborative ethic can in fact provide space for a much more exciting and autonomous culture. Friendship as a way of constructing community art projects is not without flaws, it can and sometimes does morph into an exclusionary practice. But the ethics of friendship, where trust is cultivated and time is shared, has unique political possibilities and can produce a collective where relation becomes key rather than being trumped by individual goals, talents, or creations. However, returning to love and unconditional hospitality risks reasserting a bounded subject, rather than recognizing the immanent co-emergence of subject and world. But it

[102] It would be useful to apply Paige Sarlin's concept of 'vulnerable accumulation' to the ways in which community arts organizations operate, as the accumulation of vulnerability is one where people spend huge numbers of volunteer hours to make projects work, and often become intimately involved in the lives of those with whom they work. This is both a liability and an asset. Vulnerable accumulation refers to the various forms of debt - psychological, affective, interpersonal, and monetary - that often accrue in social justice movements through exhaustive, non-normative labour. As she defines it, "Vulnerable accumulation is both a symptom of and a reaction to the structural condition referred to as precarity. It accrues because people are atomized and exposed to the violence of capitalism. But it also accrues when people come together to fight the forces of privatization and the conditions of precarity. Vulnerable accumulation stems from a certain kind of availability that is enacted when people come together (whether they acknowledge it or not). It is part of the residue of struggle" (forthcoming).

is in the space of Spiral that love and unconditional hospitality can be used as modes of consistency for the resingularization of subjectivity.

Figure 19 Child in ceremony saying goodbye to Cosmic Bird Feeder (photo courtesy of Micah Donovan)

This thread of friendship as a governing structure for relation runs through many community art practices, and although it is particularly poignant in the example of Spiral Garden, is also seen in the way that WochenKlausur and *Flood* both functioned and managed to work successfully. Informal ties and everyday affects create alternate kinds of social bonds and structures, which are utilized in community arts to draw people in to resist the violences of advanced capitalism. This model, although localized in a children's

garden creates open-ended structures of relation through friendship and could usefully be applied to other groups, to create more room for difference. And Spiral also incorporates the elements of collectivity with the other-than-human through its attention to the environment, while promoting lateral and collective decision making, mirroring some of the best elements of WochenKlausur's and Haha's practice. These practices are united in their common aim to create alternate worlds for people to begin to imagine how they would like to live, and to provide a space of experimentation to begin to enact these new patterns of relation.

Chapter Six:

Conclusion

It is rather a cliché to speak of the times that one lives in as harrowing, but under the current circumstances, it is hard not to be fearful. Economic collapse, increased debt loads, undermining of labour conditions, peak oil and environmental catastrophes occupy the 24-hour news cycle creating the conditions for fear and anxiety as arguably the most common affects and emotional states. When wanting to address these urgent crises, it may seem strange to devote attention, time and energy to community-based art. But, as I hope to have shown, community-based art approaches these realities with an optimism that generates attachment, as I indicated in the Introduction (Berlant 2006). These projects make it possible to begin to imagine and build more livable futures, that refuses to give in to the paradigms that make it harder and harder for people to survive, much less thrive. The quiet insistence, care, dedication and commitment that artists and participants show in relation to these projects provides inspiring models for approaching politics not merely as a way to react to unlivable presents, but as a way to begin to create collective structures that contain durability, longevity and the promise of joy. And it is only by way of creating this kind of infrastructure for relation, subjectivity, and the social imaginary that we can begin to build different kinds of worlds. In this way, these community-based art projects are profoundly optimistic; oriented towards the future they enable a collective becoming with the world. The other-than-human remains at the heart of this, generating the kind of movement which multiplies and moves beyond and before the self.

These projects enact a future-oriented politics, responding with gestures that go beyond mere survival to acts of flourishing, together, all the while refusing the haven of sovereignty. They can be classified, in the terminology of Michael Hardt, within the frame of a politics of love: "In a politics of love, one of the interests for me is a non-sovereign politics, or a non-sovereign social formation. By thinking love as political, as somehow centrally involved in a political project, it forces us to think through that non-sovereignty, both conceptually, but also practically, organizationally" (Hardt, 2011). These practices create organizational structures for non-sovereign politics and enable a collective transformation, even though this transformation may be temporary or limited. They create socio-political formations that move towards "an attachment to a kind of collectivity that doesn't exist yet" (Berlant, 2011). Although there are many things that generate this kind of attachment "we want the thing that includes a promise that you will feel held by relationality though not necessarily always good in it" (Berlant, 2011). Relationality emerges in each particular situation differently, but it can also be structured. Friendship, unconditional hospitality, perpetual potential, openness, agonistic democracy and cultural autonomy all can be thought of as structures for relation. That is, relation will happen regardless. The point is to develop structures where the consistency of change is given expression through duration, which requires structure. The structures proposed through these examples provide a consistency to fall back on, not just for individuals, but for collectivity as a being-in-common without a reduction to commonality. They create attachments to the world as a form of resistance. And these forms of collectivity do not erase, nor strive to erase, conflict or antagonism. They are not

gestures to create harmony, but experiments with social form that hold a space for the possibility of flourishing, for the possibility of imagining the worlds we would like.

Importantly, just as they provide modes of consistency that allow people to live without guarantees, each of these examples enact ways of being-in-common that resist a reduction to commonality or sovereignty. Without renouncing the moniker 'community-based art' what their practices involve is something closer to the proposition that Jean-Luc Nancy makes for an 'inoperative community' where there is no essence to the community; instead, it is formed, in-formed and re-formed through its practices. This can be seen in WochenKlausur's insistence on collective, radical democracy. But it is also extended, troubled and deepened by the inclusion of other-than-humans in *Flood*, and through friendship in Spiral Garden as a way of sharing that extends beyond what can be said, or known, about the other. In these examples, collectivity is not simply about transparent actors re-making the collective as a conscious rational action together, but happens instead, as these cases show, through an affective, pre-verbal register, and through the force of the other-than-human which composes and moves before and beyond us. This is a being-in-common that benefits from forms of collectivity that cannot be contained, even as they are highly structured.

By placing these three case studies together, I hope to have shown that community art has both informed art world models of socially-engaged practice, but also has a distinct methodology and history that is nuanced and deep. The practices of community art reveal a much more complicated picture than that exposed through discourse alone. The reality of these long-term community art projects is that they are hard work, involving "constant questioning of motivation and methodology, and also

constant communication with the group or situation that the artist(s) is working with. [Community art] also demands compromise, yet compromise does not sit easily with the general individualistic model of the artist or of authorship" (MacPherson 2001, 22). The amount of negotiation and time involved in community art projects, that have lasted in some cases more than twenty-five years, cannot simply be reduced to a description of an essential (or singular) identity, of either the community or the artist. Rather, by placing community art within a larger context of socially-engaged art it becomes more obvious how socially-engaged, community art and community-based art speak to one another, and implicitly invoke the potential benefits of learning from different methods of art practice. But in order for this to continue, community art needs to be taken seriously by art critics and the larger apparatus of art dissemination and funding, not dismissed out of hand, and its practices need to be documented, avoiding the perennial duplication of its history and legitimacy. This dissertation is a contribution to this effort, of bringing more sustained critical inquiry to community art practice in conjunction with the larger field of socially-engaged or interventionist work. The genres of art practice more closely associated with the art world and those that have emerged from a community orientation are both placed within the context of a larger discursive and philosophical history that refuse the confines of individualism to seek out activist practices of relation and collectivity.

Each of the forms of collectivity that I have described throughout this thesis add to and complicate collectivity, without moving towards a truth or perfection of a model. Instead, each example arises from its particular location, emerges with a set of specific relations, and also folds into and complicates the forms of collectivity found in the other examples. Even in their inconsistencies and dissonances, the ideas of collectivity and

relational subjectivity, expressed through these three cases, demonstrate the proliferation of possible practices, inciting further interventions and creative structures for relation. For even though a model of love and friendship may seem to rest upon a reassertion of a particularly human subjectivity, I have shown that in the context of these projects this subjectivity is not bounded or sovereign. Friendship splits and doubles our experiences: friends come to inhabit and extend our sense of self through the unknown distance of the other. But I would like to push this model further and insist that this extension, this more-than-oneness of the self is made possible not only because of the presence and pressures of other humans, but through the force of the other-than-human in its radically generative qualities. It is through the fundamentally disruptive, disparate incompatibility of nature in us that we are forced to respond with creative acts. Looking at these examples together, through the registers of the social, the environment, and the subjective, through their resonances and disharmonies, a sense of relational subjectivity emerges.

The three community-based art practices that I have explored in this thesis approach the political by generating optimism as a commitment to resistance as a creative, vital force. This is accomplished by taking risk, using failure as generative and striving to create more open relations amongst quite different people. These spaces create ways for people to come together as a relational proposition without a pre-determined structure, to become attentive, to effect a politics of care. They create utopias not as a kind of imagined perfection, but as a space to be in, to become with others, as a gentle openness where people are comfortable (enough) with risk, with heterogeneity, with incoherence. And through this relational openness they teach us to be more attentive to

the other-than-human and to other humans who may be radically different from ourselves.

They each provide a model or a space for people to learn to bear contingency as a delight, to love the feeling of being destabilized by and through relation, to learn that through contingency more risk can be taken to begin create the worlds we want. Of course, it is much easier to create these structures within the space of art than within a hospital, for example. But as is shown in the case of Spiral Garden, these spaces are not mutually exclusive. The art practices at Spiral Garden have slowly and subtly shifted some of the practices of the hospital, especially in relation to art therapy and the benefits of child-directed play. Rather, community-based art can move into many different spaces to shift relations and make more livable worlds.

In this, these projects are profoundly optimistic. They are optimistic in the sense that they reinforce an attachment to the world and refuse to give in to current realities. It is precisely because of the many reasons to be truly pessimistic in the current political climate that the force of optimism becomes a mechanism for resistance. Cultural theorist Lauren Berlant speaks to the reasons why optimism is important in our historical present. She says,

> Optimism is a way of interrupting the idioms, the normative idioms of the political. It's a shock. We're not talking about states of exception and we're not talking about disciplinary society. Optimism starts in a place that's frightening because it's in an emotional vernacular, because it raises all sorts of questions about rearticulating sociality beyond reproducing the public and the private, so I think it's interruptive in its shock quality, but I don't mean that in a terrorizing sense, but its interruptive qualities are a really important part of its productivity. (2011)

Optimism reveals vulnerability in its attachment. We become vulnerable to each other, just as the ideas we dream of make us vulnerable, allowing ourselves to dream of new

notions of the political makes us more vulnerable to each other and the world. As community-based art reveals and attenuates subjectivities as primarily relational, they provide opportunities to become more responsive to our environment and to each other.

Operating through Chantal Mouffe's agonistic democracy, WochenKlausur seek to create a democratic practice that refuses to homogenize the political. They create social interventions in an effort to ameliorate the local present that are grounded in (or coupled with) a structure that relies heavily on community-based research. They work with conflict as a way to value difference while still finding practicable alternatives for situations and problems that otherwise look intractable. Their methodology, working intensively within a collective, garners the creative energies of both their own members and local residents to create improvements in the social reality.

Flood shows the way in which other-than-humans can become the heart of a collective. It created multiple openings for people to understand themselves as thoroughly relational, displaying the way in which nature remains at the heart of these processes. The garden, through its demands, entangled a neighbourhood in unforeseen patterns and across divergent interests. It proposed solutions to the problem of HIV and alternative health care not by creating a definitive answer, but by proliferating the categories of people interested and methods of approach. It displayed the forces of the other-than-human that move through and compose human collectivity as perpetual potential.

Spiral Garden provides consistency for those who enter into the space through friendship – an open-ended model of intersubjective relation that preserves difference in proximity. Friendship becomes a structure for people to feel held by the world, including those whose marked difference of ability means that they are often excluded from the

social. Through collaborative play and an ethics based in hospitality and love, people are able to resist the normalizing tendencies of identity, which allows their bodies and abilities not to be pre-determined in advance, but to emerge through a period of being together.

Community-based arts, in each of my examples, act as a kind of balm. Through dedication, care, and attention they develop, in their best iterations, affective ties that promote relations between people and the world not as an intensification of the senses, but as cool-down spaces. Their response to social and political problems is based on longevity, and on re-building structures for relation without reifying a particular approach. Rather than bombarding the senses through a kind of shock, a common political mode that can translate all too easily into spectacle, community-based arts build structures to bring people together in unusual formations in order to create ties over intense but prolonged periods of time. These cool-down spaces operate as relief from the violences of daily life in advanced capitalism. They create consistency by distending and stretching time, creating space for cultivating attention and doing nothing. They build moments of joy back into life. And this joy is immediately shared, multiplied, stretching beyond the self, beyond the human. The moments of joy that these practices supply increases our capacities to act and our capacities to bring this joy into yet other spaces in our lives, to transmit this joy to others.

What this research hopes to have shown is that these projects enact an ethico-aesthetic politics that uses forces of change to begin to create better kinds of relations amongst people and between people and the material world by refusing the consolation of homogeneity or sovereignty. As Guattari says:

> Artistic cartographies have always been an essential element of the framework of every society. But since becoming the work of specialized corporate bodies, they may have appeared to be side issues, a supplement of the soul, a fragile superstructure whose death is regularly announced. And yet from the grottoes of Lascaux to Soho, taking in the dawn of the cathedrals, they have never stopped being a vital element in the crystallization of individual and collective subjectivities. (1995, 130)

Community-based art continues this process of inventing and producing individual and collective subjectivities and in particular marks a turn away from the individual and towards relation. It is only though the risks of relationality, creating structures for different kinds of relations, that openings can be made for more of us to thrive. For brief moments in time, these examples made it possible for people to live in a way that allowed them to feel held by the world, to respond creatively to the deadening effects of consumerism and advanced capitalism, and to experience themselves and others as thoroughly relational, unbounded, incoherent and joyous. And the process of investigating these practices has deepened my own belief in their significance. Taken as an aggregate, their examples, and the possibility of replication (with difference) they evince a social imaginary that refuses to be hemmed in by political defeatism, they proliferate the possibilities by way of enacting them, of different and better worlds, of the worlds that we dare to dream of. They are indeed projects that prove that it is more important to make art that loves people, than to love art.

Appendix 1: Concordia SPF form and approval

UNIVERSITÉ Concordia UNIVERSITY

CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Name of Applicant:	Dr. M. Gagnon
Department:	Communication Studies
Agency:	FQRSC (Student award)
Title of Project:	Relational Subjectivity in Collective Art Practices
Certification Number:	UH2009-074
Valid From: July 22nd 2009	to: July 22nd 2010

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Dr. James Pfaus, Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee

01/29/2009

Office of Research
SGW Campus -GM 1000 t 514.848.2424x4888 • f 514.848.4290

Concordia
UNIVERSITY

Real education for the real world

Office of Research
SGW Campus - GM 1000
t 514.848.2424x4888 • f 514.848.4290

SUMMARY PROTOCOL FORM
UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

IMPORTANT:

Approval of a *Summary Protocol Form* (SPF) must be issued by the applicable Human

Research Ethics Committee prior to beginning any research project using human participants.

Research funds cannot be released until appropriate certification has been obtained.

FOR FACULTY AND STAFF RESEARCH:

Please submit a signed original plus THREE copies of this form to the UHREC c/o the Office of Research, GM-1000. Allow one month for the UHREC to complete the review.

FOR GRADUATE or UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH:

-if your project is included in your supervising faculty member's SPF, no new SPF is required
-if your project is supported by external (e.g. CIHR, FQRSC) or internal (e.g. CASA, FRDP) funds, the supervising faculty member must submit a new SPF on behalf of the student as per faculty research above. The supervising faculty member MUST be listed as the PI.
-if your project is NOT supported by external (e.g. CIHR, FQRSC) or internal (e.g. CASA, FRDP) funds, the student must submit a new SPF to the relevant departmental committee. Contact your department for specific details.

INSTRUCTIONS:

This document is a form-fillable word document. Please open in Microsoft Word, and tab through the sections, clicking on checkboxes and typing your responses. The form will expand to fit your text. Handwritten forms will not be accepted. If you have technical difficulties with this document, you may type your responses and submit them on another sheet. Incomplete or omitted responses may cause delays in the processing of your protocol.

1. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Please provide the requested contact information in the table below:

Please check ONE of the boxes below : This application is for a new protocol.. This application is a

modification or an update of an existing protocol:

☐

☒ Previous protocol number (s): UH2009-074

2. CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide the requested contact information in the table below:

Principal Investigator/ Instructor (must be Concordia faculty or staff member)	Department	Internal Address	Phone Number	E-mail
Monika Kin Gagnon	Communication Studies	CJ 4.415	X2563	mkgagnon@alcor.concordia.ca
Co-Investigators / Collaborators		University / Department		E-mail
Heather Davis		Concordia /Communication Studies		heathermargaret@gmail.com
Research Assistants		Department / Program		E-mail
Not applicable				

3. PROJECT AND FUNDING SOURCES

Project Title:	Relational Subjectivity in Collective Art Practices

In the table below, please list all existing internal and external sources of research funding, and associated information, which will be used to support this project. Please include anticipated start and finish dates for the project(s). Note that for awarded grants, the grant number is REQUIRED. If a grant is an application only, list APPLIED instead.

Funding Source	Project Title	Grant Number	Award Period	
			Start	End
FQRSC:Bourse de doctorat en recherche	Art Communautaire et Nouvelles Perspectives Environmentales		summer 2008	fall 2010

4. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH OR ACTIVITY

Please provide a brief overall description of the project or research activity. Include a description of the benefits which are likely to be derived from the project. Alternatively, you may attach an existing project description (e.g. from a grant proposal).

This research will be conducted for the Ph.D. dissertation of Heather Davis. The research focuses on community and contemporary art practices to elaborate on the potentials of acreative, aesthetic approach to politics, subjectivity and collectives. I am particularly interested in how different kinds of subjectivities may be fostered through these practices, moving away from a purely individualistic model. How can collective and community-based arts be used as models for understanding the benefits and limitations of working together? Can these ways of working be brought into other kinds of collective or political groups? The artist, as lone solitary genius, has historically stood in for an ideal subject, reflecting a very individual way of thinking about subjects that is traditionally held in fine arts. Current artistic turns and experiments that broaden and democratize artistic production, including working with different and historically marginalized communities to produce art, may indicate a shift in thinking about our ideas and enactments of the subject more generally. What kinds of politics, communities and subjectivities are emerging in community art practices? How does making art together shift how we think of community and subjectivity? I will focus on community arts organizations, commencing with the case study of Spiral Garden.

The goal of the research is to understand how community and collective arts practices may foster or challenge ethical ways of acting towards others, including valuing and making room for difference. I hope for the research to be used to improve particular community art organizations as well as to provide various models and ideas for other researchers and practitioners of collective and community arts to implement best methods. (SPF p.2-3)

Spiral Garden is an integrated outdoor arts program for children, hosted through Bloorview Kids Rehab in Toronto. Its participants include children, ranging in age from 6 to 18, with and without disabilities, from the community and from Bloorview. Spiral Garden runs every summer for eight weeks with four two-week sessions. Throughout the summer a collective story is created by the children as well as the artists and other staff and brought to life through costumes, characters, puppets, theatrical techniques and ritual performances. Spiral also uses a number of other artistic approaches including gardening, pottery, painting, crafts and woodworking to create an imaginative environment where children are free to choose their activities.

I am intimately familiar with this program as I was a hired artist at Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder (Spiral's sister program that existed until the amalgamation of Bloorview Kids Rehab in 2006) for five years. Due to this experience I am familiar with Spiral's mandate, ways of working, as well as its institutional policies. I am a personal friend of many of the staff members, former staff members, and some of the children and youth who will be the subjects of this study. This experience will enhance my abilities and opportunities to conduct this research, including access to subjects as well as informing my approach to interviews and group discussions.

The research will follow a multi-method approach, including auto-ethnography, interviews, and participatory observation. My research will follow two main methodologies. First, I will use participatory observation, which will include diary-writing and active participation in Spiral Garden programming. The second will involve interviews and group discussions. These will take place on a volunteer basis from two sets of participants. The first set of participants will include staff, volunteers, and artists from Spiral. These interviews will be conducted in groups from two to ten people in order to facilitate conversation and dialogue, including debates and dissenting voices amongst participants. The interviews and discussions will take place outside of regular program hours.

The second set of participants will include the children and youth in the program. Interviews and group discussions with children will take place on site during the normal hours of the program. They will last approximately 5 to 20 minutes and will take place throughout the day with up to five participants at a time. I will be using flexible interview techniques to adapt to the needs and abilities of the participants, as well as consulting with facilitators to foster the principles of inclusion that Spiral operates under.

Both sets of interviews and group discussions will be recorded with audio equipment.

5. SCHOLARLY REVIEW / MERIT

UHREC Summary Protocol Form

Has this research been funded by a peer-reviewed granting agency (e.g. CIHR, FQRSC, Hexagram)?

☒ Yes Agency: FQRSC

☐ No If your research is beyond minimal risk, please complete and attach the Scholarly Review Form, available here: http://oor.concordia.ca/REC/forms.shtml

6. RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

a) Please describe the group of people who will participate in this project. I will begin my research with a case study of the community arts organization Spiral Garden. The participants in this program include: both differently-abled and able-bodied children and youth ranging in age from 6 to 18; facilitators who are hired to assist children; artists who coordinate the program and run activities; volunteers; and administrators and coordinators who also assist with and manage programming.

While conducting my research at Spiral Garden I will be under the supervision of Sarah Dobbs, Artistic Coordinator at the Centre for the Arts, Bloorview Kids Rehab.

b) Please describe in detail how participants will be recruited to participate. Please attach to this protocol draft versions of any recruitment advertising, letters, etcetera which will be used.

Participants in my research will be recruited in two ways. I will first use participant-observation techniques. This portion of the research will include all artists, facilitators, volunteers, children and youth at Spiral Garden during Session D (August 18, 19, 20, 25, 26,27). I will notify all members of the Spiral Garden in advance of my research and its goals and methods. For staff this will involve a group email. For parents of children and youth enrolled in the program, I will notify them in advance with a brief, introductory letter that will explain my project, its goals and benefits. I will include with this letter the written consent form for parents (see Appendix 2).

The second portion of my research will include interviews and group discussions with two sets of people: adult staff and volunteers, and children and youth in the program.

I will ask staff and volunteers to participate in a group interview to be conducted outside of normal working hours. I will notify all staff and some selected former staff members in advance by email of both my research, its methods, and to ask for their participation. Because many of these staff are personal friends and acquaintances of mine, the email will be inviting and informal. I will make clear to all participants at the time of the study that their participation is purely voluntary, and that they will suffer no consequences, personally or professionally, if they choose not to participate in the study. I will also ask friends to participate in the study only if they want to, and indicate that I do not want them to participate if they are doing it as a personal favour to me. They will also have the option of not participating if they are unavailable or too busy to take part in the group discussion, which will happen outside of regular work hours. This will provide an opportunity to decline their participation gracefully if they feel they need to. Participants will have no obligation to explain why they do not want to take part if they are not interested. Each person will only be asked once a single if they are willing want to contribute. I will explain the purpose of the research and anyone who wishes to participate in these conversations will be welcome to do so. A date and time will be decided collectively. I will follow up on this initial recruitment with a reminder during the staff meetings at the end of the day. For those who wish to participate in the interview process but who might not be able to attend on the selected date(s), I will provide other opportunities or means of submitting their responses according to their preference. This could include written responses, a telephone interview, or an individual interview at a different time.

I will be interviewing children and youth during the regular hours of the program. Children's parents or legal guardians will be notified of these interviews in advance with the initial letter of introduction. If they wish for their child to participate in interviews or group discussions they must give their permission in writing beforehand. This consent is included in the general consent form for parents and guardians. Children will be invited to participate verbally as I circulate throughout the garden. Children's verbal consent will be obtained each time they are interviewed and this permission will be recorded. Interviews will take place on the grass in a shady part of the garden

and will take approximately 5 to20 minutes. Interviews will sometimes also include facilitators and the interview techniques and questions will be modified to suit the needs and abilities of the children. I will conduct interviews with children on August 19, 20, 25, and 26.

All interviews and discussions will be recorded using audio equipment.

c) Please describe in detail how participants will be treated throughout the course of the research project. Include a summary of research procedures, and information regarding the training of researchers and assistants. Include sample interview questions, draft questionnaires, etcetera, as appropriate.

I will continue to talk to Sarah Dobbs, Artistic Coordinator for the Centre for the Arts, Karin Farkashidy, Manager, Centre for the Arts and Alex Glenfield, Researcher and Administrative Assistant, Centre for the Arts, to obtain their input about research methods before the summer program begins. I will be discussing with them ways in which to include as many of the children as possible and ways to make the research more playful, to reflect the goals and mandate of the program.

While on site I will be circulating throughout the garden during the unstructured times in the day asking children and youth if they wish to participate in interviews or group discussions. Once I have a few interested participants we will go to a quiet, shady part of the garden to talk and record. The interviews will be short and playful, to respond to the interest of the children.

Adult participants will be involved in a group discussion that will take place during the time agreed upon by interested staff and volunteers lasting approximately one to two hours. Individual interviews with key staff members will take place at a location and time of their convenience and last approximately 20 to 40 minutes.

Further, in order to avoid any perception of a conflict of interest resulting from my personal involvement with Spiral Garden and some of the staff, I will ask Sarah Dobbs to tell all staff during a staff meeting when I am not present that if they have concerns about the research process they can speak directly to her. The identity of the person with the complaint will not be disclosed to me, except for the case where it is necessary (in the case of a withdrawal of consent, for example). I will then address any concerns through Sarah Dobbs, the Artistic Coordinator and my site supervisor.

Interview with staff / volunteers:

Questions for each person:
What is your name?
What is your role at Spiral?
How long have you worked here for?
Did you ever work at Cosmic?

Questions for group discussion:
Would you call Spiral a community or a collective, if so, why? How would you define these terms?
Do you relate to others differently at Spiral than in other environments and if so how?
How does the physical environment of Spiral influence the way you relate to yourself and others?
How do you see yourself at Spiral?
Has your experience at Spiral changed the way you think about your idea of self, of an individual, of community, or of a collective?
How do the story, characters, and imaginary realities influence the community or

collective?
What role does making art play in influencing how people interact at Spiral?
How do different people's levels of abilities influence the collective/community at Spiral?
What does integration mean in this context?
Do you think there are any social or political consequences of the ways of working at Spiral, if so what are they?
What other questions do you think are relevant to collective or community building at Spiral?

Interview with children / youth:

Questions for each person:
What is your name?
How long have you been coming to Spiral?
Did you ever go to Cosmic?

Questions for group (these include a list of sample questions that I will choose from as appropriate for the different ages and abilities of the children or youth):
Do you like Spiral Garden? What do you like? What don't you like?
How do people treat each other here? Is it different from other places?
How do you see yourself at Spiral? How does being at Spiral make you feel?
Do you feel different at Spiral?
What is your role in the story? *(Note: I am referring here to the collective story that emerges throughout the summer. On site this is simply referred to as 'the story').*

What do you think about the story?
Does everyone have a part in the story? Should everyone have a part in the story?
How do you think the environment, art, garden, influences how people interact here?
How has Spiral changed with the new site? Has this changed the way people interact with one another?
What makes Spiral Garden special?
Do you think Spiral Garden is a community?
Would you call it a collective?
Do you think making art with other people is important?
What questions would you like to ask about Spiral Garden? Do you have any questions for other people about Spiral Garden?

7. INFORMED CONSENT

UHREC Summary Protocol Form

a) Please describe how you will obtain informed consent from your participants. A copy of your written consent form or your oral consent script must be attached to this protocol.
Please note: written consent forms must follow the format of the template included at the end of this document.

I will provide written consent forms to both sets of participants. Copies of all my consent forms, as well as the assent form for children and youth, are attached as appendices to this protocol.

I will be contacting all staff, volunteers, and selected former staff members via email to obtain their permission, to inform them of my research, and to ask them for suggestions and feedback about the process at the beginning of the program. Written consent forms will be provided in advance of my arrival at Spiral Garden. In the case of former staff members who wish to participate in group discussions, they will be provided with a copy of the written consent form before the beginning of the interview. As well, before each interview or discussion verbal consent to participate will be solicited and recorded from each participant.

For child and youth participants, copies of written consent forms will be provided to the organization four weeks in advance of my arrival so that they can be mailed out to parents and guardians and then returned to Spiral Garden. I will also be obtaining written assent from the children and youth directly at the beginning of the interview process and again obtaining their verbal assent at the beginning of each interview (even if it is with the same subject).

b) In some cultural traditions, individualized consent as implied above may not be appropriate, or additional consent (e.g. group consent; consent from community leaders) may be required. If this is the case with your sample population, please describe the appropriate format of consent and how you will obtain it.

Not applicable.

8. DECEPTION AND FREEDOM TO DISCONTINUE

a) Please describe the nature of <u>any</u> deception, and provide a rationale regarding why it must be used in your protocol. Is deception absolutely necessary for your research design? Please note that deception includes, but is not limited to, the following: deliberate presentation of false information; suppression of material information; selection of information designed to mislead; selective disclosure of information.

No deception is involved.

b) How will participants be informed that they are free to discontinue at any time? Will the nature of the project place any limitations on this freedom (e.g. documentary film)?

Participants (both adults and children) will be informed at the beginning of all interviews that they are free to discontinue the interview process at any time for any reason and individuals will be free to leave group discussions. This information will be given verbally at the beginning of the interview when their consent is being asked for. In all written consent forms the right of the participant to discontinue at any time without negative consequences is also made clear.

9. RISKS AND BENEFITS

a) Please identify any foreseeable risks or potential harms to participants. This includes low-level risk or any form of discomfort resulting from the research procedure. When appropriate, indicate arrangements that have been made to ascertain that subjects are in “healthy” enough condition to undergo the intended research procedures. Include any “withdrawal” criteria.

The program is inclusive of diverse types of children, youth, and staff but I do not anticipate any undo risks involved in the research. The fact that I am going into the research with intimate knowledge of Spiral will allow me to address participants in a manner that is consistent with the playful yet deeply respectful nature of the program.

I will be using sound recording in my interviews, but will only include the voices of people who have provided written consent to participate. In the case that a participant becomes uncomfortable with the sound equipment I will turn it off. In the case that a participant wants to withdraw from the sound recording altogether, I will immediately erase any recording of that person.

b) Please indicate how the risks identified above will be minimized. Also, if a potential risk or harm should be realized, what action will be taken? Please attach any available list of referral resources, if applicable.

Although there are no anticipated risks, if a participant becomes uncomfortable I will talk to the participant, the facilitator for the child (in the case of a child with a facilitator), or the site monitor depending on the nature of the situation. I will also report to and consult with Sarah Dobbs, Artistic Coordinator and my site supervisor if anything should occur.

c) Is there a likelihood of a particular sort of "heinous discovery" with your project (e.g. disclosure of child abuse; discovery of an unknown illness or condition; etcetera)? If so, how will such a discovery be handled?

In the unlikely case of a heinous discovery, I would either report immediately to Sarah Dobbs, my site supervisor, or to the site monitor in the case of an emergency, which is the established protocol for all staff on site.

10. DATA ACCESS AND STORAGE

a) Please describe what access research participants will have to study results, and any debriefing information that will be provided to participants post-participation.

I will provide a copy of my final dissertation to Spiral Garden if it is requested as well as any other published documents or publicly displayed works (such as sound pieces). Depending on location, resources and the requests of the organization, I will either provide digital or hard copies.

There will be no formal debriefing provided for the children and youth in the study. I will follow up verbally with parents on the final day of program.

I will follow up verbally with staff and volunteers at the final staff meeting to ask them for their feedback on the research process.

b) Please describe the path of your data from collection to storage to its eventual archiving or disposal. Include specific details on short and long-term storage (format and location), who will have access, and final destination (including archiving, or any other disposal or destruction methods).

I will be recording interviews and group discussions with an audio digital recording device. Sound recording will be immediately transferred to an external hard drive. I will keep all the source files on an external hard drive, and keep this locked in a filing cabinet, with my journal, accessible only by me.

I will also keep one backup copy on dvd-r, locked away in a remote location (e.g., my supervisor, Dr. Monika Kin Gagnon's office).

At the end of my research (i.e., when I finish and defend my dissertation), I will delete all digital files from the hard drive.

If someone withdraws from the project, or otherwise revokes their consent to participate, and wishes any recordings to be destroyed, I will do so immediately. However, I will destroy information only upon the request of a participant and will otherwise keep the information private for my own research and writing purposes for the duration of the dissertation.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESULTS

Please identify what access you, as a researcher, will have to your participant(s) identity(ies):

☐	Fully Anonymous	Researcher will not be able to identify who participated at all. Demographic information collected will be insufficient to identify individuals.
☐	Anonymous results, but identify who participated	The participation of individuals will be tracked (e.g. to provide course credit, chance for prize, etc) but it would be impossible for collected data to be linked to individuals.
☐	Pseudonym	Data collected will be linked to an individual who will only be identified by a fictitious name / code. The researcher will not know the "real" identity of the participant.
☒	Confidential	Researcher will know "real" identity of participant, but this identity will not be disclosed.
☐	Disclosed	Researcher will know and will reveal "real" identity of participants in results / published material.
☒	Participant Choice	Participant will have the option of choosing which level of disclosure they wish for their "real" identity.
☐	Other (please describe)	

a) If your sample group is a particularly vulnerable population, in which the revelation of their identity could be particularly sensitive, please describe any special measures that you will take to respect the wishes of your participants regarding the disclosure of their identity.

Adult participants will have the option of choosing which level of disclosure they wish for their identity. They will have the choice to remain confidential, use a pseudonym, or reveal their identity. In the case of participants who choose to remain confidential, I will not record their names, nor any distinguishing features, and they will only be referred to by their role in the program, such as 'child', 'artist', 'volunteer', 'facilitator'.
Adult participant's names will only be recorded if I have written permission to do so. Participant's voices will only be recorded if I have obtained written consent.

The names of minors will not be recorded in any format.

b) In some research traditions (e.g. action research, research of a socio-political nature) there can be concerns about giving participant groups a "voice". This is especially the case with groups that have been oppressed or whose views have been suppressed in their cultural location. If these concerns are relevant for your participant group, please describe how you will address them in your project.

Not applicable.

12. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

a) Bearing in mind the ethical guidelines of your academic and/or professional association, please comment on any other ethical concerns which may arise in the conduct of this protocol (e.g. responsibility to subjects beyond the purposes of this study).

Because I will be researching in an environment where I was a former employee and am a personal friend of many of the staff members as well as the children in the program, I do have a responsibility to my participants beyond the purposes of this study.

In the eventuality that participants may feel coerced into the study on the grounds that they are my friends and/or former colleagues I hope to make explicit that my friendship is not dependent upon whether or not they participate in this study, and that they should only contribute in the study if they are interested and willing to do so, not as a gesture of friendship or in order to please me personally. This information will be included in introductory emails, as well as repeated verbally to staff and volunteers during reminders and before starting the group discussion.

b) If you have feedback about this form, please provide it here.

13. SIGNATURE AND DECLARATION

Following approval from the UHREC, a protocol number will be assigned. This number must be used when giving any follow-up information or when requesting modifications to this protocol.

The UHREC will request annual status reports for all protocols, one year after the last approval date. Modification requests can be submitted as required, by submitting to the UHREC a memo describing any changes, and an updated copy of this document.

I hereby declare that this Summary Protocol Form accurately describes the research project or scholarly activity that I plan to conduct. Should I wish to add elements to my research program or make changes, I will edit this document accordingly and submit it to the University Human Research Ethics Committee for Approval.

I hereby declare that this Summary Protocol Form accurately describes the research project or scholarly activity that I plan to conduct. Should I wish to add elements to my research program or make changes, I will edit this document accordingly and submit it to the University Human Research Ethics Committee for Approval.

ALL activity conducted in relation to this project will be in compliance with:

- ***The Tri Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects*, available here:**

http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/policystatement/policystatement.cfm

- **The Concordia University Code of Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Actions**

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (for staff and volunteers)

Please keep one copy of this form for your files and return the other copy to Spiral Garden.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN "RELATIONAL SUBJECTIVITY IN COLLECTIVE ART PRACTICES"

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Heather Davis of Communication Studies at Concordia University. If you have any questions or concerns you can contact Heather at 514.315.9877 or heathermargaret@gmail.com, or her Ph.D. supervisor, Dr. Monika Kin Gagnon at 514.848.2424 x2563 or mkgagnon@alcor.concordia.ca.

A. PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is as follows:
To study how arts programs help to build community. In other words, how do people at Spiral
Garden treat and relate to each other, through making art together?

B. PROCEDURES

The research will be conducted during Session D (August 18, 19, 20 & 25, 26, 27) at Spiral Garden, Bloorview Kids Rehab, Centre for the Arts. During this period the researcher will be onsite observing and participating in regular activities.

I will be invited to participate in a group discussion about Spiral Garden, how it works, how it should work, and how people relate to each other through arts. This discussion will happen outside of regular work hours. I do not have to participate if I don't want to or if I am unable to attend. There will be no negative consequences if I choose not to participate in a group discussion.

During the regular programming of Spiral, the researcher will also interview children and youth whose parents or legal guardians have given their written consent for their child to participate. Children and youth may approach me to ask me questions. If I do not want to be recorded or I do not want to answer the questions for any reason, I do not have to and I will not be recorded.

All interviews and group discussions will be recorded using audio equipment.

C. RISKS AND BENEFITS

There are no foreseeable risks involved in this research. The regular protocols of Spiral Garden and Bloorview Kids Rehab will be strictly adhered to.

Participating in this study will provide an opportunity for me to voice my concerns with, opinions about, or support of artistic approaches to community, specifically in regards to the Spiral Garden program. It is hoped that this research will provide a better understanding of how arts can help people live together in better ways, and what the challenges in arts programming may be. It is hoped that this information will help build better arts programs.

D. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without any negative consequences, including personal as well as professional consequences.
I understand that the data from this study may be published.
I understand that if I wish to withdraw my consent from the study, I need to inform Heather Davis. If I wish for any recorded material to be erased, I also need to inform Heather Davis and then she will do

so immediately without question.

Please choose from one of the following, and indicate by circling the appropriate number:

1 I wish for my identity to be completely CONFIDENTIAL (only the researcher will know my identity. My name and any distinguishing characteristics will not be recorded in any format).
2 I wish to use a PSEUDONYM for the purposes of this study (the researcher will know my real identity. Distinguishing characteristics and the pseudonym will be recorded in a written and/or sound file format. My real name will not appear in any recorded format).
3 I wish for my identity to be completely NON-CONFIDENTIAL (my name as well as distinguishing characteristics will be recorded and may appear in the final version of this research).

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics and Compliance unit, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x2425 or by email at kwiscomb@alcor.concordia.ca.

APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (for parents or guardians of minors)

Please keep one copy of this form for your files and return the other copy to Spiral Garden.

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

– Sample Information Letter for Parents – (Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level = 6)

August xx, 2009

Dear *[name of parent],*

My name is Heather Davis. I am a Ph.D. student at Concordia University and I will be doing research on Spiral Garden in Session D (August 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27). I would like to invite you and your child to take part in a research study to understand how arts programs work to build community. Before agreeing to take part in this study, it is important that you understand how you and your child will be involved.

What is the study about?
As a former artist and gardener at Spiral Garden, I found that people related to one another there in ways that were different from other programs. I want to know what role making art together plays in how people behave, treat, and interact with each other at Spiral. What makes Spiral Garden different from other organizations? How does the garden affect people's behaviour? How does making art together make staff, children, and youth feel about themselves and each other?

How will my child and I be involved in this study?
I will be at Spiral Garden during Session D to observe how people play, make art, and interact with one another.

I also want to invite your child to be interviewed about Spiral Garden. Your child will be asked questions while they are in-between other activities at Spiral or during lunch time if your child wants to participate. Your child will also be asked if he or she wants to ask other people questions about Spiral Garden.

The interviews will take about 5 to 10 minutes.

Will anyone know what I say?
I will use a tape recorder to record what your child says during the interview. I have a separate consent form for this. I need to use the tape recorder to be able to

accurately record and write up what your child said. Only researchers on the project will listen to these tapes.

We will destroy the tapes at the end of the project. If you decide to withdraw from the study before the end of the project and want these tapes destroyed, you should inform Heather Davis. All the information we collect about you and your family will be kept confidential. We will not make public anything that might identify you or your family, unless required by law.

If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used and no information that discloses your identity will be released or published without your specific consent to the disclosure.

Do I have to do this?
If you decide not to take part in this study, that is okay. If you decide to take part, but change your mind at any time, that is okay. This will not affect the services you or your child gets from Spiral Garden or Bloorview Kids Rehab.

What are the risks and benefits?
I don't think there are any risks involved in this research.
I think that the Spiral Garden program is quite special. I hope for the research to help understand
how to improve the program, and to understand how it works to encourage other organizations to
set up similar programs. You and your child may not directly benefit from this research.
However, this research will provide an opportunity for your child to express what they like and
don't like about Spiral Garden.

What if I have questions?
Please ask me to explain anything you don't understand before signing the consent form. My phone number is 514.315.9877. You can also contact Patty Rigby, who is the supervisor for this project at Bloorview Kids Rehab. Her phone number is 416.425.6220 x 3497.

Thank you thinking about helping me with this project.

Yours truly,

Heather Davis

Ph.D. Candidate Communication Studies Concordia University Montreal, QC
514.315.9877 or heathermargaret@gmail.com

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please

contact the Research Ethics and Compliance unit, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x2425 or by email at kwiscomb@alcor.concordia.ca.

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

– Sample Consent Form –

CONSENT FORM
BLOORVIEW KIDS REHAB

Re: Relational Subjectivity in Collective Art Practices (at Spiral Garden)

Please complete this form below and return it using the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

I read the Information Letter dated August xx, 2009 and understand what this study is about. I understand that my child or I may drop out of the study at any time. I understand that I can ask for records or notes involving my child to be destroyed at any time.

I agree to allow my child to participate in this study.

Parent's Name (please print) Signature Date

Researcher's Name Signature Date

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics and Compliance unit, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x2425 or by email at kwiscomb@alcor.concordia.ca.

APPENDIX 3: VERBAL ASSENT SCRIPT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (for children and youth)

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

– Sample Information Sheet and Assent Form for Children – (Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level= 3)

(The researcher reads this assent form with the child before being interviewed.)

Art and Community at Spiral Garden)

Why did you want to talk with me?
I asked you to see me because I wanted to ask you if you would like to answer some questions about Spiral Garden. I am doing a study for the University that I go to and I am interested in how Spiral works and what it feels like to be here.

What do I need to do?
If you would like to be asked questions, you can tell me what you think about Spiral Garden. You can tell me what it is like to be here and how it is different from other places. I will record what we say with this tape recorder. You can also ask me questions or ask other staff and volunteers questions.

The questions will take about 5 to 10 minutes.

What are the good and bad things about doing this?
I don't think that there are any bad things about being involved. If you don't want to answer questions, that's O.K. You don't need to do this. If you or your parents decide not to participate, I won't ask you again.

The good thing about this study is that you will help me understand more about Spiral, and what you think of it. I hope this research helps other people understand the good things about Spiral and that they are inspired to make other programs like Spiral.

Will anyone know that I did this study?
We won't share anything you said with anyone who is not part of this study. No one else will know it was you who said these things.
Do I have to do this?
If you do not want to answer any questions, that's O.K. You can tell your parents or

me that you don't want to take part in this study. That will be O.K. This will not affect how I treat you the next time you see me. If you say yes now, you can change your mind later. You can still say no. That will be O.K.

What if I am not sure?
Your parents know about this study. Ask them questions if you don't understand what this is about. You can also talk to me about the study before you decide whether or not you want to be involved.

Thanks for thinking about being a part of this study.

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

Art and Community at Spiral Garden

I want to be in this study.

Name of participant and age

Signature

I read this form to _____ and s/he agreed to participate.

Name of Person Who Obtained Assent

Signature

Date

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

Study Tracking Number: _____ Client /Participant's Name:

Health Record No. _____ (*if applicable)*

Consent for Client Photography and
Audio Visual Recording
For Research Purposes

I, _____, give my consent to have one or more of
(*print name in full)* the following done: *(please check all that apply)*

… Photography
… Videotaping
… Audiotaping
… Other *(please specify):* _____

I understand that the recordings will be used for:

Title of Study: _____

I understand that the recordings will be stored in a secure, locked location that will protect the privacy of the person recorded, accessed only by members of the research team, kept for the time period required by law or as outlined in the Bloorview Kids Rehab retention schedule for research data, and destroyed according to legal requirements.

I understand that the recordings are the property of Bloorview Kids Rehab, but that I may request access to view them and/or obtain a copy according to hospital policies and procedures. I realize that I may have to pay the costs of having a copy made. I will not make copies of them without written approval of Bloorview Kids Rehab.

I understand that I have the right to refuse to take part in this study or to refuse to have these recordings done. I also have the right to withdraw my consent at any time (for example, before or even after the recordings have been made) and this decision will not have a negative effect on the services my child or I receive from Bloorview Kids Rehab.

… I understand that the recordings will be used only for the purposes noted above,

OR

In addition, I consent to these recordings to be used for:

··· Teaching and demonstration at Bloorview Kids Rehab
··· Teaching and demonstration at sessions outside of Bloorview Kids Rehab
··· Other purposes *(please specify)* _____

I understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent for other uses of the recordings at any time.

Date	_____ Signature of Participant or Person Legally Authorized to Consent	Relationship to Participant

Printed Name of Investigator Investigator's signature

Form No. 17964

Appendix 2: Bloorview Research Ethics Review Board Approval and Forms

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

Bloorview Kids Rehab
150 Kilgour Road
Toronto ON Canada M4G 1R8
Tel: 416 425 6220
Toll-Free: 800 363 2440
Fax: 416 425 6591
www.bloorview.ca

A teaching hospital fully affiliated with the University of Toronto

Bloorview Research Ethics Board
Ethics Approval Notification

The Bloorview Kids Research Ethics Board operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, ICH Good Clinical Practice Consolidated Guideline E6, and Health Canada Part C Division 5 of the Food and Drug Regulations

Study Title: Art and Community at Spiral Garden
File number: 09-058
Principal Investigator: Patty Rigby
Co-Investigators: Monika Kin Gagnon, Heather Davis, Sarah Dobbs
Original Approval Date: August 17, 2009
Expiry Date: August 17, 2010
Timeframe of Study: August 17 2009 to August 31, 2009

August 17, 200

Dear Patty Rigby,

The Bloorview Research Ethics Board (REB) has reviewed the above named study and is granting ethics approval for a period of one year ending August 17, 2010. The approval of this study includes the following documents:

- Protocol (received July 20, 2009)
- TAHSN Form (received August 13, 2009)
- Information Sheet & Consent Form-Staff & Volunteers (received August 13, 2009)
- Information Sheet & Consent Form-Parents/Guardians of minors (received August 13, 2009)
- Information Sheet & Assent Form (received August 13, 2009)
- Interview Sheet-Staff/Volunteers (received July 20, 2009)

This study must be conducted in accordance with the description in the application and any supplementary documents for which ethics approval has been granted. Any changes need be submitted through an "Amendment Form" to the REB for approval *before* the changes are implemented, except where necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the participants.

Any adverse events that occur as a result of your study must be reported to the REB by submitting an "Adverse Event Form".

Upon completion or termination of your study, you need to submit a "Research Completion Form". Should your study continue for more than one year you must request a renewal, three weeks prior to th expiry date, by submitting an "Annual Renewal Form".

Please ensure that the original *signed* consent forms are sent to Health Data Resources to be filed with the client's file.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Sincerely,

Doug Biggar
Chair, Research Ethics Board
Professor of Pediatrics
Tel: (416) 424-3813

REB ID NUMBER:	(office use only)

Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network (TAHSN)
HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH APPLICATION

All sections of this application MUST be completed before it will be considered for REB review. A complete application must be submitted to each site where this research will take place. A separate detailed protocol must be included with each application. See TAHSN Guidelines for Research Ethics Review Involving Human Subjects.

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR NAME*
***** If your institution requires the PI to be a staff member, the on-staff investigator accepts the role and responsibilities of PI at this institution.

Title (e.g. Dr.): Dr.	**Last Name:** Rigby	**First Name:** Patty

2. FULL STUDY TITLE

Relational Subjectivity in Collective Art Practices
Sponsor Protocol Number (if applicable):

2A. Is this protocol directly related to a previously approved study at this institution (e.g., extension, rollover, subsequent to a pilot study)? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, indicate name of Principal Investigator: **and REB file number:**

3. SOURCE OF FUNDING

Sponsor Name:	
Granting Agency Name:	FQRSC
Internal Funding:	
Other:	
☒ **Funding obtained**	
☐ **Funding applied for**	**Expected date of decision:**
☐ **No funding required**	**Explain:**

4. INVESTIGATORS

4A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION AND SIGNATURE

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR AGREEMENT – I assume full responsibility for the scientific and ethical conduct of the study as described in this application and submitted protocol and agree to conduct this study in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects and any other relevant regulations or guidelines. I certify that all researchers and other personnel involved in this project at this institution are appropriately qualified or will undergo appropriate training to fulfill their role in this project.

Dept/Div: Bloorview Research Institute	**Program:** Participation	**Institution:** Bloorview Kids Rehab
Telephone: 416.425.6220 x 3497	**Pager:**	**Fax:**
Street Address: 150 Kilgour rd.		
City: Toronto	**Province:** ON	**Email:** patty.rigby@utoronto.ca

Signature of Principal Investigator	Date

4B. CO-INVESTGATOR(S) CONTACT INFORMATION AND SIGNATURE

CO- INVESTIGATOR AGREEMENT – I agree to participate in this study as described in this application and submitted protocol and agree to conduct this study in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects and any other relevant regulations or guidelines.

1	Title: Dr.	Last Name: Kin Gagnon	First Name: Monika	Institution: Concordia University
	Dept/Div: Communication Studies	Program: Joint Ph.D.	Signature	
2	Title:	Last Name: Davis	First Name: Heather	Institution: Concordia University
	Dept/Div: Communication Studies	Program: Joint Ph.D.	Signature	
3	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:	Institution:
	Dept/Div:	Program:	Signature	
4	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:	Institution:
	Dept/Div:	Program:	Signature	
5	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:	Institution:
	Dept/Div:	Program:	Signature	

4C. CONTACT PERSON FOR THIS APPLICATION IF NOT THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (e.g. study coordinator, research administrative contact, research student, institutional liaison).
Not Applicable ☐

Contact's Role in Study: Co-investigator

Indicate to whom correspondence should be mailed: ☐ PI ☒ Other

Title:	Last Name: Davis	First Name: Heather
Dept/Div:	Program:	Institution:
Telephone: 647.379.3845	Pager:	Fax:
Street Address:		
City:	Province:	Email: heathermargaret@gmail.com

5. DEPARTMENT/DIVISION/PROGRAM APPROVAL*
* For institutions that require the PI to be a staff member, approval must come from the Department / Division / Program Head of the same institution as the PI.

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION/PROGRAM HEAD APPROVAL – I am aware of this proposal and support its submission for ethics review. I consider it to be feasible and appropriate. I attest that the Principal Investigator responsible for the conduct of this study is qualified by education, training, and experience to perform his/her role in this study.

Title:	Last Name: Wade	First Name: Shawna
Signature of Dept/Div/Program Head	Date	

6. STUDY PERIOD

Expected start date: August 17, 2009 **Total study duration:** two weeks

7. OTHER ETHICS/SCIENTIFIC/SCHOLARLY REVIEW

In order to facilitate the REB review process through harmonization and coordination of REB activity, identify if any of the REBs below have reviewed and/or approved the study outlined in this application (check all that apply):		***Ethics Review and Approval Status (check all that apply and indicate date where applicable):**			
		Application To Be Submitted	**Applied, Review Pending**	**Reviewed**	**Approved**
☐	Baycrest	☐	☐	☐	☐
☒	Bloorview Kids Rehab	☐	☒	☐	☐
☐	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	Hospital for Sick Children	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	Mount Sinai Hospital	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	St. Michael's Hospital	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	Toronto Rehabilitation Institute	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	University Health Network	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	University of Toronto	☐	☐	☐	☐
☒	Other (e.g. Hamilton Health Sciences REB, University of Western Ontario Health Sciences REB, other GTA hospitals): Concordia University REB	☐	☐	☒ June 30	☐

Include all relevant correspondence related to ethics and scientific review (e.g. REB review letter, replies, approval letter).

8. CLINICAL TRIAL APPLICATION

This section must be completed for clinical trials only. See TAHSN guidelines for Health Canada's definition of a clinical trial.
Not applicable ☒ If not applicable proceed to Question 10.

8A. If this study involves any of the following, check all that apply:

☐ Investigational drug(s) - drug name(s): ,
☐ Approved drug for new indication, dosage, or formulation (e.g. new patient population) - drug name(s): ,
☐ Investigational biologics – name(s) of biologics: ,
☐ Investigational natural health products (NHP) – NHP name(s): ,
☐ Investigational medical devices – device name(s): ,

8B. If this study involves submission to Health Canada under the Food and Drug Act:
Is Health Canada "No objection letter" or regulatory authorization attached? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If No, when is it expected?

8C. Provide the FDA IND number (drug studies) or PMA number (device studies):
FDA IND #: ☐ Pending
PMA #: ☐ Pending
Not Applicable ☒

Note: final approval will not be granted until the appropriate regulatory approval has been received.

9. CLINICAL TRIAL REGISTRATION
The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICJME) has indicated that clinical trials will not be published without the registration of that trial prior to subject enrolment. A clinical trial is defined by ICJME as, "Any research project that prospectively assigns human subjects to intervention and comparison groups to study the cause-and-effect relationship between a medical intervention and a health outcome. This definition includes drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, process-of-case changes and the like. A trial must have at least one prospectively assigned concurrent control or comparison group in order to trigger the requirement for registration."

Given the above definition, indicate whether this trial will be registered (e.g., www.clinicaltrials.gov, www.controlled-trials.com/isrctn/). ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable

If Yes, provide registration site:

SECTION II: STUDY SUMMARY

Note: Responses to this section are not a substitute for the full protocol.

10. ABSTRACT
Must be summary of study suitable for lay audience.

(Max ¼ page)

This research will be conducted in partial completion of the Ph.D. dissertation of Heather Davis. The research is interested in addressing how making art collectively can shift our ideas about ourselves, and about community. What is unique in these practices is the way of working together to create art, where both the process and product are the result of a group effort. Because art is so often associated with expression, and usually with self-expression, how does making art together produce a kind of group expression, and then how does this change our ideas of who we are, and our relations to others? How does making art together shift how we think of community and subjectivity? What kinds of politics, communities and subjectivities are emerging in community art practice? This research will focus on community arts organizations, commencing with the case study of Spiral Garden.

11. RATIONALE AND HYPOTHESIS/RESEARCH QUESTION

11A. Indicate the rationale for this study.

(Max ¼ page)

Through Heather Davis' employment at Cosmic Birdfeeder and Spiral Garden, as well as other community arts organizations, she noticed that a very specific kind of community was emerging. The organizations, broadly speaking, seek to build community, through art production, where diversity and difference are fostered. In other words, they seemed to be moving towards a way of being together as a group that allowed for each person to express themselves differently, and yet still contribute to the group. This kind of practice can be seen as an opportunity to develop empathy between participants and to encourage each person to act in increasingly ethical ways to one another. This study seeks to understand these practices and their implications more profoundly, their successes and limitations, with a goal of thinking about wider definitions and enactments of democratic practice.

11B. Indicate the hypothesis for this study or research question.

(Max ¼ page)

It is the hypothesis of this study that the current shift in contemporary art towards collective and community-engaged art production may indicate a wider shift in the understanding of subjectivity. The artist, as lone, individual, solitary genius, has historically stood in for an ideal subject. So what does it mean that contemporary artists are broadening and democratizing their practice, expanding the role, producers and consumers of art? The artist is no longer found locked in a solitary studio, but is engaging others to make art in communities. The re-working of what it means to be an artist in contemporary art may open up different ways of thinking about ourselves, as subjects. If we think about what it means to be a person differently, what implications does this have for how we relate to others?

11C. Indicate the significance of the study (i.e. the overall anticipated public and/or scientific benefit).

(Max ¼ page)

The overall significance of the study is to understand how community and collective arts practices may foster or challenge ethical ways of acting towards others, including valuing and making room for difference. It is hoped that this research will be used to improve specific community art organizations, as well as to provide various models and ideas for other researchers and practitioners of community arts.

12. STUDY DESIGN

Many of these questions apply to clinical research studies. If any of the items are not applicable to your study, indicate N/A.

12A. Describe the design and methodology (e.g. pre/post design, pilot, study visits, procedures, study intervention).

(Max ½ page)

The reserach will first use participant-observation. Ms. Davis will be at Spiral Garden during Session D, including staff work days (August 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27), observing regular activities and writing a field journal. She will also be participating in the everyday life of Spiral Garden, including dressing up, assisting with on-going projects, making art, gardening, and playing. She will be observing and writing about both the activities and expressions of others at the garden, as well as her own responses to her engagement there. This portion of the research will include all artists, facilitators, volunteers, children and youth at Spiral.

The second portion of the research will include group discussions with two sets of people: adult staff and volunteers, and children and youth in the program. Ms. Davis will ask staff and volunteers if they wish to participate in a group discussion to be conducted outside of normal working hours, by notifying them in advance by email of the research and its methods. Consent forms will be provided at the beginning of the group discussion.

Ms. Davis will conduct small group (2-5 subjects) discussions with children and youth, whose guardians have provided their written consent, during the regular hours of Spiral Garden, while the children are either in-between other activities or during the lunch break. These discussions will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

All discussions will be recorded with audio equipment.

12B. Describe the primary outcome measures/goals of the study.

(Max ¼ page)

The research will analyze, using critical analytic skills appropriate to the field of Communication Studies, both the field notes of Heather Davis as well as the sound recordings and transcriptions of group discussions. Ms. Davis will be writing up these observations and responses from interviews and discussions in a creative manner that reflects the goals and intentions of Spiral Garden and transmits to the reader a sense of what it is like to be at the garden.

The primary goal for this study is to convey the possibilities and limitations of collective action through making art together. It is hoped that the results of the study be used by other researchers, artists, community arts practitioners and administrators in making decisions and enacting best practice models in community arts.

12C. List any criteria for premature withdrawal of a subject from the study for safety concerns.

Not Applicable ☒

(Max ¼ page)

12D. Is a placebo used in this study? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, explain how this is this justified (e.g. no alternative standard treatment available). Include any provisions in place to reduce risks to subjects assigned to placebo (e.g., increased monitoring, rescue medication).

(Max ¼ page)

12E. Does this study involve deception or intentional lack of disclosure? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, justify and indicate how subjects will be debriefed.

(Max ¼ page)

12F. Will the subject be withdrawn from or denied usual therapy for any condition in order to participate in the study or be subject to other restrictions during the study? ☐ Yes ☒ No

(This would include medications that are prohibited or restricted in order to be eligible for the study or that may be prohibited or restricted during the course of the study.)

If Yes, explain.

(Max ¼ page)

13. SUBJECT/CONTROLS

13A. Indicate the main inclusion/exclusion criteria.

(Max ¼ page)

All members of the Spiral Garden program will be asked to participate in the study. This includes children and youth enrolled in the program, volunteers, artists, facilitators, and other staff members. This could potentially include up to 60 people, but the study would need at minimum 5 children or youth and 4 staff members or volunteers to conduct discussions. Heather Davis will also contact 5 key former staff members who may wish to be a part of the group discussions, selected for their longevity of employment and engagement with Spiral Garden.

i) Indicate the age range of eligible subjects: 6-65

13B. If applicable, indicate the rationale for control group(s).

(Max ¼ page)
not applicable for a qualitative study

13C.

Total study enrollment: no more than 60 will be observed; as many as 30 will participate in discussions.	
Number of subjects to be enrolled at this institution: no more than 60	**Indicate the time period for enrollment:** August 12-17
Approximate size of eligible population from institution/practice: no more than 60	

13D. Is sample size justified in the protocol? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, indicate protocol page:
If No, provide sample size justification.

(Max ¼ page)
It is necessary to include observation of all Spiral participants and extend invitations for discussions to all Spiral Garden members because the study is focused on the interrelation of the participants, and how they act as a group. The study is interested in the specific place, behaviours and models of working and playing that Spiral Garden fosters, thus it is necessary to analyze how the group functions together, focusing less on individual actors, but including their voices as vital to the larger whole. It is not necessary that there be a specific number of subjects interested in group discussions, although the study will require minimum numbers in order for discussions to work.

14. STUDY INTERVENTIONS OR PROCEDURES
Not Applicable ☐ (e.g. observational studies). If not applicable, go directly to 15. DATA ANALYSIS

14A. Document the usual standard of care at this institution for this population.
Not Applicable ☐

(Max ¼ page)
Spiral Garden is an integrated outdoor art, garden and play program. The program runs for eight weeks during the summer and is open to clients of Bloorview, as well as able-bodied and differently abled children from the GTA. It encourages creativity, imagination and irreverant play for all children, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses. It provides excellent care for children, with a staff of artists and trained facilitators to assist with the integration process.

14B. Indicate what procedures are to be carried out in the study, that are not considered part of the diagnostic, therapeutic "routine" or indicate how standard of care is altered. Attach a copy of all non-standardized instruments (e.g., questionnaires, rating scales).

(Max ¼ page)
Heather Davis will be conducting small group discussions with children, ranging in participant size from 2 to 5 per discussion. These discussions will be held with children whose guardians have given written consent and who have also assented to participate themselves. The discussions will take place in the Spiral Garden either at an activity area, under a tree, or during the lunch period after the children have eaten, in order to minimize the impact of the research on the regular activities and play of the children. The discussions will also include facilitators, when appropriate. Attached to this protocol is a copy of discussion questions.

14C. Indicate the additional risks associated with the study as compared to usual standard of care. Do not refer to other sections of this form.

(Max ½ page)
Although there are no foreseeable risks associated with the study, there will always be a Bloorview employee, an artist with Spiral Garden or the Artistic Coordinator, Sarah Dobbs, on hand in case anyone becomes upset or distressed.

14D. Indicate duration of study visits and extra time commitment (length, number, and frequency of test sessions) for study participation.

(Max ¼ page)
Ms. Davis will be conducting group discussions with children and youth on August 19, 20, and 26. Each discussion will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes.
The group discussion for adult staff and volunteers will take place after work hours on August 20. It will be approximately 1-2 hours long. Participation in these discussions is entirely voluntary.

15. DATA ANALYSIS

Briefly explain what methods will be used to analyze study data.
References to protocol for this question are acceptable. Indicate applicable page(s) of protocol.

(Max ¼ page)
Critical analytic skills from ethnography and autoethnography, as well as a creative analytic practice, will be used to analyze the study data. These tools are consistent with qualitative research in the Humanities.

SECTION III: ETHICAL ISSUES

16. RECRUITMENT AND CONSENT
Not Applicable ☐

Note: Any document to be viewed by the subject (e.g., recruitment posters/letters, consent/assent forms, information sheets) must be included with your submission.

16A. Indicate what tools will be used to identify potential subjects for recruitment into the study.

☐ Permanent health record/clinical chart (specify source):
☐ Existing database (specify): ○ Does the Principal Investigator maintain the database? ☐ Yes ☐ No ○ If No, identify the entity that maintains the database: Note: The creation and maintenance of a database for research purposes is a research activity that may require a separate REB application. Consult your institutional REB.
☐ Advertisements, including web based recruitment tools (attach)
☒ Other (specify): enrollment or employment at the Spiral Garden during Session D.

16B. Indicate who will identify potential study subjects
☒ Investigator/study personnel
☒ Other healthcare professional (e.g. non-study personnel)
☐ Self-referral (e.g. response to advertisement)

i) Identify all persons who will be reviewing health records/identifying information (for recruitment purposes).

1	Title: Artistic Coordinator	Last Name: Dobbs	First Name: Sarah
	Institution: Bloorview Kids Rehab	Qualifications:	Role in Study: on-site co-supervisor
2	Title: Manager, Centre for the Arts	Last Name: Farkashidy	First Name: Karin
	Institution: Bloorview Kids	Qualifications:	Role in Study:

	Rehab		
3	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:
4	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:
5	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:

ii) List the identifying information that will be collected, used, or disclosed from the records during the course of the proposed recruitment activities.

☒ Name	☐ Images (e.g., photographic, x-ray, MRI scans)
☒ Address	☐ Social Insurance Number
☐ Telephone Numbers	☐ Medical Record Number
☒ Email Address	☐ Date of Birth
☐ Health Card Number	☐ Health Information: (e.g., relating to inclusion /exclusion criteria, medications)
☐ Other information (specify):	

iii) Describe the security measures that will be taken to protect the confidentiality of this information.

(Max ¼ page)

No names nor identifying features of any child or youth will be recorded in data collection. Names and identifying information will only appear on consent forms. Ms. Davis will use study codes such as: A, B, C, D to distinguish between children. Adult participants will be free to choose their level of confidentiality. They can choose to remain completely confidential (where the researcher will use a code to distinguish between them), to use a pseudonym, or to disclose their name.

iv) Indicate what will happen to this information at the completion of the recruitment process.

(Max ¼ page)

At the completion of the recruitment process, all consent forms will be kept in locked filing cabinets in the office of Patty Rigby. Once the transcripts and fieldnotes have the children's names replaced with codes, Heather Davis, at the end of the fieldwork, will take the information back to Concordia University to be analyzed. Consent forms as well as audio recordings of children, as the only documents with identifying information, will be kept in the office of Patty Rigby at Bloorview. All documents will be destroyed at the completion of the research, after Ms. Davis has defended her dissertation.

16C. Indicate who will make initial contact with potential subjects or authorized third party, whether they are already known to the subject or authorized third party, and how contact will be made (e.g., in person, phone, letter, e-mail, website). Attach a copy of the script or any written materials if applicable.

(Max ¼ page)

Initial contact with potential subjects will be made through the Spiral Garden office. This will consist of two blind copied emails sent out to all staff and volunteers from the Spiral Garden office, as in line with their normal procedures. Parents and guardians of children will receive in the mail (sent through the Spiral Garden) a letter of introduction as well as consent forms. Copies of the email, letter of introduction, and conset forms are attached to this protocol.

16D. Describe the consent process and who will obtain consent (e.g. will consent be written, oral, telephone (include script). If the study population requires special consent considerations (e.g., child, incompetent adult, unable to communicate), refer to 16E.

(Max ¼ page)

Adults (including staff and volunteers) will be informed of the research and those who wish to participate will be asked to sign consent forms at the beginning of the group discussion. Parents and legal guardians will be informed by email of the research and asked to assess their child's capacity to consent. If there is no response from parents to this email, I will approach the parents at the first opportunity. Children who are capable will be asked for their assent on the first day of discussions (August 19) during the lunch hour. The script provided with this form will be read to each child who wishes to participate.

i) Indicate if there is a relationship between the subjects and either of the following:
Person obtaining consent ☐ Yes ☒ No
Investigator ☐ Yes ☒ No

ii) If Yes, explain the nature of the relationship (e.g., physician, employer) and what steps will be taken to avoid the perception of undue influence.

(Max ¼ page)

iii) Indicate how much time will be given to subjects to review the information before being asked to give consent.

(Max ¼ page)
Unfortunately, given the untimely nature of this application, subjects will be given a minimum of one day to review the information before being asked to give consent. If it is possible (pending approval of this application) the subjects will be given up to one week to review the information before being asked to give consent.

16E. Indicate if the research will involve any of the following:

i) Special Considerations (check all that apply):

☐ Women of child bearing potential	☐ Genetic research
☐ Pregnant women	☐ Tissue samples
☒ Healthy volunteers	☐ Fetal tissue or placenta
☐ Students	☐ Prisoners
☒ Staff	☐ None of the above

ii) Capacity/Competency (check all that apply):
☒ Children less than 16 years of age
☐ Emergency patients
☐ Individuals temporarily unable to provide an informed consent
☒ Marginally incompetent subjects
☐ Incompetent subjects
☐ None of the above

Describe how capacity will be assessed for any individuals in 16Eii.

(Max ¼ page)
First, parents and legal guardians will be asked whether or not they feel their child has the capacity to consent. The child will also be asked if they feel up to participating when the discussions take place. If a child has a facilitator, that facilitator will also be asked whether the child is competent to give consent at that particular moment.

If subjects are incapable of providing consent, provide information on how substitute decision makers will be identified.

(Max ¼ page)
Parents and legal guardians of children and youth will be asked for their written consent.

When inability to provide an informed consent is expected to be temporary, describe what procedures will be used to regularly assess capacity and to obtain consent if the individual later becomes capable of providing consent.

(Max ¼ page)
If a child is temporarily unable to give informed consent, the researcher will return later or on a different day when both the child and the facilitator (where applicable) indicate that the child can give informed consent.

iii) Communication Difficulties (check all that apply):

☐ Individuals who may require translation
☐ Individuals who are illiterate
☒ Subjects unable to communicate
☐ None of the above

Provide an explanation of what procedures will be used to address any communication difficulties (e.g., the use of translated forms, translator, impartial witness).

(Max ¼ page)
In the case of childern and/or youth who use alternative communication techniques (communication boards, hand or eye gestures, etc.) Ms. Davis will recruit the aid of the child's facilitator. The facilitator will be able to provide any additional communication information.

16F. If potential subjects might be approached for recruitment in other studies, indicate the steps that will be taken to minimize the number of times that this will occur.

(Max ¼ page)
A program assessment is scheduled to take place during the same time period at Spiral Garden. Ms. Davis has already discussed this matter with Sarah Dobbs (Artistic Coordinator, Centre for the Arts) and Karin Farkashidy (Manager, Centre for the Arts) and an agreement has been made to not conduct these two studies at the same time. Therefore, discussions with children will take place on three of the six days of Spiral, and not on the same day that participants will be asked to fill out the assessment forms.

17. RISK/BENEFIT ESTIMATES

17A. Potential Benefits to Subjects
No direct benefits anticipated ☒

List anticipated benefits to the subject, if any.

(Max ¼ page)

17B. Potential Harms (injury, discomfort and inconvenience) to subject (including psychological factors).
No known risks ☒

i) List the known risks of study intervention(s) including approximate rates of occurrence, severity and rates of reversibility.

(Max ¾ page)

ii) List the risks of any tests, procedures or other protocol-mandated activities that are conducted for research purposes only, including approximate rates of occurrence, severity and reversibility.

(Max ¾ page)

iii) For studies involving placebo, washout, or withholding treatment, list any risks related to absence of treatment.
Not Applicable ☐

(Max ¾ page)

iv) Include a summary of the data regarding reproductive risks such as teratogenicity or embryotoxicity of the study drug, any risk with breastfeeding, or risk to men regarding conception.
Risks unknown ☐

(Max ¼ page)

v) Indicate whether participation in this study affects alternatives for future care.
☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, explain.

(Max ¼ page)

18. PAYMENTS
Not Applicable ☒

18A. Indicate what payment(s) will be provided to subjects or substitute decision makers, if applicable.

☐ Reimbursement for expenses incurred as a result of research Amount: Specify (e.g., travel, meals):
☐ Gifts for participation Value:
☐ Compensation for time Amount: Provide justification if compensation for time will be provided. (Max 1/4 page)
☒ Other forms of compensation: Dinner will be provided to adult participants on night of discussion.

19. MONITORING

19A. Indicate if there is a plan for monitoring of the study (e.g. sponsor initiated site visits)
☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable

If YES, describe.

(Max ¼ page)

19B. Indicate if an interim analysis is planned. ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable

If Yes, describe briefly.

(Max ¼ page)

19C. Indicate if there is a steering committee. ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable

If Yes, provide a copy of the terms of reference (mandate) of the steering committee.

19D. Indicate if there is a data and safety monitoring board (DSMB).
☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not Applicable

If Yes, forward a copy of the DSMB charter when available or provide a description of the DSMB, including its purpose, membership, relationship to the sponsor, and whether the committee will review unblinded study data etc. Refer to the protocol as needed.

(Max ¼ page)

If No, justify and explain what alternative arrangements are in place to monitor the safety data and how the overall risk/benefit information will be communicated to the REB.

(Max ¼ page)

20. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
If any of the conflicts listed below apply to any of the Investigators involved in the research study or any member of their immediate family, append a letter to the Chair of the REB detailing these activities and how they will be managed. Disclose all contracts and any conflicts of interest (actual, apparent, perceived, or potential) relating to this project. Conflict of interest may also arise with regard to the disclosure of personal health information.

☐ Function as an advisor, employee, officer, director or consultant for the study sponsor
☐ Have direct or indirect financial interest in the drug, device or technology employed in this research study (including patents or stocks)
☐ Receive an honorarium or other personal benefits from the sponsor (apart from fees for service)
☐ Receive direct or indirect financial benefit from the disclosure of personal health information
☐ Other
☒ None of the above

21. PUBLICATION/DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS
Indicate how the results will be communicated to subjects and other stakeholders (e.g., advocacy groups, scientific community).

☐ Individual debriefing at end of test session	☒ Publication
☒ Group debriefing	☐ Other (specify):
☒ Letter of appreciation at end of study	☐ No Plan

If no plan is in place, provide justification.
Not Applicable ☒

(Max ¼ page)

SECTION IV: PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

22. COLLECTION USE AND DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION
Investigators should comply with the duties set out for researchers in the Personal Health Information Protection ACT (PHIPA – effective in Ontario Nov. 1, 2004) and with the privacy and confidentiality and consent guidelines outlined in theTri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

22A. List all personal health information and personal identifiers (e.g. name, DOB) required to be collected. For all non-clinical trials, attach data collection forms.

(Max ¼ page)
Names of adult subjects will be recorded where they have given written consent to do so. There is also the option of using a pseudonym. In the case of children and youth names and identifying information will only be recorded on consent forms. On all field notes and transcripts, names and identifying information will be replaced with a lettered code system.

22B. Identify all potential sources of this information.

(Max ¼ page)
Names and identifying information will be recorded on consent forms, kept in the locked office of Patty Rigby. As a reseracher on site, Heather Davis will know the names of study subjects. As well, regular Spiral Garden staff and volunteers will also know the names of children and youth.

22C. Indicate how study subjects will be identified on data collection forms (e.g. study number, initials).

(Max ¼ page)
In observation notes and transcriptions of interviews adult study subjects will either be identified by name, pseudonym or role (eg. facilitator, volunteer, artist) depending on their wishes and what they have consented to.
Children and youth will always be identified simply as 'child' or 'youth' and assigned a lettered code ie. A, B, C to distinguish between children.

22D. Indicate how data will be stored.

☒ Computerized files (specify): Server ☒ Desktop ☐ Laptop ☐
☒ Audio recordings
☐ Hard copy
☐ Videotape
☐ Other (e.g. PDA):

i) Describe the safeguards to protect the confidentiality and security of the data, including any physical and technical safeguards (e.g. data will be stored in a locked and secure area, the data will be stored on a secure server that is password protected)

(Max ¼ page)
Data will be stored on the protected server at Bloorview. After the initial fieldwork, and all names and other identifying information have been coded, the data collected will be taken to the locked office of Dr. Monika Kin Gagnon (who is Heather Davis' supervisor) at Concordia University, so that the data can be analyzed by Heather Davis. Consent forms and audio recordings of children will remain at Bloorview in locked filing cabinets in the office of Patty Rigby.

ii) Indicate who will have access to these data in the future.

(Max ¼ page)
Dr. Patty Rigby as Principle Investigator at Bloorview, Dr. Monika Kin Gagnon as Principle Investigator at Concordia University, and Heather Davis will have access to these data in the future.

22E. Indicate if any information that could potentially identify study subjects will be disclosed outside of the institution (e.g., names, initials, DOB, OHIP #).

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, justify and describe how this information will be transferred and any security measures to be used (e.g., anonymized data, secure network upload or download).

(Max ¼ page)
Names of adults who have provided written and informed consent will be used in future publications resulting from

this study. No identifying information of children or their families will be disclosed outside of the institution.

22F. If personal health information is to be linked to other databases (e.g., health registries, statistics Canada information) provide the following details:
Not Applicable ☒

i) Describe the data to which the personal health information will be linked.
(Max ¼ page)

ii) Explain how the linkages will be made.
(Max ¼ page)

iii) Explain why these linkages are required.
(Max ¼ page)

22G. Indicate how long the personal health information will remain identifiable and explain why.
Not Applicable ☒
(Max ¼ page)

22H. Identify all persons (in addition to those listed in Q. 16Bi) that will have access to the personal health information, their roles in the study, their reason for access, and related qualifications.

1	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:
2	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:
3	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:
4	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:
5	Title:	Last Name:	First Name:
	Institution:	Qualifications:	Role in Study:

22I. Explain why the research cannot reasonably be accomplished without using personal health information.
(Max ¼ page)
not applicable

22J. If personal health information will be collected, used or disclosed without consent from the individuals to whom the information relates, explain why obtaining explicit consent would be impractical.
(Max ¼ page)

not applicable

22K. Describe any harms or benefits that could arise if personal health information was inappropriately released (e.g., embarrassment, refusal of employment or insurance coverage, stigmatization of individuals / groups) and how any consequences would be addressed.

(Max ¼ page)
not applicable

22L. Describe how and when the personal health information will be disposed of or returned to the health information custodian.

(Max ¼ page)
not applicable

SECTION V: FUNDING AND CONTRACTS

23. BUDGET
☐ **No budget required**

Attach an itemized study budget (applies to all full board and expedited review studies). The budget should reflect all costs at this institution.

Indicate whether the funding is sufficient to cover all study costs. ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If No, explain how the shortfall will be made up.

(Max ¼ page)

Indicate if any investigator will receive direct personal payments from the budget. ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, describe what these payments are for and the amount.

(Max ¼ page)

24. AGREEMENTS
24A. Contract/Research Agreement
Indicate whether there is a contract/research agreement involved ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, provide name of sponsor/agency:
Provide name of the contract research organization: Not applicable ☒

24B. Indicate whether the contract/research agreement has been submitted for review and signing. (See institution specific instruction page) ☐ Yes ☐ No

24C. Indicate if there is external (non-institutional) liability insurance. ☐ Yes ☒ No

ii) Indicate who will cover reasonable out-of pocket expenses to ensure that immediate medical care is provided if a subject suffers an injury as a result of participation in the study.
☐ Sponsor
☒ Institution

☐ Other (specify):

24D. Publication Agreements

i) Indicate if there is an agreement between the Investigator and the sponsor regarding the use, publication or disposal of the data. ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending

ii) If Yes, Indicate whether the funding agency or sponsoring company places any restrictions on publication of findings or reporting interim results. ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending

iii) If Yes, explain any restrictions.

(Max ¼ page)

25. MATERIAL TRANSFER AGREEMENT

Indicate if there is a material transfer agreement (MTA) involving human material for this study. This refers to an agreement for transfer of biological materials (e.g. tissues, cell lines) from the institution to another institution or entity. ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, attach a copy of the agreement.

26. INFORMATION SHARING

Indicate if there is an information sharing agreement. ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, attach a copy of the agreement.

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor. "Reconciliation under Duress" and "Commitment" In *Aesthetics and Politics*, edited by Ronald Taylor, 151-195. Verso: London, 1980.

Agamben, Giorgio. *The Coming Community*. Translated by Michael Hardt. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1993.

------."The Friend" in *What is an Apparatus? And other essays*. Translated by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella, 25-37. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Antebi, Nicole, Colin Dickey and Robby Herbst, eds. *Failure! Experiments in Aesthetic and Social Practices*. Los Angeles: Journal of Aesthetics and Protest, nd.

Appiah, K. Anthony. "Identity, Authenticity, Survival, Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction." In *Multiculturalism: examining the politics of recognition,* edited by Amy Gutmann, 149-164. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. *Books VIII and IX*. Translated by Michael Pakaluk. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

Balibar, Étienne. "Subjection and Subjectivation" In *Supposing the Subject*, edited by Joan Copjec, 1-15. New York: Verso, 1994.

Barber, Bruce. "The Gift in Littoral Practice" *In Intervention: Post-Object Art in New Zealand, 1970 and Beyond*. Christchurch, New Zealand: Robert McDougall Art Gallery and Annex publication, 2000.

Barndt, Deborah, ed. *Wild Fire: Art as Activism*. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006.

Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author" In *Image, Music, Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath, 142-148. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.

Beckenridge, Carol A. and Candace Vogler. "The Critical Limits of Embodiment" *Public Culture* 13.3 (2001): 349-357.

Becker, Carol. *Surpassing the Spectacle: Global Transformations and the Changing Politics of Art*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002.

Benjamin, Walter. (1936) "*The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*" In *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt, 217-252. New York : Schocken Books, 1969.

Bennett, Jill. *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

Bennett, Tony, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris, eds. "Community" In *New Keywords: A revised vocabulary of culture and society*, 51-53. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.

Berlant, Lauren. "'68 or Something" *Critical Inquiry*, 21 no. 1 (Autumn, 1994): 124-155.

------. "Cruel Optimism" *Differences* 17, no. 5 (2006): 21-36.

------."Slow Death" *Critical Inquiry* 33 (Summer 2007): 754-780.

------. *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.

Berlant, Lauren, Gesa Helms and Marina Vishmidt. "Affect and the Politics of Austerity: An interview exchange with Lauren Berlant" *Variant* 39/40 (Winter 2010): 3-6.

Berlant, Laurent, Michael Hardt, Heather Davis and Paige Sarlin. "The Risk of a New Relationality" unpublished interview. May 21, 2011.

Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Bishop, Claire. “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics” *October* 110 (Fall 2004): 51-80.
------. “The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents” *Artforum* Vol. 44 Issue 6 (Feb. 2006a): 178-183.
------, ed. *Participation*. Whitchapel: MIT Press, 2006b.
Blanchot, Maurice. *Friendship*. Translated by Elizabeth Rottenberg. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
------. The Unavowable Community. Translated by Pierre Joris. Barrytown: Station Hill Press, 2006.
Blas, Zach. “Virus, Viral” *Women’s Studies Quarterly*. forthcoming.
Block, Rene and Nollert, Angelika, eds. *Collective Creativity*. Frankfurt: Revolver, 2005.
Bloom, Brett. “Alluvial Deposits” In *With Love From Haha: Essays and Notes on a Collective Art Practice,* edited by Wendy Jacob, Laurie Palmer, and John Ploof, 20-29. Chicago: White Walls, Inc., 2008.
Boal, Augusto. *Theatre of the oppressed*. Translated by Charles A., Maria-Odilia Leal McBride and Emily Fryer. London: Pluto Press, 2008.
Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Relational aesthetics*. Translated by Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods. Dijon : Les presses du réel, 2002.
Bowie, Andrew. *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: from Kant to Nietzsche*. 2nd Edition. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
Braidotti, Rosi. *Transpositions*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.
Brenson, Michael. “Healing in Time” In *Culture in Action,* edited by Mary Jane Jacob, Michael Brenson, and Eva M. Olson, 16-49. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.
Brummans, Boris. “Death by Document: Tracing the Agency of a Text” Qualitative Inquiry, 13 (2007): 711-727.
Burnham Frye, Linda. “Social Imagination: Documenting Engagement in Canada.” Community Arts Network, 2009. http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2009/02/social_imaginat.php.
Burnham Frye, Linda and Steven Durland, eds. *The Citizen Artist: 20 Years of Art in the Public Arena: An Anthology from High Performance Magazine 1978-1998*. Gardiner NY: Critical Press, 1998.
Butler, Cornelia, ed. *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007.
Butler, Rex. “The World is Not Enough: Art and Globalization” *ArtUS* 21 (2008): 29-37.
Chandler, Michaela. “Cosmic Bird Feeder Evaluation Forms.” Photocopy, Cosmic Bird Feeder, Toronto, 2005.
Chandler, Mielle and Astrida Neimanis. “Water and Gestationality: What Flows Beneath Ethics” *Thinking with Water*, forthcoming.
Clements, Paul. “The Evaluation of community Arts Projects and the Problems with Social Impact Methodology” *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 26 Issue 3 (2007): 325-335.
Clifford, James and George E. Marcus, eds. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
Clifford, James. “An Ethnographer in the Field” In *Site-Specificity: The Ethnographic Turn*, edited by Alex Coles, 52-71. *De-, dis-, ex.* 4 London: Black Dog Press, 2000.

Clover, Darlene. "Community Arts as Environmental Education and Activism: A Labour and Environment Case Study" *Convergence*, 33 no.4 (2000): 19-31.
Cohen, Louis and Lawrence Manion. *Research methods in education*. 4th Edition. London: Routledge, 1994.
Cohen-Cruz, Jan. "'Twixt Cup and Lip': Intentions and Execution of Community-Based Art as Civic Expression" In *Artistic Citizenship: A Public Voice for the Arts,* edited by Mary Schmidt Campbell and Randy Martin, 163-180. New York: Routledge, 2006.
Coles, Alex, ed. *Site-Specificity: The Ethnographic Turn*. Vol. 4 de-, dis-, ex-. London: Black Dog Press, 2000.
Combes, Muriel. *Simondon. Individu et collectivité*. Paris: PUF, 1999.
Condorelli, Celine and Eyal Weizman. "Support, Participation and Relationships to Equity." In *The Violence of Participation,* edited by Markus Miessen, B29-B36. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2007.
Connolly, William E. *The Ethos of Pluralization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
Cosmic Bird Feeder. *Annual Report*. Toronto: Bloorview MacMillan Children's Rehabilitation Center, 1998.
Critchley, Simon. *Ethics-Politics-Subjectivity*. London: Verso, 1999.
------. *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of commitment, politics of resistance*. London: Verso, 2007.
------. "Mystical Anarchism" *Public: New Communities*, 39 (2009): 138-157.
Cvejic, Bojana. "Collectivity? You Mean Collaboration" *Republic Art*, 2004. http://republicart.net/disc/aap/index.htm.
Davis, Heather. "Cosmic Bird Feeder Evaluation Forms." Photocopy, Cosmic Bird Feeder, Toronto, 2005.
------. "WochenKlausur: When Art Becomes Social Change" *.dpi journal* 17 (2010). dpi.studioxx.org/demo/?q=en/no/17/when-art-becomes-social-change-by-Heather-Davis
Davis, Jessica. "Everything old is new again: self-assessment as tradition in community art centers" *Advances in Program Education*, 4 (1998): 117-132.
Debaise, Didier. "Le langage de l'individuation (Lexique simondonien)" *Multitudes*, 18 (2004). http://multitudes.samizdat.net/Le-langage-de-l-individuation
Debord, Guy. *Society of the Spectacle*. Detroit: Red & Black, 1970.
De Buysser, Pieter and Jacob Wren. "An Anthology of Optimism" http://www.anthologyofoptimism.com/.
De Oliveira, Nicolas, Nicola Oxley, and Michael Petry, eds. *Installation Art*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1994.
Deleuze, Gilles. *Spinoza, practical philosophy*. Translated by Robert Hurley. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988.
------. *Cinema 1: the movement-image*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001a.
------. *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*. Translated by Anne Boyman. New York: Zone, 2001b.
------. "Spinoza: 24/01/1978" *Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze*. http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=14&groupe=Spinoza&langue=2

Deleuze, Gilles and Claire Parnet. *Dialogues II*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Robert Hurley, et al. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.
-------. *A Thousand Plateaus*. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
-------. *What is Philosophy*? Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
-------. *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*. Trans. Dana Polan. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
Del Lucchese, Filippo. "Monstrous Individuations: Deleuze, Simondon, and Relational Ontology" *Differences*, 20, 2 (2009): 179-193.
Denzin, Norman. *Sociological Methods: A Sourcebook*. 5th edition. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2006.
Derrida, Jacques. *Politics of Friendship*. Translated by George Collins. New York: Verso, 1997.
------. *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, London: Routledge, 2001.
Dewey, John. *Art as Experience*. New York: Perigee, 2005.
Dickson, Malcolm. *Art with people*. Sunderland, UK: AN Publications, 1995.
Eagleton, Terry. *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990.
Fanon, Franz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, 1967.
Felshin, Nina, ed. *But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.
Finkelpearl, Tom. *Dialogues in Public Art*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000.
Fiumara, Gemma Corradi. *The Other Side of Language*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
Fleming, Martha. "Letter to the Editors" *Afterimage* (June 1995): 3.
Florida, Richard. *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How it's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.
Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power" in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Dreyfus, Hubert L. and Paul Rabinow, 208-253. 2nd Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
------. "Friendship as a Way of Life" in *Hatred of Capitalism*. Edited by Chris Kraus and Sylvère Lotringer, 297-302. New York: Semiotext(e), 2001.
Foster, Hal. *The Return of the Real: the avant-garde at the end of the century*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.
------. "Chat Rooms, 2004" in *Participation*, edited by Claire Bishop, 190-195. London: Whitechapel Press, 2006.
Fraser, Nancy. *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.
Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.
Gablik, Suzi. *The Reenchantment of Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991.
------. "Connective Aesthetics: Art After Individualism" In *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, edited by Suzanne Lacy, 74-88. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.
Galindo, Angela. *Finding Our Place in the Garden: A Holistic Approach to Art Education*. Montreal: Concordia University, 2001.

Gamble, Allison. “Reframing a Movement.” *New Art Examiner*, 21, 5 (January 1994): 18–23.
Gandillac, Maurice de. “Approches de l’amitié” In *L’Existence*, edited by A. de Wachlens, 63 – 67. Paris: Gallimard, 1945.
Gandhi, Leela. *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.
Genosko, Gary. *Félix Guattari: An Aberrant Introduction*. London: Continuum, 2002.
Goldbard, Arlene. “Postcript to the Past: Notes Toward a History of Community Arts.” *High Performance* (Winter 1993): 23-27.
------. *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development*. Oakland: New Village Press, 2006.
Golden, Devin. "Murmur Causes A Din." *New Art Examiner* (June 1990): 81–83.
Golden, Joseph. *Pollyana in the Brier Patch: The Community Arts Movement*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987.
Goodall, H. L. Jr. *Casing the Promised Land: The Autobiography of an Organizational Detective as Cultural Ethnographer*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, 1994.
Green, Charles. *The Third Hand: Collaboration in art from conceptualism to postmodernism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
Greenberg, Clement. “Towards a Newer Laocoon.” *Partisan Review*. 1940.
Gregg, Melissa and Gregory J. Seigworth, eds. *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
Grosz, Elizabeth. *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.
------. *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the framing of the earth*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
Groys, Boris. “A Genealogy of Participatory Art” In *The Art of Participation: 1950 to Now*, edited by Rudolph Frieling, 18-31. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2008.
Guattari, Félix. *Chaosmosis: an ethico-aesthetic paradigm*. Translated by Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1995.
------. *The Three Ecologies*. Translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton. London: the Athlone Press, 2000.
------. “Remaking Social Practices” In *The Guattari Reader* edited by Gary Genosko, 262-272. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
Guerrera, Massimo. *Darboral*. Québec: Musée du Québec, 2002.
Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson, eds. *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
Habermas, Jürgen. *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press., 1989.
Hall, Stuart. “Encoding, Decoding.” In *The Cultural Studies Reader*, 2nd ed. edited by Simon During, 507-517. London: Routledge, 1993.
------. “New Cultures for Old” In *A Place in the World? Places, Cultures, and Globalization*. Edited by Doreen Massey and P. M. Jess, PAGE NOS. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
------.“New Ethnicities” In *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, edited by David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen, 442-451. London: Routledge, 1996.

Haraway, Donna. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." In *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature,* 149-181. New York; Routledge, 1991.
------. *How Like a Leaf: an Interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve*. London: Routledge, 2000.
Harding, Sandra. *Whose science? Whose knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991.
Hardt, Michael. "Jefferson and Democracy." *American Quarterly,* 59 No.1 (2007): 41-78.
Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
------. *Commonwealth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.
Harvey, David. *The Urban Experience*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
-----. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Heartney, Eleanor. "The Dematerialization of Public Art." *Sculpture*, vol. 12, no. 2 (March/April 1993): 44–49.
------. "Public Art in Action." *Art in America,* 83 Issue 6 (June 1995): 33-34.
------. *Critical Condition*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy, Christina Gilmartin, and Robin Lydenberg. *Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
Higgins, Dick. "Statement on Intermedia" In *Dé-coll/age (décollage)* 6. Edited by Wolf Vostell. New York: Something Else Press, 1967.
Hixson, Kathryn. "Icons and Interventions in Chicago and the Potential of Public Art." *Sculpture,* 17 (May/June 1998): 46–51.
hoogland, rené. "The Matter of Culture: Aesthetic Experience and Corporeal Being" *Mosaic,* 36 no. 3 (2003): 1-18.
Holmes, Brian. "Do-it-yourself Geopolitics" *Continental Drift*, 2007. http://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2007/04/27/do-it-yourself-geopolitics/
------. *Unleashing the Collective Phantoms: Essays in Reverse Imagineering*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2008.
Howard, Ruth and Rachel Van Fossen. *Easy to Say: Reflections on the Roles of Art and the Artist in Canadian Adaptations of the Colway Community Play Form*. Toronto: Jumblies Theatre, 2005.
Hudson, Anna Victoria. *Art and social progress: The Toronto community of painters, 1933-1950*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
Irigary, Luce. *Speculum of the Other Woman*. Translated by Gillian C. Gill. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
------. *I Love to You: Sketch of a Possible Felicity in History*. Translated by Alison Martin. London: Routledge, 1996.
Jacob, Mary Jane. "Outside the Loop" In *Culture in Action: A Public Art Program of Sculpture Chicago*, edited by Mary Jane Jacob, Michael Brenson, and Eva M. Olson, 50-61. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.
Jacob, Mary Jane, Michael Brenson, and Eva M. Olson, eds. *Culture in Action: A Public Art Program of Sculpture Chicago*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.

Jacob, Mary Jane and Michael Brenson, eds. *Conversations at the Castle: Changing Audiences and Contemporary Art*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998.
Jacob, Wendy, Laurie Palmer and John Ploof, eds. *With Love From Haha: Essays and Notes on a Collective Art Practice*. Chicago: White Walls Inc., 2008.
James, William. *Essays in Radical Empiricism*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996.
Jeanée, Pascal. "Concrete Social Interventions." *Variant,* 16 (2002). http://www.variant.org.uk/16texts/Concrete_Interventions.html.
Jones, Amelia. "'Women' in Dada: Elsa, Rrose, and Charlie" In Women in Dada: Essays on Sex, Gender, and Identity. Edited by Naomi Sawelson-Gorse, 142-173. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.
Joseph, Miranda. *Against the Romance of Community*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.
Kaprow, Allan. *Essays on the blurring of art and life*. Edited by Jeff Kelley. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
Kester, Grant. "Aesthetic Evangelists" Afterimage (January 1995): 5-11.
------. *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
------. "Another Turn" *Artforum International* Vol.44 No.9 (2006): 22
Knabb, Ken, ed. and trans. *Situationist International Anthology*. Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1995.
Korza, Pam and Barbara Schaffer Bacon, eds. *Art, Dialogue, Action, Activism: Case Studies from Animating Democracy*. Washington, D.C.: Americans for the Arts, 2005.
Kwon, Miwon. *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002.
Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics* 2nd Ed. London: Verso, 2001.
Lacy, Suzanne, ed. *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.
------. *Leaving Art: Writings on Performance, Politics, and Publics 1974-2007*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
Lamoureux, Ève. *Art et politique: Nouvelles formes d'engagement artistique au Québec*. Montréal: Écosociété, 2009.
Langdon, Paul. "Community Art Education: Issues for Teacher Training" Edited by Francine Gagnon-Bourget and Pierre Gosselin. *Actes du Colloque sur la Recherche en Enseignement des Arts Visuels*. Sherbrooke, QC: CREA Editions, 1996.
Langer, Suzanne. *Feeling and Form*. New York: Scribner, 1953.
Lash, Heather. "You are my sunshine: Refugee Participation in Performance" In *Wild Fire: Art as Activism*. Edited by Deborah Barndt, 221-229. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006.
Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Leggiere, Phil. "Lily Yeh's Art of Transformation." *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* July/August, 2000. http://www.upenn.edu/gazette/0700/leggiere.html.

Le Feuvre, Lisa, ed. *Failure (Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art)*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010.
Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. Tranlated by Alphonso Lingis. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969.
------. *Ethics and Infinity*. Translated by Richard A. Cohen. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1985.
------. *Otherwise than Being, Or Beyond Essence*. Translated by Alphonso Lingis. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998.
------. *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*. Translated by Barbara Harshav and Michael B. Smith. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
Levine, Stephen K. "The Spiral Garden: An Interview with Jan MacKie and Bohdan Petryk" *Poesis* 4 (2002): 46-52.
Lippard, Lucy. *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
------. *The Lure of the Local: senses of place in a multicentered society*. New York: The New Press, 1997.
Lowe, Seana. "The Art of Community Transformation" *Education and Urban Society* 33, no. 4 (2001): 457-471.
Lucchese, del Filippo. "Monstrous Individuations: Deleuze, Simondon, and Relational Ontology" *Differences* 20, 2 (2009):179-193.
Lulashnyk, Kimberly. *More people than materials or techniques: the community-based public art of C.J. Fleury*. Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 2001.
Mackenzie, Fiona. "Against the Tide: Placing Visual Art in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland." *Social & Cultural Geography* 7, no.6 (2006): 965-985.
MacKie, Jan and Bohdan Petryk, eds. *Spiral Garden Resource Book: A Collection of work from the Children and Artists of Spiral Garden & Cosmic Bird Feeder*, 2nd Edition. Toronto, ON: Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre and Spiral Community Artists' Circle, 2009.
MacPherson, Ruth. "The Importance of Appearing Earnest" *Variant* 14, 2 (2001): 21-22.
Manning, Erin. *Relationscapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009.
Marcus, George and Michael Fischer. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
marino, dian. *Wild Garden*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 1997.
Marsland, Jane, Graeme Page and Stan Shortt. *Report of the Arts in the Community Task Force*. Toronto: Ontario Arts Council, 2000.
Massey, Doreen. Space, Place, and Gender. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.
Massumi, Brian. *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992.
------. *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002a.
------, ed. *A Shock to Thought: Expression After Deleuze and Guattari*. London: Routledge, 2002b.

------. "Of Microperception and Micropolitics" *Inflexions* 3 (October 2009a) http://www.senselab.ca/inflexions/volume_4/n3_massumi.html.

Massumi, Brian, Arne de Boever, Alex Murray and Jon Roffe. "'Technical Mentality' Revisited: Brian Massumi on Gilbert Simondon" *Parrhesia* 7 (2009b): 36-45. www.parrhesiajournal.org/parrhesia07/parrhesia07_massumi.pdf.

Martin, Randy and Mary Schmidt Campbell, eds. *Artistic Citizenship: A Public Voice for the Arts*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Matarasso, Francois. *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*. Stroud: Comedia, 1997.

McCabe, Cynthia Jaffee. *Artistic Collaboration in the Twentieth Century*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984.

McCarl Nielsen, Joyce. *Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1990.

McGauley, Laurie. "Utopian longings: romanticism, subversion and democracy in community arts." Ph.D. diss., Laurentian University, 2007.

------. "IMAGINE: An External Review of the Canada Council for the Arts' Artists and Community Collaboration Fund." Canada Council for the Arts, 2006. www.canadacouncil.ca/publications_e/research/art_disciplines_sect/fd128050426037054919.htm

Meecham, Pam and Julie Sheldon, eds. *Modern Art: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 2005.

Mey, Kerstin "Afterward: In/ter/ceptions and In/tensions—Situating Suzanne Lacy's Practice" In *Leaving Art: Writings on Performance, Politics, and Publics 1974-2002*. Suzanne Lacy, 327-338. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Miessen, Markus and Shumon Basar, eds. *Did Someone Say Participate?* Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006.

Miessen, Markus, ed. *The Violence of Participation*. New York: Sternberg Press, 2007.

Miller, Rosina S. "Unhaunting the Village: Critical Regionalism and "Luminous Place" at the Village of Arts and Humanities" *Journal of American Folklore* 117, no. 466 (2004): 446-454.

------. "Performing the urban village: Art, place-making, and cultural politics in North Central Philadelphia." Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2005.

Mitchell, Juliet. *Psychoanalysis and Feminism: Freud, Reich, Laing and Women*. New York: Vintage Books, 1975.

Morris, Nina and Sarah G. Cant. "Engaging with Place: artists, site-specificity and the Hebden Bridge Sculpture Trail" *Social & Cultural Geography* 7, no. 6 (2006): 863-888.

Mouffe, Chantal. "Hegemony and New Political Subjects: Toward a New Concept of Democracy" Translated by Stanley Gray. In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 89-104. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

------. "For an Agonistic Public Sphere." In *The Pragmatist Imagination: Thinking About "Things in the Making."* Edited by Joan Ockman, 66-75. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

------. *The Democratic Paradox*. London: Verso, 2009.

Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Inoperative Community*. Edited by Peter Connor. Translated by Peter Connor et al. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
Naples, Nancy. *Feminism and Method: Ethnography, Discourse Analysis, and Activist Research*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
Nemerov, Alexander. "Seeing Ghosts: *The Turn of the Screw* and Art History" In *What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter,* edited by Michael Ann Holly and Marquard Smith, 13-32. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
Noor, Waleed. "Cosmic Bird Feeder Evaluation Forms." Photocopy, Cosmic Bird Feeder, Toronto, 2005.
Obrist, Hans Ulrich. *Interviews*. Volume 2. Milano: Charta, 2010.
O'Neill, Patrick and Mick Wilson, eds. *Curating and the Educational Turn*. London: Open Editions/de Appel, 2010.
O'Sullivan, Simon. *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
Ontario Arts Council. *Community Arts Workbook: Another Vital Link*. Toronto: Ontario Arts Council, 1998.
Pacific, Robin. "This is not a Benetton ad: The theory of community art." *MIX* 23, no. 3 (1998): 38-43.
Palmer, Laurie. "Dirt/*Flood*/Leaks" *High Performance* (Spring 1994): 55-57.
------."Instruments" *Advances in Art, Urban Futures* 4 (2004a): 133-142.
------. "Eating Dirt" paper from The Monongahela Conference (October 2004b) http://moncon.greenmuseum.org/papers/palmer1.html
------. "Flood" In *With Love From Haha: Essays and Notes on a Collective Art Practice,* edited by Wendy Jacob, Laurie Palmer, and John Ploof, 56-69. Chicago: White Walls, Inc., 2008.
Parr, Hester. "Mental Health, the Arts and Belonging" *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31, no. 2 (2006): 150-166.
Pearse, Harold. *From Drawing to Visual Culture: A History of Art Education in Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006.
Parti imaginaire. "Préface: À un ami" *Maitenant, il faut des armes*. Edited by Dominique Le Nuz, 9-28. Paris: La Fabrique, 2007.
Petryk, Bohdan. "Seeding Expertise: A study of Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder Programs. Research Summary Draft." Unpublished, 2005.
Purves, Ted, ed. *What We Want is Free: Generosity and Exchange in Recent Art*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005.
Pollock, Griselda and Rozsika Parker. *Old mistresses: Women, Art, and Ideology*. London: Routledge, 1981.
Pontbriand, Chantal. "L'idée de communauté" *Parachute* 100, no.1 (2000): 6-13.
Potts, Alex. "The Artwork, the Archive, and the Living Moment" In *What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter,* edited by Michael Ann Holly and Marquard Smith, 119-137. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
Rancière, Jacques. *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*. New York: Continuum, 2004.
Raunig, Gerald. *Art and Revolution: Transversal Activism in the Long Twentieth Century*. Translated by Aileen Derieg. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2007.

Reyes, Pedro. "The Manufacture of Surplus Realities" lecture. Banff Centre, Banff: May 12, 2001.

Richardson, Laurel. "Writing: A method of Inquiry." In *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* 3rd Edition, edited by Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, 923-948. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005.

Rogoff, Irit. "Production Lines." In *Team Spirit* edited by Susuan Sollins and Nina Casteli Sundell, 33-39. New York: Independent Curators Incorporated, 1990. http://collabarts.org/?p=69

------. "We - Mutualities, Collectivities, Participations" In *I Promise It's Political*, Museum Ludwig: Cologne, 2002.

Rosaldo, Renato. *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.

Rose, Gillian. "Performing Inoperative Community: The Space and Resistance of Some Community Art Projects." In *Geographies of Resistance*. Edited by Steve Pile and Michael Kieth, 184-202. London: Routledge, 1997.

Rose, Jacqueline. *Sexuality in the Field of Vision*. London: Verso, 2005.

Rosler, Martha "Take the Money and Run? Can Political and Socio-Critical Art 'Survive'?" In *What is Contemporary Art?* Edited by Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood and Anton Vidokle, 104-140. New York: Sternberg Press, 2010.

Rucker, Elizabeth. "Cosmic Bird Feeder Evaluation Forms." Photocopy, Cosmic Bird Feeder, Toronto, 2005.

Sandoval, Chela. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Sarlin, Paige. "Definition of Vulnerable Accumulation." Unpublished, 2011.

Sassen, Saskia. "Cities as Frontier Zones: Making Informal Politics." In *Thinking Worlds: The Moscow Conference on Philosophy, Politics, and Art*. Edited by Joseph Backstein, Daniel Birnbaum and Sven-Olov Wallenstein, 83-94. New York: Sternberg Press, 2008.

Saltz, Jerry. "A short history of Rirkrit Tiravanija" *Art in America* 84, Issue 2 (Feb, 1996): 82-7.

Scanlan, Joseph. "Sculpture Chicago's Culture in Action." *frieze* (fall 1993): 22–27.

Sholette, Gregory. "Interventionism and the Historical Uncanny, Or: Can There Be Revolutionary Art without the Revolution?" In *The Interventionists: User's Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life*. Edited by Nato Thompson and Gregory Sholette, 133-141. North Adams, Mass.: MASS MoCA, 2004.

------. *Dark Matter: Art and Politics in the Age of Enterprise Culture*. London: Pluto Press, 2011.

Simondon, Gilbert. "The Genesis of the Individual." Translated by Mark Cohen and Sanford Kwinter. In *Incorporations*, edited by Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, 296-319. New York: Zone, 1992.

------. *L'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information* Grenoble: Million, 2005.

Sisler, Rebecca. *Art for Enlightenment: A History of Art in Toronto Schools*. Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1993.

Smith, Christopher. "Being-maintained, the undead and life after MMT: Retracing the creation of monsters in (post-)MMT user narratives." Conference paper, 2011.

Smolik, Naomi. “Haha.” *Kunstforum* (November/December 1991): 394–395.
Snodgrass, Susan. “Culture in Action.” *Art Papers* (November/December 1993a): 7–11.
------. “Review From Chicago.” *Art in America* (July 1993b): 53-55.
Spinoza, Benedict de. *Ethics*. Translated by R.H.M. Elwes. New York: Prometheus Books, 1989.
Spiral Garden and Cosmic Bird Feeder. *Annual Report*. Toronto: Bloorview MacMillan Children’s Rehabilitation Center, 2004.
Spiral Garden. Annual Report. Toronto: Bloorview MacMillan Children’s Rehabilitation Centre, 1995.
Stake, Robert E. “Qualitative Case Studies” In *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* 3rd Edition, edited by Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, 443-463. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005.
Stanley, Liz. *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*. London: Routledge, 1990.
Stengers, Isabelle “Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices” *Cultural Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (March 2005): 183-196.
------. “History through the Middle: Between Macro and Mesopolitics” Inflexions, 3 (2009) http://www.senselab.ca/inflexions/volume_4/n3_stengers.html
Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.
Stivale, Charles. *Gilles Deleuze’s ABCs: The Folds of Friendship*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.
Stevens, Caroline Alexandra. *Making Art Matter: Narrating the Collaborative Process*. Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 2002.
Stimson, Blake and Gregory Sholette, eds. *Collectivism after modernism: the art of social imagination after 1945*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
Taylor, Charles. *Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
Temporary Services, eds. *Group Work*. New York: Printed Matter, Inc, 2007.
The Globe and Mail. “Etobicoke Community Arts Centre,” September 22, 1960.
Thompson, Nato, and Gregory Sholette, eds. *The Interventionists: Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004.
Tillman-Healy, Lisa. “Friendship as Method” *Qualitative Inquiry* 9, no. 5 (2003): 729-749.
Toronto Arts Council. *Creative City: Block by Block. Relationships, Relevance and Responsiveness. Discussions from Art at the Hub Symposium*. Toronto: Toronto Arts Council Foundation, 2008.
Trinh, Minh-ha. *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989.
Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 2006.
Tyler, Stephen. “Post-modern Ethnography: From Document of the Occult to Occult Document.” In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus, 122-140. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
Van Laar, Timothy and Leonard Diepeveen. *Active Sights: Art as Social Interaction*. New York: Mayfield/McGraw Hill, 1999.

Waldie, Paul. “Creditors Pull Plug on Inuit Film Company Behind Fast Runner.” *The Globe and Mail*. July 9, 2011.
Warner, Michael. *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.
Whitehead, Alfred North. *Process and reality: an essay in cosmology,* edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne. New York: Free Press, 1978.
Whitt, Laurie Anne and Jennifer Daryl Slack. “Communities, Environments and Cultural Studies” *Cultural Studies* 8, Issue 1 (1994): 5-31.
Williams, Raymond. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London : Fontana/Croom Helm, 1976.
Witoszek, Nina. “Friendship and Revolution in Poland: The Eros and Ethos of the Committee for Workers’ Defense (KOR).” In *Friendship in Politics*. Edited by Preston King and Graham Smith, 99-116. London: Routledge, 2007.
WochenKlausur “From the Object to the Concrete Intervention” http://www.wochenklausur.at/kunst.php?lang=en
Yashinsky, Dan “The Funder’s Tale” *The New Quarterly* (Winter 2006-7) http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2007/06/the_funders_tal.php
Yood, James. “Art at the Armory: Occupied Territory.” *Artforum* (December 1992): 98.
Young, Iris Marion. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
Yúdice, George. The Expediency of Culture: Uses of Culture in the Global Era. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.
Zinggl, Wolfgang and Pascal Jeanée. “The Art of Intervention.” In ~~*Senseless*~~*: Defying the Mechanisms of Disablement*. Edited by Wolfgang Temmel and Evelyn Kraus, 169-196. Vienna: Springer, 2004.
Zinggl, Wolfgang, ed. *WochenKlausur: Sociopolitical Activism in Art*. Vienna: Springer, 2001.