

SAYITASITIS

Over the past decade the contemporary art market has witnessed a significant global expansion through the proliferation of international exhibitions. Beyond the traditional sites for this activity (Western Europe and the United States of America in particular), the scope of this activity has expanded to now include former Eastern Bloc Countries, nations across the continents of Africa and Latin America as well as countries such as India and China. This has arguably precipitated greater opportunity for individuals/groups and institutions to routinely interact on not just a local or national level but now also on an international scale.

In London, the impact of the global economic transformation within the (art) world has coincided with what could be described as the privatisation of contemporary art. No longer (if ever at all) can an easy dichotomy be made between public and private sectors of the art world. Not least, the corporate influence in art today traverses both the public and private sectors, forming something resembling a *public-private partnership*.

Within this context, the notion of a politically-motivated artistic practice – one which is premised on the transformative powers of art – appears if not untenable then certainly more problematic. How can artists aspire to be political and not duplicitous in a market environment in which commodity is the primary basis for production? What strategies might artists/producers seek to adopt that actively acknowledge both the limitations and possibilities for a ‘critical’ practice? Can an embrace of market forces itself be a critical tool or strategy? Now that art institutions are seemingly embracing their own form of self-criticality, where does this leave the notion of an ‘outside’ and a critical art practice?

SPEAKERS

Tuesday 7 November 6.30pm

Peter Fend

Convenient Facts

Peter Fend was born early in the Cold War, just as the Korean War broke out, with a father doing research physics within the military-industrial complex. This means he had no hometown, but just an American Dream. The Dream extends back to before the White Man came, to before the Europeans dispersed their technology worldwide, with a resultant destruction of vast numbers and varieties of wild animals. The Dream is sung in 'Home on the Range'. Fend has supposed that Earth Art and related art-based movements like Constructivism, Conceptual Art and An-architecture can restore the planet's ecology, if industrially applied. He is now looking for countries where such ideas can be tested and realized. Credits include *Documenta*, the *Venice Biennale Aperto*, etc. and the museums Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz and the Smart Museum at the University of Chicago. The latest project, installed at the Kunstlerhof Rieseberg near Wolfsburg, Germany is titled *Beyond Petroleum /And Nuclear Too*.

Wednesday 8 November 6.30pm

Virginia Nimarkoh

In the Meantime

Virginia Nimarkoh is an artist living and working in London. Her practice incorporates photography, curating, writing and publishing. Her photographic work has shown at venues including, Threadwaxing Space, New York (2000), Platform Gallery, London (2002) and Waygood Gallery, Newcastle (2004). She co-curated the artists' bookwork, *The Holy Bible: Old Testament* by David Hammons (2002). In recent writing, she has explored artists' strategies and their socio-political impact. Her writing includes, *Image of Pain: Physicality in the Art of Donald Rodney*, in *Doublethink: Donald Rodney*, Autograph ABP (2003) and *Concrete Poetry: David Hammons*, in *Antipodes: Inside the White Cube*, White Cube Gallery (2003). She recently completed her PhD, *Shadowboxing: Governmentality, Performativity & Critique in Contemporary Art Practice*, at Goldsmiths College.

Thursday 9 November 6.30pm

John Jordan

Apocalyptic Anaesthesia – the question of art, aesthetics and direct action at the end of the world

John Jordan's work merges the imagination of art and the social engagement of politics. Co-director of social practice art group *Platform* (1987–1995), he went on to be a co-founder of the infamous cultural resistance collective *Reclaim the Streets* (1995–2000). He is interested in the role of artists dissolving into social movements, applying creativity directly to activism and social change. He has written and lectured extensively about the space between art and activism, and the global anti-capitalist movements of the last decade – including at the Museum of Contemporary Art Barcelona and the Tate Modern, London. In 2003, he co-edited the book *We Are Everywhere – the irresistible rise of global anti-capitalism*, published by Verso and now being translated in 7 languages. He has now gone Awol from CIRCA and is presently searching for ways to build lifeboats that will take us through the coming ecological collapse of civilisation.

Anthony Iles Moderator

Anthony Iles is a freelance writer and assistant editor at Mute magazine

Talks cost £2 on the door (including refreshments)

Unit 2 Gallery

Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media & Design
London Metropolitan University
Central House
59–63 Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7PF
+44 (0)20 7320 1970
+44 (0) 20 7320 1928
info@unit2.co.uk
www.unit2.co.uk
nearest tube: Aldgate East

www.sayitasitis.net

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KAHVE-SOCIETY

