Chapter 12

Inside-Outside

Inside-Outside: The Efficaciousness of Art and Culture within Social Movements

Dr. Adam Scime is a young composer, performer, and educator, who has been praised as “a fantastic success” (CBC) and “Astounding, the musical result was remarkable” (icareifyoulisten.com). His work has received many awards including the 2015 Canadian Music Centre Toronto Emerging Composer Award, the Socan Young Composer Competition, the Karen Keiser Prize in Canadian Music, the Esprit Young Composer Competition, and first prize in the 2018 Land’s End Composer Competition. He was recently selected for the Ensemble contemporain de Montréal (ECM+) 2016 Generations Project during which his piece Liminal Pathways was toured across nine Canadian cities. Additionally, Scime’s music continues to be performed and commissioned by many renowned ensembles and soloists including Nouvelle Ensemble Moderne, The Esprit Orchestra, Array Music, The National Arts Centre Orchestra, The Thin Edge New Music Collective, The Hamilton Philharmonic, l’Orchestre de la Francophonie The Gryphon Trio, New Music Concerts, Soundstreams, The Bicycle Opera Project, Véronique Mathieu, Nadina Mackie Jackson, and Carla Huhtanen, among others. He recently received his doctorate from the University of Toronto.

Introduction

> It is because we act that we come to see, not before or after, but with and while we act. This is just one way of saying that it is impossible to express the meaning of the act in any but its own expression. What Beethoven said with his Ninth Symphony or Turner with his *Rough Sea With Wreckage* only that music or that painting itself reveals. (Martland 1970, 170)

Identifying an object as art — whether concrete or abstract — unweaves a particular chronology and invokes an ideal. When we contemplate the art experience, we envision a context through which our awareness is heightened amid universal expression. Inevitably being weighed against past canons, newly created art must satisfy a particular set of variables as mapped onto distinct tastes and genres.[1] But what of art created within the arena of social activism? Art created within social movements has the ability to mirror the attitudes and ambitions of contemporary society (Miles and Dawson 2012). Many activist works display cynicism and despondency, as often is the case with the gallery experience; however, others produce works of resistance and, in contrast, operate outside the gallery (Turner 2005). Whatever the case, is it necessary that creative impulses inspired alongside activist intentions undergo the tired and scrupulous criticisms typical of the so-called high-art[2] standard — a grossly exclusive and formalist ideology in its design? Further, when considering the importance and desire of social-activists to successfully project a politically charged message onto large groups, certain aesthetic questions reveal themselves concerning the efficacy of art activism. These questions are especially relevant if a particular work of activist art has been designed with fine art idioms, and readymade for the gallery or concert hall. That is, if social movements utilize fine art modes of expression, should these artworks be subjected to the rigorousness of fine art practices and critiques, and how should the art-world respond to such works — works that are often created without formal training?[3]

---

1 Harold Bloom writes extensively on this subject in his seminal book *The Anxiety of Influence* (1975). This text explores the notion that artists are inevitably hindered in their creative process by the ambiguous relationship maintained with the canon.

2 A distinction between high art (or fine art) — what this chapter defines as "inside art" — and other art efforts is made clear below.

Further, if the application of such works is strictly intended to ignite social awareness, should the artist herself be concerned with fine art considerations such as criticism and institutional acceptance?

Spanning the duration of a 2017 summer field school offered through the University of Victoria, the above considerations became unexpected centrepieces of discussion and debate. The field school brought together an international cohort of artists and academics in order to elicit varying perspectives on contemporary narratives pertaining to memory, xenophobia, and migration. Part of this unique initiative included the commissioning of several new musical works that were subsequently performed at various sites of trauma visited by the field school participants. The material content of each of these works was inspired by subject matter relevant to the field school and intended to provide an artist's interpretation of current global issues relating to migration and xenophobia. This chapter does not aim to comment on the efficacy of the works specifically created for the field school; instead, it is the general discussion that was ignited by these works that is of interest.

Through contemplating the topic of art[4] created for social-activist purposes, many fascinating discussions occurred as the field school unfolded. Many of the field school participants — students and mentors alike — struggled to compute why any particular type of art aiming to comment upon highly sensitive social issues should be deeply inaccessible (to use an admittedly regrettable pejorative) to its audience members. Imagine the surprise of all involved (especially the mentors of the project) as group discussions became dominated with the effectiveness of fine art as a voice for social activism as opposed to broader discussions surrounding the social issues pertinent to the course.

As a participant of this field school, and as an artist who encourages certain rigorous art practices in appropriate contexts, my initial impetus was to defend certain ways of art making at all costs. It was my strong belief that many of the participants were simply reacting to contemporary art the way many do without much prior interest or

3 Whether an artist possesses formal training or not is of course not requisite to making great art. Unfortunately the fine art-world is notorious for condemning works created within social movements (and similar contexts) as "outside art" — or art created outside recognized institutions — and therefore somehow inferior to art that is accepted inside institutional walls.

4 It should be noted that the composers commissioned to write pieces for the field school do not necessarily consider themselves to be activist artists, nor were the commissioned works necessarily created for social-activist purposes.

experience with the idiom: a combination of confusion and frustration for not being able to understand the inner workings of what is being heard or seen. I was convinced that they need only familiarize themselves with the expressive modes of contemporary art and that through exposure profound meaning would undoubtedly arise — any discussion of a work being subjectively good or bad notwithstanding. My initial defence was additionally fueled through a personal belief that an artist should never claim to possess the ability to predict and extract specific responses from an audience as it is impossible for any artist to gauge the intellectual capacity of any one audience member let alone any collective response to a work of art. More importantly, I stood firm upon the notion that an artist should never be told how to create, no matter the context.

It is often the case that after much deliberation and research one finds a third way — an undiscovered fissure between deep-rooted personal opinion and opposing perspective. Throughout the field school it was my opinion that fine art should never assume the role of tactical media: art rendered as an information pamphlet to be handed out at demonstrations. Conversely, many of the participants felt strongly that activist art should be accessible to the masses so that information might be more readily disseminated. In a way, we were both wrong in our extremes. As the field school came to a close and the passage of time allowed for some reflection, I began to reconsider the potential function of art within social-activist contexts.

While art-making activities regularly occur in a variety of contexts within social movements (singing, poster design, crafts, etc.), the purpose of this chapter is to examine social-movement art that satisfies two criteria: effective resource mobilization and artistic excellence. Through much serendipitous investigation, I encountered several compelling instances of activist-art efforts that fulfilled such a description. What follows is an examination of a few carefully selected examples from recent history that prove to be not only captivating artworks but also effective voices for a particular cause. I do not comment upon gallery — or concert hall-ready — activist art in this chapter as these practices provide only mere commentary on issues that may or may not resonate with an audience and are usually not mobilized as an effective resource within a particular social movement. Further, I do not claim to provide an exhaustive compendium of successful activist-art practices. Below is an analysis of select activist-art instances that managed to enact measurable change, empower individuals, and mobilize social-

activist organizations while also making substantial contributions to the fine art world. The evidence will show that when it comes to art activism, we must become divorced from the notion that art exists for its own sake. Although art making may be at times an activity of indulgence, there are impressive instances proving that art may bring about redirections and rearrangements of social constructs. Through access and participation, the members of a social movement can utilize art and culture as a resource for change. This type of art making has the power to eradicate harmful ideologies while introducing progressive models: the profound nature of the work rendered luminous by those willing to partake. The following examples confirm that art making within social movements has the potential to become a mobilized resource for a cause and to earn the attention and respect of the fine art world.

Get In and Get Out: Art Activism Removed from Institutions

> The world of art is an imposed world. Art imposes its world by giving a new life to old things in old environments. It builds up new universes of meaning, gives new patterns, moves what was previously concealed into unconcealment. (Martland 1970)

Social movements have received vast amounts of attention and sociological analysis over recent decades producing a matured and healthy field of study (Baumann 2001, 2006, 48). In many instances throughout the discourse (Chambon 2009; David and McCaughan 2007; Fine 1995; Roy 2010; Thompson 2015) the influence of art and culture within social movements is examined from a broad perspective. Despite some quality contributions (Adams 2002; Clay 2006; Forgács 2016; Jackson 2009; McCaughan 2006, 2015; Moravec 2012; Martin et al. 2016) there remains little written about the efficacious trajectory of specific artworks (or art movements) within social movements followed by any subsequent acceptance (or non-acceptance) within the art world. The efforts and contributions from artists to progressive social movements warrant increased attention from both leaders and scholars (McCaughan 2006). Much of the art created within repressed social movements is often accomplished in secret, in large groups of amateurs,

or in anonymous guerilla fashion, making the legitimation or documentation process difficult (Baumann 2006). Throughout the discourse, one encounters hopelessly unfortunate terms such as "insider art" and "outsider art" (Baumann 2006; DiMaggio and Fernández-Kelly 2010; Gaspar de Alba 1998; Leslie 2004; Levine and Levine 2011; Orange 1997). These terms were created by art dealers and critics with economic agendas to construct disturbing inequalities between art made for or permitted into museums and galleries as somehow superior to art created (most often by amateurs and individuals with disabilities) outside these institutions (Baumann 2001, 2006; Bürger 1984; Tekiner 2006). Art created within social movements is too often clumped into the "outsider art" category by default, suggesting it lacked the craft necessary to be taken seriously and, as a consequence, discarded into critical purgatory (Thompson 2015, 34).

Nevertheless, artists concerned with activism most often ignore established art-world prescriptions with respect to process and aesthetic; however, while most activist artists do not care for the established legitimation process (Thompson 2015; Weibel 2015), analysis must still occur on some level if we are to document activist-art efforts.[5] Baumann (2001) argues that studies of art worlds have previously relied on three basic components: a changing cultural opportunity space, the institutionalization of resources and practices, and a legitimating ideology. Legitimation renders the unfamiliar familiar, the disesteemed approved, and the unaccepted accepted. Throughout the legitimation process, a work of art may be repositioned from its intellectual or institutional point of origin. That is, what was once entertainment or experimentation may be rendered legitimate (whether as high art or otherwise) through some form of consensus. Such consensuses usually occur through the approval of various art-world gatekeepers who themselves possess the ability to sway the opinions of their followers. That said, consensus need not occur at the mass collective level. If the individual or the few may legitimate a work of art, the process may indeed yield a vast amount of cultural capital. The ability of a work of art, or an art movement, to influence or mobilize large groups must therefore depend on consensus metrics.

5 For the purposes of this chapter, activist art will be defined as art efforts created within social movements that apply fine art idioms. Although one could argue that there is much crossover, this study is not concerned with folk art activities (effective as they are) such as poster making, crafts, group song, collective poetry, etc.

Nevertheless, even in extreme cases, legitimation and consensus occur only locally, not globally. Therefore, activist art need only be legitimated by the members of a particular movement to be effective. As Fine (1995) reminds us in his essay "Public Narration and Group Culture," and as we shall see below, activist art can be used as a mobilizing force toward change where cultural discourse and performance often become resources for a particular movement and its members. In fact, some authors have gone so far as to suggest that a movement's cultural activities are more enduring and important than any political consideration or achievement (Roy 2010).

In addition to established systems of art legitimation, one must also consider established patterns of art criticism. As stated above, any market-driven legitimation process — reliant upon both intellectual and institutional systems — is certainly not applicable when attempting to codify art activism as a legitimate form of expression. Undoubtedly, we must also do away with formalist art criticism in such a context as the critic system too often functions to appropriate art for market interests — a process rendering art as a commodity and not a tool for social activism. When art criticism is limited to form alone, it inevitably obscures the relationship of art to social contexts and the socially critical implications of art (Tekiner 2006). In this field of criticism we segregate ourselves into the realm of so-called "art for art's sake": a formalist ideology that resorts to quantifying the physical (or perhaps plastic) qualities of an art object only for its colour, shape, size, or texture, etc., but certainly not for any ideational constructs such as culturally significant social issues embedded within the work of art. Formal art criticism exclusively defines artworks as material items having no significance other than aesthetic appeal (Tekiner 2006). Such an approach to art legitimation is dangerous on account of its leanings toward cultural hegemony, elitism, and exclusivity — attributes that have no place in the struggle for social justice. When considering the quality or legitimation of activist art, one can still apply a certain amount of critique, however; such criticisms must favour contextual approaches as a dominant feature, leaving formalist qualities as secondary, or perhaps even moot, elements. Art historian Howard Risatti reminds us that when considering the legitimation of activist artworks, we must aim to "understand how art functions socially, economically, and politically in relation to status and power and the construction of world views" (1988, 31). In other words, we as creators, spectators, and critics must not only focus on a narrow set of art processes; on the

contrary, we must consider all aspects, especially when social justice is part of the picture. One can therefore determine that the legitimation and observation of art activism must not in any way be complicit with market ideologies to be effective. Activist art functions outside established structures of power. If one is to create, observe, and mobilize this art as a resource for a cause, one must approach such activist-art activities from any established art-world legitimating or critical construct.

As a reminder, artists with social-activist creative impulses often have no desire to acquire public esteem and certainly have no use for institutions as a force of legitimating their art. Despite this fact, we may still learn from art legitimation behaviour as mapped onto social-movement formation and success. As Baumann (2006) reminds us, art worlds and cultural fields can be sites of collective action as much as any larger social-movement proper. It is for this reason that one may draw striking parallels between the art-legitimation process and the success of a given social movement: both contain elements of collective action and consensus. If we retain the notion that all art *is* collective action (from creation to consumption), then the creation and deployment of resources will determine the ability of an art-world to attain recognition (Baumann 2006). Resources within social movements may be physical or non-physical. Similarly, factors enabling change or recognition may be exogenous or endogenous. It is the ability of a collective to mobilize available resources that may determine success of a movement.

If we consider art to be both an intellectual and physical resource, where the inspiration and execution for that art is in direct alignment with the goals of a social movement, art then has the potential to become a profound tool for mobilization and change. It therefore may be stated that one should not be concerned with the accessibility of art with regard to aestheticism — where the art-viewing experience is a passive one — but instead consider how the members of a social movement may access the creation process themselves as active participants. This is what has become known as the excellence-access debate: certain controversial principles have typically been framed as opposing policy motivators around public arts funding and support (McNeely and Shockley 2006). Such a debate posits the obvious concern of what the cultural and political implications are when approaching the arts in terms of access as opposed to excellence. Consider the following:

> Art is a social construct. Art is socially constructed as a specialized cultural expression, conceptualized as fundamentally constituted from the inherent skills and innate talents of the artist. Moreover, it is precisely the social character of art and its interpretation relative to social value, significance, and power that frames it as a political issue and places it on the political agenda. It is against this backdrop that we address the meaning and effect of the excellence-access debate relative to democratic ideals and practice in the U.S. The influence of society on the arts and the role and influence of the arts in society are the fundamental issues in question, particularly in regard to the creation, evaluation, use, and distribution of the arts in society. (McNeely and Shockley 2006, 47)

Art functions within the public sphere; artists therefore have a unique access to this sphere. As a consequence, the reaction and interpretation of art occurs in a social context where a sequence of images (however abstract or concrete) connect to create symbolic and historic relevancies. If society at large has the ability to map certain meanings upon art in a general sense, we must infer that members of a particular social movement have the power to not only legitimate art created within, but also to recognize the values and advantages of mobilizing socio-political art resources. Making art is fundamentally about representation, signification, and sensorial perception. Understanding activist art is therefore directly relevant toward understanding the cultural politics of social change (McCaughan 2006).

A focus toward "excellence" in the arts historically has implicated an undesirable art-product commodity (Baumann 2006; Shusterman 1993). As a consequence, "excellence" and "access" as art constructs have been treated as separate worlds, only to the detriment of all involved. Perhaps an important reason the legitimation of activist art remains somewhat avoided in academic literature is that it posits conditions whereby a large group of people may appreciate the benefits of both "excellence" and "access" as symbiotic goals — a prospect that undoubtedly leaves many art world elitists aghast (Shusterman 1993). In common established art-world gatekeeping, elitists have insisted that increased access will threaten artistic excellence, the two constructs not being entirely compatible (Baumann 2006; Causton-Theoharis 2008; Cromwell 2005; McNeely and Shockley 2006; Shusterman 1993). That is, if we legitimate

all of society as artists there supposedly will be no way to gauge great works apart from endless seas of mediocrity. This of course is nonsense. In order to increase cultural capital and social awareness, access and excellence in the arts must be dealt with as interdependent processes that in turn will create highly inclusive environments. As Barber reminds us, the arts have the capacity to simultaneously "offer expression to the particular identities of communities and groups" *and* "to capture commonalities and universalities that tie communities and groups together into a national whole" (1997, 15). Arts education and access enables increased cultural capital and engenders participation and excellence. We must not render artists responsible for watering down art so that it may be easily consumed by large masses in activist contexts; instead, we must create wider access to art from the ground up — in the form of education, training, consumption, and especially participation — for all levels of society so that excellence becomes a natural by-product of the process, no matter the context. If access is expanded in this manner, social capital increases and art becomes a relevant cultural object. As a consequence, art then becomes available for mobilization within social-activist contexts on a deeper and more profound level compared to simply making posters or participating in group song. Art no longer is a means to an end but an end in and of itself, or perhaps both a means and an end (McNeely and Shockley 2006). Art and social cause become symbiotic elements: one is used to frame and inform the other, allowing the public to equip themselves with the tools necessary in order to consider not only what makes a work of art special from a formalist perspective, but also how that work of art may function as an active cultural apparatus. Those who benefit from art access transcend any aesthetic concern: arts education and participation become germane to accounts of social value and social-activist movements. As culture arises from the efforts of a movement, it becomes a resource for its members. For instance, consciousness-raising throughout the feminist movement was both a marker of, and a resource to, the women who participated — a process acting as a catalyst toward group solidarity (Clay 2006). When personal experiences are mapped onto culture politics, boundaries and messages are maintained as a narrative practice for a particular movement.

Photography, Visual Art, and Social-Movement Framing

> The art object itself is intrinsically related to the imposed world. It does not point to that imposed world, it participates in it. Not only does art bring about what was not, it brings about what could be without it. (Martland 1970)

Social-movement resources may be physical or non-physical. The nature with which certain ideas are framed within a collective (that is how they are rendered comprehensible and appealing) may assist with the inherent success of a movement. (Adams 2002; Benford and Snow 2000; Buechler 2011; Chesters and Welsh 2006; Johnston and Noakes 2005; Martin 2008; Rodgers 2018). When ideas are delicately framed, social-movement members are shown an ideal perspective and the path toward successfully transmitting the voice of a particular cause is revealed. In other words, framing ideas creates a model narrative for a movement so that identity is properly transmitted. History has shown that preconceived artistic ideologies forcibly implanted onto social-movement contexts — whether with good or bad intentions — are doomed to fail. This has been proven most notably by the Situationist International — assuredly one of the more famous instances of persistent post-war attempts to transcend art in a single revolutionary act (Rasmussen 2006). Part of the Situationist ideology was to obliterate art institutions such as museums, concert halls, or any established school of artistic thought in a bold attempt to reimagine the conception and function of art in society. Situationist scholars such as Guy Debord believed the historical avant-garde had regressed into a commodifiable object serving to feed the spectacle of consumer society (Debord and Knabb 2000). The once subversive power of art was thought to have eroded as art became fused with the spectacle: overproduction and consumption reigning high as society passively envisioned a world beyond their means. The Situationists rejected art institutions with "militant fervour, and argued that the isolated work of art no longer possessed critical potential" (Rasmussen 2006, 5). In the minds of the Situationists, art had to die and be reborn through revolutionary praxis. Situationist members attempted to "create a territory where art and politics were merged and transformed from specialized activities into

a kind of holistic mega-text in which historical rationality expressed itself" (David and McCaughan 2006, 13).

The Situationists found it impossible to free themselves from the already tested historic avant-garde experiments. Situationist artistic efforts unwittingly fell into an unavoidable avant-garde renaissance or neo-avant-garde system, resulting in a rather abrupt abandonment of any artistic activities for fear of simply repeating history. The Situationists were unable to re-establish the original intentions of the historical avant-garde: the negation of the freedom of art and the insertion of new art fused alongside revolutionary practices. As Peter Bürger (1984) explains, the neo-avant-garde was a farcical repetition of the heroic failure of the historical avant-garde. The Situationist art movement failed for two reasons: first, single artworks too closely represented historical avant-garde idioms and, second, attempts to completely subvert all art in order to reimagine art was impossible to locate in the minds of the collective as a successful framework for the movement. All Situationist art was eventually deemed suspect by its own members, and legitimation — whether by internal or external consensus — became impossible. To the horror of the Situationist collective, the movement itself began to appear as a work of art through its increasing attempts toward total art suppression (Rasmussen 2006). If an art movement is to be utilized as a resource within social-movement collectives, that art must successfully be legitimated and mobilized by its members as a utility for the cause. This art must be created and accepted from within, not imposed from above. Despite obvious failures, there are important examples of Situationist artworks that undoubtedly cleared the way for subsequent activist-art contexts of successful application. For example, the Situationist practices of *drifting* (*dérive*)[6] and *psychogeography* produced a decidedly Lefebvrian[7] understanding of public space whereby a relationship is constructed between the individual and the topography — an abstract concept designed to counter the limits of predetermined location (Hunter 2006). The Situationists were able to rewrite one's

6 A dérive may be understood as a wandering throughout the city, letting your desires guide your path as you roam from street to street. Situationist scholar Ken Knabb explains that, "[i]n a dérive, one or more persons during a certain period can drop their usual motives for movement and action, their relations, their work and leisure activities, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there" (Knabb 2006).

7 French Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre introduced concepts such the right to the city and production of social space through this critiques of everyday life. The concept of the "everyday" was central to Situationist ideology.

relationship to public space through a series of slogans displayed in the form of graffiti on Paris city walls. One particular slogan that is markedly "delicious in its duality" reads, "The Beach Is Under the Cobblestones" (Hunter 2006, 24). This slogan suggests that the user of public space constructs their own psychogeography in two ways: first the idea and function of the city being constructed by the individual and, second, by offering an invitation to public insurrection through reference to the revolutionary narrative of cobblestones traditionally being used as projectiles at barricades. For Simeon Hunter this slogan is both poetic gesture and direct action (Hunter 2006). This artwork was therefore a successful mobilization of formal and political resources, the framing of which resonated with activist members to a semantic effect.

The effectiveness of slogans as visual framework for a cause was further explored by artists such as Barbara Kruger, an artist who in the late 1970s began placing her own text upon existing photos in order to project a range of social commentaries. Kruger's slogans implicate the viewer so that they might question established societal norms as related to beauty, capitalism, and misogyny among other issues. In her 1986 work *We Don't Need Another Hero,* for example, a typical black-and-white photograph of a young girl pokes the muscles of a little boy — an image that clearly relates to the well-known 1942 posters by J. Howard Miller such as *We Can Do It!* Along with the implanted aforementioned text, the image perpetuates the gender stereotype that women have been trained to view men as equanimous beings of heartless power. Simply put, Kruger is reminding us that the past narrative of gender being mapped onto positions of power is seriously outdated. This contradicting binary between image and prose creates a compelling instance of intertextuality, or parody within pastiche, suggesting that another hero isn't needed because the Second World War is over. The postmodern (and often more specifically pop-art) technique of modifying existing textual fragments so that any original meaning is circumvented through intertextuality is known as bricolage or culture-jamming. This tactic attempts to expose methods of domination in mass society and foster progressive change. The culture-jamming technique has proven to be most effective when attempting to frame the ideas of social activism; however, Kruger's work is still an individual effort that, although usually displayed on public billboards and effective as a voice for a cause, does not involve the participation of numerous activist members. As we shall see below, it is through collective art processes

whereby a social movement may utilize artworks or art movements most effectively as a mobilized resource for a cause.

The Homeless Photography Project

When Emerson College in Boston and The Neighborhood Action Coalition[8] collaborated on a photography initiative, staggering results were displayed at an exhibition titled *Images from the Streets*. The participants in this project included unsheltered homeless individuals who were supplied with disposable cameras and asked to document significant images from their world. The photographs varied from rather innocuous images of parks to depictions of personal items to scenes of rejection and despondency. These images obliterate any societal narrative of the homeless experience as one can't help but admit the similarity to one's own predilection for photographing their surroundings. In what became known as the Homeless Photography Project, the resultant images provided tools for exploring and communicating the experiences and identities of homeless individuals who live at the margins of society bereft of an identity (Miller 2006). The captured images convey a shared and yet unique narrative of physical environment and a grounded identity within the homeless experience. This act of reconnecting knowledge, identity, and place creates a "powerful strategy for grounding individual lives in time and space, weaving threads of interconnectedness through events in the photographers' personal histories, and constructing a sense of belonging and community through the images that are created and shared" (Miller 2006).

Images from the Streets is an excellent example of creating access and participation for individuals to make art as a voice for a cause or movement. Looking beyond the fact that the project bestowed a much needed sense of self-worth for the homeless individuals, a greater context of communication was created to express a connection to a wider community and an understanding of the homeless experience. This project proves that a combination of so-called "insider" and

8 The Neighbourhood Action Coalition is a politically independent coalition of hyper-local neighbourhood councils, committed to combating oppression and supporting their neighbours where the state fails them through mutual aid, solidarity, and direct action ("Solidarity, Mutual Aid, Direct Action" 2018).

"outsider" art — initiated through larger institutions to create access to marginalized communities — can coexist in compelling ways and can be used as a resource for social change. In the particular case of *Images from the Streets,* the effects were not contained to the walls of the initial exhibition, as is the case with many museum-ready activists' artworks. On the contrary, the images have travelled to many other viewable contexts and several of the photographers have been invited to speak to community groups about the homeless experience. Therefore, this community art project has not only allowed individuals to become part of a social movement through participatory art access, but also has provided a wider concept of humanity to the homeless condition. Art access is provided as a conduit, individuals are empowered through participatory art-making processes, and a cultural identity is created for a larger movement: a cultural critical mass enabling social activism efficacy.

Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo

There are other notable instances of visual art being applied as a vehicle toward social change. Throughout the oppressive rule of the Argentinian military regime between 1976 and 1983, many human-rights abuses led to one of the most widely recognized examples of photography used to resist repression. In response to widespread abduction and disappearance, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo[9] led weekly marches in Buenos Aires to distribute photographs of kidnapped children. As Tandeciarz explains, this public display of mourning "interrupts the civilizing order of the city to generate awareness and acknowledgement of the Mothers' plight from even the most casual passers-by" (2006, 115). The images locate the separation between the living and the dead. By using images of kidnapped citizens — by attaching a face and a name — the Mothers have returned a sense of humanity to these individuals while at the same time creating awareness for a cause — a cause that others could be inspired to follow. The

9 The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo is an association of Argentine women whose children disappeared. Through their efforts, they created an unexpected oppositional force that exposed human-rights violations committed by the regime.

photographs were proof that the disappeared citizens existed and created an undeniable past-narrative reality.

Therefore, there are extreme benefits to using visual art in social-activist contexts for it creates a distinction between narrative memory and traumatic memory — a process where "affective experience is not simply referenced, but activated or staged in some sense" (Tanderciarz 2006, 135). This process allows photography and visual art to be used as a powerful device toward successful mobilization. Throughout the discourse on the matter, framing literature mainly focuses on speeches, writings, and statements — that is to say, nonverbal aspects are quite often overlooked. With the above evidence, it becomes clear that visual artworks and photography are crucial to movement framing, and that increasingly, "it is through images that political communication, the production of meaning, and the making of issues are accomplished" (Adams 2002, 24). These framing attributes are especially important for social movements within regions where public protest is forbidden.

The aforementioned examples of visual art and photography create a recall function for the collective consciousness. In these instances, art documents the root narrative of society; it is the gatekeeper of memory. Art then becomes a collective resource for a shared history. Images function as conduits for identity and allow for dialogue and reflection. The act of photographing one's world requires reflection on experiences, values, and identity to determine what one wishes to communicate, and which images will constitute that message. This product, the photograph, then continues the reflective process through acceptance or rejection as an apt representation, contextual narration, reception by its audience, and the dialogue it encourages. The photograph is a call for attention and a beacon for social-movement members. It captures a glimpse of unique subjectivity, of humanity, and of a collective history. The photograph has the power to "reveal and reflect, to create dialogue between individuals and social worlds" (Miller 2006, 127). Photography and visual art create meaningful catalysts for progressive social change insofar as they challenge hegemonic and ruptured ways of problematic societal contexts. Visual elements have the potential to empower the public with alternative ways of understanding past and current narratives of society. As Susan Sontag (2004) reminds us, simple narratives can help us to understand certain societal issues, but photographs go further — they haunt us.

The Arpilleras: Art as Social-Movement Symbol

The Pinochet regime in Chile, lasting from 1973-1990, ruled with severe amounts of oppression, implemented neoliberal economic policies, caused periodic bouts of widespread unemployment, and committed a long list of human-rights violations. Many citizens engaged in protest demanding a return to a democratic state. Many were severely punished for open protest against the state and, as a result, protest often occurred in secret contexts. A particularly fascinating instance occurred through the artisan weavings of the Vicaría de la Solidaridad (Vicriate of Solidarity), an organization set up through the Catholic Church. Through this organization, Shantytown women were provided with the opportunity to create *arpilleras* (small tapestries commonly displayed as household decorative items) in order to generate a small income. The women began to design covert messages embedded within various depictions as woven into the *arpilleras*. Such depictions revealed raids by soldiers, public beatings, and protests among other repressive activities. The *arpilleras* were smuggled into post offices containing sympathetic post workers. This created an opportunity for foreign buyers, such as NGOs and other human rights organizations, to learn of the atrocities occurring throughout Chile — atrocities the regime attempted to keep hidden from international eyes.

The creation of the *arpilleras* in Chile is an exceptional example of how art can be used as a framing device for social-movement purposes. In fact, it was the art object itself that singlehandedly created a context for social change as opposed to activist art being used alongside other resources — a remarkable case indeed. Through the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, the Shantytown women were provided with an opportunity to share ideas, create art objects, and mobilize these objects as a resource toward social change. Through these efforts, horrific oppression was communicated to the international community. Here we must remind ourselves that activist art need not be tailored to the masses. Because the *arpilleras* were such an effective framing object, it did not matter how many individuals observed the frame, but only that the frame was created and shared by only a few. Further, any legitimation concerns are immediately rendered moot considering the organic participatory nature of the creation process. In this instance, it was the people creating the art who possessed the ability to define its

boundaries as a collective. Undoubtedly, the *arpilleras* were effective because they operated on both an emotional and cognitive level and portrayed the situation in Chile with symbolic and literal contexts (Adams 2002). When international organizations observed the messages embedded within the *arpilleras*, an emotional connection was established through the striking visual aspects of the artwork — a connection that mere statistics cannot provide. This is an example of a phenomenon known as "belief amplification" as labelled in social movement analytics (Snow et al. 1986).

Further, sustaining hope within a social movement is essential in order to maintain a sense of morale. The Vicaría de la Solidaridad created access and an inclusive environment for disadvantaged women to create art — a context that eventually became an arts-driven social movement. Many Chileans could gain a sense of hope when international buyers purchased the *arpilleras*, a factor that undoubtedly maintained a determination to continue the struggle. Therefore, the *arpilleras* were crucial as a framing device, a mobilized resource, and created both individual and collective identity for a movement. It was because a work of art became imbued with all these factors that movement success and resistance efficacy was enhanced. Creating what Thompson (2015) calls "transversality," the shantytown women engaged with each other over a sustained period that deeply influenced their ability to create new forms of social awareness.

The Guerrilla Girls

With the advent of modern technology and the accompanying advertising machines, it is often necessary that individuals living in today's society require abrupt awakenings when it comes to the realities of social injustice present throughout the world. With the ironic effect of globalization setting us further apart, many artists feel it necessary to create striking public statements so as to cut through the noise of social media, advertising, and world news. One such group, known as the Guerrilla Girls, has managed to build a body of work that "combines a Derridean understanding of Masquerade as a means to represent an unspeakable truth" (Hunter 2006, 25). Through presenting their work in a highly visible context, such as demonstrations, protests, or places of high public density, the Guerrilla Girls' efforts are indistinguishable

from direct action when considering the highly politicized nature of the artistic subject matter. Forming in the mid-1980s, and with over fifty members, the Guerrilla Girls are self-described feminist activist artists claiming their anonymity — achieved by wearing gorilla masks and assuming pseudonyms of notable deceased female artists, which allows viewers to focus on particular social issues while avoiding any romanticization of the artist herself. The work of these artists combines fact-based humour with outlandish visual displays in order to expose gender and ethnic bias in addition to providing striking commentary on current narratives of corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture. The Guerrilla Girls undermine the idea of "a mainstream narrative by revealing the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair" while framing their work within an "intersectional feminism that fights discrimination and supports human rights for all people and all genders" (Guerilla Girls).

When observing a work such as *Guerilla Girls Code of Ethics for Art Museums* (1990), it becomes evident how the Guerilla Girls choose striking visual elements (often deployed as a subversive type of advertising in the form of posters) to provide effective social commentary on the distribution of art through institutions as related to privileged economic exchange, the environment, and gender equality issues. In this work, the Guerrilla Girls use identifiable iconography — a set of ten rules listed next to roman numerals and printed onto two stone-tablet images recalling the Old Testament. Using such a widely recognizable image infiltrates our sense of memory to suggest a narrative of outdated social constructs that are as antiquated and misguided as certain messages contained within the bible. Statements such as "Thou shalt not permit Corporations to launder their public images in Museums until they cleaneth up their Toxic Waste Dumps" and "Thy Corporate Benefactors who earn their income from products for Women and Artists of Color shall earmark their Museum donations for exhibits and acquisitions of art by those Groups" and "Thou shalt admit to the Public that words such as genius, masterpiece, priceless, seminal, potent, tough, gritty, and powerful are used solely to prop up the Myth and inflate the Market Value of White Male Artists" create humorous and perverse social commentaries. Much like the work of Kruger, this type of parody (as executed in the form of flyposting or wild-posting) is a guerrilla communication tactic designed to capitalize on a set of distinctive qualities and appropriates their characteristics to produce an imitation that not only mocks the original object, but also

re-contextualizes it for social-activist purposes. The Guerilla Girls seize power of visual advertising syntax in order to convey complex social-activist ideologies in a quick and ready manner. Other Guerilla Girls works using irony to reveal the double standards prevalent in the art-world include *We Sell White Bread* (1987)*; Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into The Met. Museum?* (1989)*;* and *The Advantages Of Being A Woman Artist* 1988). These works were publically displayed in the form of posters, advertisements on New York City busses, and peel-off stickers on gallery windows to successfully widen the focus of gender inequality and racial discrimination. This type of cultural expression, using humour as a critical tool of the empowered, has commonly been referred to as a "weapon of the weak" (Lo, Bettinger, and Fan 2006). The Guerilla Girls show that cynical and humorous art applications can facilitate political expression for the disempowered. For Du Bois (1989), humoristic elements used in this way do not distract us from important issues, but rather help us to better engage with the formulations and circulations of social commentary. With the combination of anonymity and cynical humour, the Guerilla Girls have created an opportunity to mock oppressors in highly visible contexts and get away with it.

This type of activist art has proven to set in motion a peculiar form of public engagement that "balances between self-restraint and provocation" and "facilitates a form of civic expression registered with criticisms of, and disbelief in, such participation" (Lo, Bettinger, and Fan 2006, 99-100). If one is "in on the joke," one feels the need to pass it along, and in the process become a conduit through which a voice for a cause is permeated toward willing members ready to align themselves with a particular activist ideology. The art in this case has successfully been deployed as a mobilized resource for a cause. The Guerilla Girls have given a voice to a movement in the form of partiipatory art that is both aesthetically pleasing from a critical perspective, but also appropriately designed as an approachable creative device. While the Situationists surprisingly distanced themselves from humoristic elements in their art, the Guerilla Girls nonetheless deploy similar artistic elements from a politico-aesthetic level as their art tactics are both theoretical and transformative (Grosenick 2001).

With the above examples of art activism, one can clearly see that through the right circumstances of participation, curiosity, urgency, and creation, social-movement success becomes a reality. As Thompson explains:

> What socially engaged art and the production of alternative infrastructure can offer are physical spaces of engagement over time. They are, in a sense, prolonged encounters of difference and affinity that transpire in the world and between people. As opposed to a political theory or critique, the encounters enact a range of transformations that exceed mere worlds. They are somatic. They are lived. These encounters come with feelings as well as ideas. This is a politics of doing that provides an entirely unique and powerful set of potentialities. (2015, 145)

Final Thoughts

Cultural flow is never one-sided, but more like a continuum of dispersal and return. Within social movements there exist artworks at the cutting edge of community and nation-state. This art differs from any avant-garde, or neo-avant-garde, in that it attempts to redefine the meaning of democracy through creative participation. These works most often utilize visual elements for their ability to make an immediate and lasting impact on the viewer. It has been shown that for the purposes of social-movement efficacy, participation and access to the arts can be a vital resource for change. This chapter is but an introduction to the possibilities and examples of current art activism occurring outside the gallery or concert hall. This field of study deserves continued attention and depth throughout social-movement discourse. There currently exists an exceeding amount of art activism that has been successfully mobilized as a resource for social movements. For example, one could examine Indonesian artists that, over the past decade, have produced a powerful body of artwork opposing human rights abuses (Turner 2005), or the Critical Art Ensemble who demonstrate the importance of moving laterally between fields to disrupt the circulation of ideas within a particular infrastructure (Thompson 2015), to name only two important examples out of a vast many more. Art activism must not be forced onto its members from above, but must involve collective action through a network of individuals, each working toward an idea of counter-hegemony. Social movements can use art to carefully frame their ideologies and communicate information about the movement in the form of a symbol. By studying art activism, we may

better understand how framing and resource mobilization function within a particular cause. In the art-activism discussion, we might come to understand how emotion and identity are important elements in social movements and what they look like on the ground (Adams 2002).

Participatory public art within social movements is an active environment where both artist and audience take action. This is a public project whereby civic participation is grounded in a particular social experience. Activist art conducted in this way gives individuals pause to reflect on what it means to participate in collective resistance. In this context, the idea of art as a separate sphere must be abolished. The excellence-access construct must be broken down and rebuilt as a unified theory whereby creation, hope, and determination are transmitted through the art-making experience. Art must not be created for the masses without the masses being privy to and included in the creative impetus in an organic and inclusive environment. This process fosters a bond between social-movement members and (as shown above) attracts new recruits to a cause despite large geographical impediments. Art activism provides a coherent identity and legitimate recognition for a cause. Lo, Bettinger, and Fan aptly describe activist art as the ability to "express the shared, yet contentious, understandings of objects and actions [making] it the vehicle of social movements" (2006, 78). Lastly, activist art is especially useful in that it keeps members active and committed to a movement once they have joined. As is evidenced in the examples above, art has the ability to give existence and meaning to repressed individuals. Art in this context creates a journey for legitimacy, a narrative for change, and amplifies belief. In the study of this art, it is not appropriate to simply focus on the content of art, but also on how people relate to one another while actually making art in a collective fashion. What this chapter shows is that when many individuals *do* art in social movements, that is — not just consuming it — powerful modes of movement success are realized. This art both embodies and realizes the nature of a cause where citizens may imagine alternative social and political realities. As shown above, even when art is nested within hegemonic contexts, it still has the power to effect material change. In closing, it is Sartre (1957) who reminds us that we are only our authentic selves when we choose freedom — the freedom to create meaning in our own lives. Further, when we choose freedom for ourselves, we additionally choose freedom for others. This ideology occurs at its most potent within the participatory cultural activities of social movements. When we choose to create safe spaces for others to make art and express themselves within

oppressive environments, we choose freedom for ourselves and for the collective: Art is that kind of activity that can change the world (Martland 1970).

References

Adams, Jacqueline. 2002 "Art in Social Movements: Shantytown Women's Protest in Pinochet's Chile." *Sociological Forum* 17 (1): 21–56. doi: 10.1023/A:10145894.

Barber, Benjamin R. 1997. "Serving Democracy by Serving the Arts and the Humanities Traditional Perspectives, Unique Modern Conditions." Prepared for the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. Washington, DC.

Baumann, Shyon. 2001. "Intellectualization and Art World Development: Film in the United States." *American Sociological Review* 66 (3): 404–26. doi: 10.2307/3088886.

———. 2006. "A General Theory of Artistic Legitimation: How Art Worlds Are Like Social Movements." *Poetics* 35 (1): 47–65. doi: 10.1016/j.poetic.2006.06.001.

Benford, Robert D., and David A. Snow. 2000. "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 611–39. http://www.jstor.org/stable/223459.

Bloom, Harold. 1975. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. London: Oxford University Press.

Buechler, Steven M. 2011. *Understanding Social Movements: Theories from the Classical Era to the Present*. London: Routledge.

Bürger, Peter. 1984. *Theory of the Avant-Garde.* Translated by Michael Shaw. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Causton-Theoharis, Julie, and Corrie Burdick. 2008. "Paraprofessionals: Gatekeepers of Authentic Art Production." *Studies in Art Education* 49 (3): 167–82. doi: 10.1080/00393541.2008.11518734.

Chambon, Adrienne. 2009. "What Can Art Do for Social Work?" *Canadian Social Work Review / Revue Canadienne De Service Social* 26 (2): 217–31. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41669914.

Chesters, Graeme, and Ian Welsh. 2006. *Complexity and Social Movements: Multitudes at the Edge of Chaos*. London: Routledge.

Clay, Andreana. 2006. "'All I Need Is One Mic': Mobilizing Youth for Social Change in the Post-Civil Rights Era." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 105–21. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768373.

Cromwell, Wendy. 2005. "Drawings: Restricted Access." *Art on Paper* 9 (6): 20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24556541.

David, Emmanuel A., and Edward J. McCaughan. 2006. "Editors' Introduction: Art, Power, and Social Change." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 1–4. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768365.

Debord, Guy, and Ken Knabb. 2000. *Society of the Spectacle*. London: Rebel Press.

DiMaggio, Paul, and María Patricia Fernández-Kelly. 2012. *Art in the Lives of Immigrant Communities in the United State*s. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. 1989. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Penguin Books.

Fine, Gary Alan. 1995. "Public Narration and Group Culture: Discerning Discourse in Social Movements." In *Social Movements and Culture,* edited by Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, 127–43. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Forgács, Éva. 2016. *Hungarian Art: Confrontation and Revival in the Modern Movement*. Los Angeles: Doppelhouse Press.

Grosenick, Uta. 2001. *Women Artists in the 20th and 21st Centuries.* New York: Taschen.

Gaspar de Alba, Alicia. 1998. *Chicano Art Inside/Outside the Master's House: Cultural Politics and the* CARA *Exhibition*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Guerilla Girls. "Our Story." Accessed 10 March 2018. https://www.guerrillagirls.com/our-story.

Hunter, Simeon. 2006. "Situating Situationism/Supporting Its Legacy: Reply to Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 16–28. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768367.

Jackson, Carlos Francisco. 2009. *Chicana and Chicano Art: ProtestArte.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Johnston, Hank, and John A. Noakes. 2005. *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Knabb, Ken. 2006. *Situationist International Anthology.* Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets.

Kruger, Barbara. *We Don't Need Another Hero*. 1986. Drawing. Accessed 5 January 2018. https://medium.com/@aaliacoovadia/postmodern-features-explained-through-we-dont-need-another-hero-by-barbara-kruger-b7a1668fc683.

Leslie, Fiona. 2004. "Inside Outside: Changing Attitudes Towards Architectural Models in the Museums at South Kensington." *Architectural History* 47: 159–200. doi: 10.1017/S0066622X0000174X.

Levine, Ellen G., and Stephen K. Levine. 2011. *Art in Action: Expressive Arts Therapy and Social Change*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Lo, Ming-cheng M., Christopher P. Bettinger, and Yun Fan. 2006. "Deploying Weapons of the Weak in Civil Society: Political Culture in Hong Kong and Taiwan." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 77–104. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768372.

Martin, Andrew W. 2008. "Resources for Success: Social Movements, Strategic Resource Allocation, and Union Organizing Outcomes." *Social Problems* 55 (4): 501–24. doi: 10.1525/sp.2008.55.4.501.

Martin, Keavy, Dylan Robinson, and David Garneau. 2016. *Arts of Engagement: Taking Aesthetic Action in and Beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.* Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Martland, T. R. 1970. "Austin, Art, and Anxiety." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. 29 (2): 169–74. doi: 10.2307/428597.

McCaughan, Edward J. 2006. "Notes on Mexican Art, Social Movements, and Anzaldúa's 'Conocimiento.'" *Social Justice* 33 (2): 153–64. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768376.

———. 2015. "Art, Identity, and Mexico's Gay Movement." *Social Justice* 42 (3/4): 89-103. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24871328.

McNeely, Connie L., and Gordon E. Shockley. 2006. "Deconstructing U.S. Arts Policy: A Dialectical Exposition of the Excellence-Access Debate." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 45–62. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768370.

Miles, Jennifer, and Laura Dawson. 2012. The Art of Social Justice. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 34: 2–8. http://www.jstor.org/stable/humjsocrel.34.2.

Miller, Cynthia J. 2006. "Images from the Streets: Art for Social Change from the Homelessness Photography Project." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 122–34. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768374.

Miller, J. Howard. 1942 *We Can Do It!.* Accessed 5 January 2018. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We_Can_Do_It!.

Moravec, Michelle. 2012. "Toward a History of Feminism, Art, and Social Movements in the United States." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 33 (2): 22–54. doi:10.5250/fronjwomestud.33.2.0022.

Orange, Mark. 1997. "Public Art: Working It Out." *Circa* 79: 20–23. doi: 10.2307/25563093.

Rasmussen, Mikkel Bolt. 2006. "Counterrevolution, the Spectacle, and the Situationist Avant-Garde." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 5–15. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768366.

Risatti, Howard. 1988. "Politics in Academe." *New Art Examiner* 16 (4): 30–34.

Rodgers, Kathleen. 2018. *Protest, Activism, and Social Movements*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Roy, William G. 2010. "How Social Movements Do Culture." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 23 (2/3): 85–98. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40981290.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. 1957. *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes. London: Methuen & Co Lt.

Shusterman, Richard. 1993. "Too Legit to Quit? Popular Art and Legitimation." *Iyyun: The Jerusalem Philosophical Quarterly* 42 (January): 215–24. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23350761.

Snow, David A., E. Burke Rochford, Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford. 1986. "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51 (4): 464–81. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2095581.

"Solidarity, Mutual Aid, Direct Action." 2018. *Neighbourhood Action Coalition*. Accessed 3 August 2019. https://www.neighborhoodaction.info.

Sontag, Susan. 2004. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador.

Tandeciarz, Silvia R. 2006. "Mnemonic Hauntings: Photography as Art of the Missing." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 135–52. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768375.

Tekiner, Deniz. 2006. "Formalist Art Criticism and the Politics of Meaning." *Social Justice* 33 (2): 31–44. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768369.

Thompson, Nato. 2015. *Seeing Power: Art and Activism in the 21st Century*. Brooklyn: Melville House.

Turner, Caroline. 2005. *Art and Social Change: Contemporary Art in Asia and the Pacific*. Canberra: Pandanus Books.

Weibel, Peter. 2015. *Global Activism: Art and Conflict in the 21st Century*. Karlsruhe: ZKM, Centre for Art and Media.