A Gift of Time: The Contemporary Artist-in-Residency Programme

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Abstract

Contemporary artist residency programmes around the globe have proliferated since the early 1990s. Promoted through new online platforms such as Res Artis and TransArtists, they are now firmly embedded within artistic networking and discursive practices. Whereas residency programmes were originally valued for their role in enabling mobility and cultural exchange, this thesis addresses a countervailing tendency that identifies residencies as retreats, whose primary role is to shelter artists from external pressures and demands. Residency programmes frequently claim to provide artists with a 'gift of time', or even more commonly, to provide 'time and space.' This thesis identifies the concept of providing temporal-spatial withdrawal as a 'problem-idea' that courses through and also shapes residency programmes and discourses: in practice, the emphasis on withdrawal can occlude the real pressures and demands that residencies place on artists, the complexity of their entanglements within the wider art world and its institutions, and the extent to which artistic practices and residency practices are intertwined. The thesis is structured through an analysis of some of the main types of artist residencies, since these are also related to the key concepts that shape contemporary residency thinking. The first part examines residency programmes within museums, which are frequently used to reinscribe the concept of the museum as a patron and supporter of living artists. The second part focuses on retreat-type residencies, programmes that actively promote the 'gift of time' idea by offering to 'shelter' artists in rural and remote places. The final part addresses discourses on artistic labour, together with case studies of experimental residency models, in order to consider the different ways that residencies ameliorate, contribute to, and make visible, contemporary conditions for artistic working. One of the aims of the thesis is to challenge the tendency of residency programmes to disavow their own institutional character. This requires that we acknowledge the extensive infrastructure of contemporary residency programmes and the ways in which they actively shape contemporary artistic production.

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1 A Gift of Time

1.1 A Gift of Time

Image 1.1.

In 2009, I undertook a studio visit to a residency programme, visiting what was then called International Art Space Kellerberrin Australia (IASKA), located in a small Western Australian wheatbelt town, and encountering two Melbourne-based artists, Janet Burchill and Jennifer McCamley. I later wrote, with Darren Jorgensen (who had led the fieldtrip that took our Art History class two hours from Perth to Kelleberrin) that we had found the artists in some distress, 'haunted by the ghosts in the building and shocked at the racism of rural Australia.'[1] Their project that would later result from the residency was a neon sign titled *Inland Empire* (2008), a fitting transposition of the title of David Lynch's film about 'A Woman in Trouble' to be about a place the artists had encountered riven with unbroken colonialism, and where attempts to engage with local communities had been frustrated. To me, the artwork title also alluded to the scene of encounter in the studio-apartment that played host to both artist-residents and our group of visitors, to hear the tales of in-situ experience from the midst of a residency. This was a place that felt set apart from the rest of the town – a domestic space in which the artists could tell their tales of encounters 'outside' in a new place. Although artist-residencies have rarely been the subject of any comprehensive historicisation or theorisation, even then I associated them with a variety of trends that have been the subject of art-historical attention, namely, the rise of forms of artistic practice that are discursively concerned with the politics of place, considered in such paradigms as social engagement, community-based art,

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[1] Darren Jorgensen and Jessyca Hutchens, 'Fly In Fly Out Artists of Western Australia', *Artlink Magazine*, September 2015, accessed 25 May, 2021, https://www.artlink.com.au/articles/4360/fly-in-fly-out-artists-of-western-australia/.

site-specific art, post-studio practices, project-work, and also archival and historical work. Yet, present in this first encounter were the seeds of what I would come to understand as a counter-veiling tendency within residency discourses: to centre the retreat of the artist from their everyday life and work, but not necessarily to re-emerge as a figure of sustained pro-active engagement with a new place, but as one also *sheltered* in place.

Throughout research for this thesis, I would continue to encounter narratives of artists arriving at a site where they would continue to mediate their own withdrawal, potentially into the space of a live-work studio, and then to negotiate levels of engagement, encounter, and visibility, at once being almost intensively present within a new situation (one often doubly coded as strange and exotic as well as sheltering and nurturing) while also enacting forms of distance and withdrawal. And while this example of the artists-in-resident at IASKA, frustrated by attempts to enact a socially-engaged artwork during a residency, is by no means the norm, something about the artists 'inland empire' resonated with broader tendencies within residencies to centre ideas of the artist in retreat. Instead of creating a work with any pretence to the artists as having an involved transformative effect through being embedded within a community *Inland Empire* centred the artists partial retreat from engagement, and pointed towards their subjective experiences of the continued colonialism of the place they found themselves in.

In contrast to the way that residencies were once linked to the figure of the peripatetic artist nomad throughout the 1990s, a figure at first celebrated and then later subject to much critique, residencies are now increasingly affirming opportunities for artists to slow down, to break from everyday routines, and to retreat from the wider norms and pressures of the contemporary art world.[2] Their travel to new places is positioned less as a forward march

[2] For analysis and critique of the figure of the artist nomad see Carol Becker, 'The Romance of Nomadism: A Series of Reflections', *Art Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 2, (Summer 1999): 22–29, accessed 24 October 2021, https://doi.org/10.2307/777945; James Meyer, 'Nomads: Figures of Travel in Contemporary Art', in *Site-Specificity: The Ethnographic Turn*, ed. Alex Coles, London: Black Dog Publishing, London, 2000, 10–26; Marcus

towards the next engagement, public artwork, or project, and more as a potential reprieve from the pressures to produce and participate.

Artist residency programmes have spread across so many of the pathways opened up by accelerated global mobilities: they inhabit remote and isolated locations, virtual and digital spaces, and are attached to many different art institutions (biennales, exhibitions, galleries, and museums). While often small in size or attached to other institutions, they have risen to become a dominant institutional form in the contemporary art world, enabling forms of intercultural exchange, periods for artists to develop new work away from other obligations, and opening up a wide variety of situations and contexts for artists to utilise, respond to, encounter, or otherwise incorporate into their work. Residencies are situations of embeddedness: within cargo ships, research laboratories, national parks, zoos, and local government organisations. They are highly prized and competitive awards that can come with significant material support, and they are a vast network of small-scale programmes that are often informal, artist-run, and partly or wholly self-funded by residents.[3] They are idyllic situations that present escapist visions of the artist in retreat and they carve out pockets of time and space within far more time-pressured environments – from gas stations to the artist's own home. They are small private and individual opportunities to withdraw, long-term engagements with a particular site, community, or place, and intensive communities who temporarily live and work together or convene around a particular topic, project, or pedagogical process.

The way the residency network Res Artis defines residencies is reflective of their wide variety. Rather than a fixed definition they offer a series of core principles that can be quite

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Verhagen, 'Nomadism', *Art Monthly*, October, 2006, 7–10; Claudette Lauzon, 'Biennial Culture's Reluctant Nomads', *The Unmaking of Home in Contemporary Art*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 4–176; and Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass., London, England: MIT Press, 2004), E-book, 156–168. For a variety of positions see *Life Between Borders: The Nomadic Life of Curators and Artists*, ed. Steven Rand and Heather Felty (New York: apexart, 2013).

[3] This is partly based upon the definition for 'microresidencies' given by the MicroResidence Network, see 'Publications', MicroResidence Network, accessed 25 May, 2021, https://microresidence.net/publications/.

broad, including: 'Organised and sufficient time, space and resources'; 'Enablers of the creative process'; and 'Reflective of their lexical meaning as 'an act of dwelling in a place''.[4] In this thesis I do not adhere to any one definition of a residency and accept the self-identification of programmes which claim to be residencies. As I am concerned with the broad ways that residency thinking and practices have developed in recent years, I consider both well-established paradigmatic examples and also consider more experimental or even minimal cases, as these often reflect back in parodic or autocratical ways on the nature of residencies at large. For example, in Chapter Four: Residency Labour, I consider a number of examples of programmes that are largely made visible online (and indeed there are a wide range of virtual residencies, an area likely to grow further given the current pandemic) and which often take strange or ludic premises as the residency 'site' of inhabitation. At a minimum, however, residencies can nearly always be described as instantiating some kind of temporal-spatial boundaries around a context for artistic development. Residents performatively reside *somewhere* (even if that somewhere is virtual or even imaginative or conceptual) for a defined period of time, for the purposes of developing their artistic work or career – whether this be on a defined project or in a more general sense.

As artist residencies increasingly proliferated across the globe throughout the 1990s, they became a growing infrastructure of situations that could meet the needs of increasingly mobile project-based artists, providing places that could cater to desires to make site-responsive or socially engaged work, as well as to assist artists in expanding and maintaining vast and global professional networks.[5] A more recent shift in residency discourse, however, marks a partial turn back to an earlier image of residencies as primarily concerned with retreat, of providing artists with undisturbed time and space to focus on developing their ideas and

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[4] Res Artis, 'Definition of Arts Residencies', accessed 20 July 2021, https://resartis.org/global-network-arts-residency-centres/definition-arts-residencies/.

[5] Taru Elving and Irmeli Kokko link the rise of residencies in the 1990s to a rise in situated or site-bound art practices, see Taru Elving and Irmeli Kokko, 'Reclaiming Time and Space Introduction', in *Contemporary Artist Residencies: Reclaiming Time and Space*, eds. Taru Elfving and Pascal Gielen (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2019), 12–13.

work. In contrast to earlier optimism around artistic nomadism, which often saw artist mobility as an enabler of productive cultural exchange and art practice as able to mediate the local and global, residencies today often position themselves within discourse concerned with accelerated yet uneven global mobilities being navigated by precarious and time-pressured artists, as well as entangled within a nexus of politicised global urgencies including climate disaster, racial injustice, and global inequities.[6] Residencies now frequently present themselves as a temporary reprieve from such pressures, and as providing alternative modes of living and working as compared to the wider art world, as something like a counter-flow or temporary withdrawal within a picture of sped-up globalised production.

In their introduction to a recent edited volume on contemporary artist residencies, aptly titled *Contemporary Artists Residencies: Reclaiming Time and Space*, curator and writer Taru Elving and curator and educator Irmeli Kokko, both former directors of HIAP-Helsinki International Artist Programme, characterise the current position of residencies as one of paradox, as being both part of the machinery of an international art world that 'appears to be accelerating in its global circulation at a dizzying pace', while also having a role 'to counter this very acceleration as support structures for artistic development, offering time-space for creative processes and momentary retreats for critical reflection.'[7] While there is some discussion in the discourse on contemporary residencies on the challenges and complexities of

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[6] As examples of enthusiasm for the 'nomadic' trend and residencies, presentations on the topic of residencies and nomadism were delivered by Res Artis founding member Dr. Michael Haerdter at the 1996 Res Artis meeting in Dublin, and the 2005 Res Artis meeting in Berlin. See Michael Haerdter, 'Post-modern Nomadism', talk delivered at Res Artis meeting, Dublin, 1996, Res Artis, accessed 2 January 2018, https://resartis.org/res-artis-conferences/past-conferences/dublin-1996/; and Michael Haerdter, 'Residencies and Nomadism', excerpt of a talk delivered at the Res Artis meeting, Berlin, 2005, Res Artis, accessed 25 May, 2021, https://resartis.org/res-artis-conferences/past-conferences/berlin-2005/dr-michael-haerdter-residencies-and-nomadism/?preview=true. As will be discussed later in this thesis, turns towards topics such as the ecological costs of global mobility (see Chapter Three: The Residency as Retreat) and the figure of the artist precariat (see Chapter Four: Residency Labour) have marked a more critical stance towards accelerated global mobilities. Also note the recent Res Artis online conference, 'Residencies in Challenging Times', which addressed various political issues as they relate to residencies, including the effects of and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, racism and residencies 'in the time of Black Lives Matter', and 'The Environmental Dilemma'. 2 September – 14 October, 2020, webinair series, website documentation accessed 1 November, 2021, https://resartis.org/2020/08/27/residencies-in-challenging-times/.
[7] Elving and Kokko, 'Reclaiming Time and Space Introduction', 21.

providing such an alternative time-space away from acceleration, the positioning of residencies as generally claiming and practicing certain forms of *alternativity* is rarely examined.

The title of this thesis comes from a common phrase used to describe residencies as a 'gift of time'. The Roswell Artist-in-Residence Program, New Mexico, claims to be well known as the 'Gift of Time'; The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum residency programme, Boston, offers a 'gift of time spent with the Gardner's collection and archives'; and many other programmes use this phrase in their description or a 'gift of time and space.'[8] This is part of a wider language around time that is common throughout residency discourses, that discusses the temporalities and even 'chronopolitics' of artist-residencies.[9] The evocation of time is usually made to emphasise the role of residencies in providing support and hospitality to artists, while asking little in return, thereby offering residents a high degree of autonomy over how they spend their time. This notion of time, as relatively evacuated of pressures and demands, is positioned as ideal for the artistic process. While the idea of a 'gift of time' is part of a long-standing discourse within residencies that often leverages romantic tropes around the lone artist seeking solitude, withdrawal, and communion with nature, more recent forms of this discourse tend to focus more on the evacuation of certain kinds of institutional pressures, and on a language of artistic practice, process, research, and development.[10]

[8] The Roswell Artist-in-Residence Program, 'About', accessed 25 May 2021, https://rair.org/about-rair; Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 'Artists-in-Residence', accessed 25 May 2021, https://www.gardnermuseum.org/experience/contemporary-art/artists.

[9] Maria Hirvi-Ijäs and Irmeli Kokko reference Sarah Sharma's work on chronopolitics (the politics of time) in regard to residencies, calling them sites of 'mobilized geopolitics' and also 'chronopolitics'. While Sharma focuses on the way certain power structures are maintained through temporal practices, Hirvi-Ijäs and Kokko also acknowledge that residencies are often constructed as a 'gap in regular time', which in my view, leads to them often being positioned as largely evacuated of political considerations. Part of my aim with this thesis it to further interrogate what kind of chronopolitics residencies enact to create an illusory 'gap in regular time'. See Maria Hirvi-Ijäs and Irmeli Kokko, 'Grounding Artistic Development', in *Contemporary Artist Residencies: Reclaiming Time and Space*, 96. See also Sarah Sharma, *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2014).

[10] Regarding the use of more romantic tropes, Windhager and Mazza write how with residencies 'there still exists a set of utopian and idealistic key words that might stem from the escapism and ideologies of the 19th century artist communities. These designations are still valid and used to speak about residencies', in Laura Windhager and Lisa Mazza, 'Neither Working nor Unworking. On Residencies as Sites of Production,' *Open Systems*, Issue 4 (n.d.), 'Out of the Commodity', accessed 25 May 2021, http://www.openspace-zkp.org/2013/en/journal.php?j=4&t=26.

Jean-Baptiste Joly, the Director of Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, has described residencies as providing 'time without quality' which he describes as 'not being defined in advance to any defined task.'[11] Johan Pousette, Founding Director of the residency programmes at the Baltic Art Center (BAC), Gotland, writes how process-oriented residencies offer artists 'their own time to develop' while production-oriented residencies should ideally 'facilitate open-ended processes and – where needed – allow them to stretch out in time.'[12] For Pousette, even when the residency has a particular goal, the time on offer should be 'unconditional time.'[13] Helmut Batista, an artist and founder of the research residency programme, Capacete, has described the core premise of residencies as being to 'produce a 'different' time for production, materially or immaterially.'[14] Curator Nav Haq writes how in residencies:

> …the personal speed of art practice, along with the development of personal research methodologies, are given a privileged position, allowing for new things to happen. Contrary to the traditional display modes of art, which are in a sense 'frozen', we must acknowledge that making art is foremost a temporal process, the whole part psychological. So the opportunities for durational space and physical space to develop one's practice, particularly those that take away the daily pressures of one's socio-economic reality, possess an intrinsic value. In other, more prosaic words, you might say – the essence is of the time.[15]

Increasingly, the residencies' 'gift of time' is being linked to contemporary time-pressures and often associated with the conditions of artistic labour under neoliberalism. A number of reigning paradigms underpin such understandings. Firstly, that neoliberal ideology and post-Fordist conditions in many industrialised nations (primarily marked by shifts from material to immaterial forms of labour, production, and goods) have led to a blurring of life and work, as

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[11] John-Baptise Joly in conversation with Sienkiewicz-Nowacka, 'One Day, One Question', *Re-Tooling Residencies. A Closer Look at the Mobility of Art Professionals*, ed. Anna Ptak (Warsaw: CCA Ujazdowski Castle & A-I-R Laboratory, 2011), 226.
[12] Johan Pousette, 'Artists in Flux', *Re-Tooling Residencies*, 45.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Helmut Batista, 'Antropofuga', *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space*, 78.
[15] Nav Haq, 'Art Speed: The Time and Space of the International Residency,' in *25 Years – Hosting International Artists' Residencies in London* (London: Acme Studios, 2012), 21.

well as precarity (lower job security and predictability associated with flexible and contingent labour), and moreover that impulses once potentially oppositional to capitalism (to escape routine, to achieve autonomy, and to engage in creative work) have now become integrated into it.[16] Adding to this, is the notion that technological changes (in communication, information, and mobility) have led to a sense of time-space compression and contributed to significantly more accelerated lives.[17] The uptake of theories of post-Fordist labour within contemporary art, has seen the rise of the figure of the artist 'precariat' (a portmanteau of precarious and proletariat and used to denote a class of workers with a lack of job security), depicted as being at the vanguard of cultural shifts towards passionate, flexible work.[18] Greig de Peuter summaries the perceived tendencies of cultural worker 'precariats' within the 'creative economy' as:

> habituated to self-reliance; accepting a high level of risk; allergic to bureaucracy; juggling multiple short-term 'projects'; blurring the boundaries of work and non-work time; preternaturally adaptable; striving to be innovative and unique; producing monetary value from knowledge, symbols, or otherwise intangible resources; carefully branding the self; personally funding perpetual education upgrades; vigorously managing social networks within highly informal labour markets; performing work without a guarantee of compensation; assuming responsibility for maintaining a steady flow of paid work and, hence, on a job search without end; and willingness to put the passion for the work ahead of the size of the pay.[19]

This time-pressured artist flex-worker, moving from one opportunity to the next (or managing them simultaneously) is perhaps ambiguously positioned in regard to residencies – are artists in need of the sheltered time and space and support residencies purport to provide,

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[16] See generally Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2007); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA; London, England: Harvard University Press, 2001); and Paschal Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude: Global Art, Politics and Post-Fordism*, (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015). I engage in a more in-depth discussion on residencies and post-Fordist labour discourses in Chapter Four: Residency Work.

[17] See Anthony Elliott and John Urry, *Mobile Lives* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2010).

[18] For discussions of the artist precariat see generally Alison Bain and Heather McLean, 'The artist precariat', *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 6 (2013): 93–111, accessed 24 October 2021, https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rss020; Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt, 'In the social factory? Immaterial labour, precariousness, and cultural work'; and *Are You Working Too Much?: Post-Fordism, Precarity, and the Labor of Art*, eds. Julieta Aranda and Diedrich Diederichsen (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011).

[19] Greig de Peuter, 'Beyond the Model Worker: Surveying a Creative Precariat', *Culture Unbound*, Volume 6 (2014): 264, accessed 24 October 2021, https://doi.org/10.3384/cu.2000.1525.146263.

or are residencies yet another small flexible opportunity for them to self-manage? Are artists able to temporarily escape conditions of precarious project-work and hyperproduction through residencies that make few demands, or are they also being induced to accept only minimally supportive or even self-funded residency situations in order to carve out time to develop work?

A few commentators have critiqued residencies in regard to their alignment or entanglement within precarious post-Fordist working conditions and modes. Laura Windhager and Lisa Mazza have argued that in the residencies tendency to make processes of artistic production visible, they are linked to 'post-Fordist working conditions with their flexible working hours, immaterial labour, the dissolution of routinisation, and the drill to excessive individualisation.'[20] Hito Steyerl and Boris Buden associate residencies with immaterial forms of labour, writing that in residencies: 'The "product" which is expected is performative, not object-based: it implies the creation of relations, of communication, of networks. Thus "residency work" belongs to a type of affective and symbolic labour.'[21] Sebastjan Leban and Yasin Vasilev have both been critical of the predominance of residencies paid-for by artists.[22] Leban is particularly critical of the *Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencies* developed within the *European Agenda for Culture during 2011 – 2014* which he argues glosses over the precarious situation for artists and the reality of the residency market, in which few programmes cover all associated costs.[23] For the most part, however, residencies are increasingly absorbing discourses on contemporary artistic labour conditions and situating their offer of time as being attentive to the needs of precarious artists.

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[20] Laura Windhager and Lisa Mazza, 'Neither Working nor Unworking'.
[21] Hito Steyerl and Boris Buden, '"The Artist As Res(iden)t,",' B-Chronicles, n.d., accessed 14 April 2016, http://www.b-kronieken.be/index.php?type=publication_dieter&txt_id=95&lng=eng.
[22] Sebastjan Leban, 'Art in Residence: Precarity or Opportunity?', *Seismopolite Journal of Art and Politics*, Issue 18, n.d., accessed 25 May 2021, https://www.seismopolite.com/art-in-residency-precarity-or-opportunity; and Yasan Vasilev, 'Reimagining residencies post-pandemic', *Culture 360 ASEF*, 25 March 2021, accessed 25 May 2021, https://culture360.asef.org/magazine/reimagining-arts-residencies-post-pandemic/.
[23] Sebastjan Leban, 'Art in Residence: Precarity or Opportunity?'

This current discourse extends beyond the assertions of temporal difference already outlined, towards a more politicised stance of resistance. Indeed, the anthology *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space* explicitly situates its debates and discussions within the problems and demands of a neoliberal creative economy, and frequently positions residencies as attempting to counter its negative effects on the conditions for artistic practice.[24] In this edited volume, Florian Schneider describes residencies as having 'responded to the pragmatic necessities of managing the precarious existence of artists', providing a 'space-time' that allows 'participants to escape the existential pressure, to reframe, intensify, or refresh their own practice.'[25] Maria Hirvi-Ijäs and Irmeli Kokko acknowledge the framing of time in residencies as a 'gap in regular time' but further suggest that the 'artistic insistence on time gaps could be developed into a mode of cultural resistance', and that residencies can 'potentially be an alternative to the institutional and commercial structures of the art markets, mainly due to the fundamental ethics of open-ended time gaps and the implicit non expectation.'[26] Bojana Pavenska draws a parallel between residencies and the term Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ) coined by the anarchist writer Hakim Bey to describe the creation of temporary spaces that can elude hegemonic power structures.[27]

While there are many other ways that residencies assert their differences from other kinds of art institutions, these ideas around time provide something of a general bedrock for the way residencies define themselves: as a preferable, even a more ethical or resistant, alternative to the ways artists are usually expected to develop or make work. A blurb for a panel discussion on residencies hosted by Asia Art Archive asserts that 'Unlike exhibitions

[24] This is made clear in the blurb to *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space* which states that 'many residencies today actively search for more sustainable alternatives than the current neoliberal condition allows for artistic practices.'
[25] Florian Schneider, 'Artistic Intelligence and Foreign Agency. A proposal to Rethink Residency in Relation to Artistic Research', *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space,* 66.
[26] Maria Hirvi-Ijäs and Irmeli Kokko, 'Grounding Artistic Development', 96 and 98.
[27] Bojana Pavenska, 'From Community Building to Digital Presence', *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space,* 54.

and speaking engagements, the artist residency is seen as less a part of the endless cycle of production than a chance for artists to take pause and establish more lasting bonds with the communities among which they are temporarily situated.'[28] But how might residencies also be part of normative cycles of production, tied to the art world's valorisation of context-specific and project-based working modes? Throughout this thesis, I consider the ways that residency programmes and discourses perform, practice, and navigate this central claim of providing artists with freer, less constrained time to develop their practice, while also considering the conditions and norms around practice that residencies also elicit, questioning this stance of alternativity away from the rest of the artworld.

A Gift

Although less examined than notions of temporality in this thesis, a crucial part of this alternative framing by residencies is linked to the notion of offering artists, specifically, 'a gift' of time. It is through this language that residencies attempt to position themselves away from market-driven, institutional, or government-led cultural prerogatives and frame their aims and values as more altruistically driven. Of some relevance to the residencies' notion of a 'gift of time' is the theorisation of gift-giving as inherently linked to temporality. In *Given Time*, Derrida argues that a genuine gift cannot accrue any benefit in the giving, rendering an authentic gift almost an impossibility (or more precisely it is the impossible, it 'gives itself to be thought of as the impossible').[29] For Derrida, gift-giving invariably begins a process of reciprocity that then undermines it, contradicting Marcel Mauss' famous notion of the gift as being marked by a certainty of reciprocation, which for Derrida, does not adequately deal with

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[28] Asia Art Archive, 'Faraway So Close: Artist Residencies Outside the Circuit', accessed 25 May, 2021, https://aaa.org.hk/en/programmes/programmes/faraway-so-close-artist-residencies-outside-the-circuit?utm_campaign=default&utm_content=link&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ApsisPro.

[29] Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press: 1992), 7.

the contradiction between gift and exchange.[30] For Mauss, however, it is enough to differentiate between the two that reciprocity for a gift is delayed and there is an interval of time between giving and restitution.[31] Derrida's interpretation of this, is that:

> The gift is not a gift, the gift only gives to the extent it gives time. The difference between a gift and every other operation of pure and simple exchange is that the gift gives time. There where there is gift, there is time.[32]

The way 'gift of time' is used by residencies, however, is not the interval between gift and repayment, but time itself. They purport to gift a specific period of time on the presumption that it is difficult for artists to take this time for themselves. But as time itself cannot be gifted as a thing (in Derrida's words: 'as time does not belong to anyone as such, one can no more take it, itself, than give it'), it is more accurate to speak of residencies gifting more material forms of care and support that are temporal (within a specific period) such that artists can purportedly spend their time more freely.[33] In some cases, the repayment of the 'gift' might even be thought to be concurrent with the artists' time in residence, as the artist's presence and their activities in residence may be promoted and utilised by a programme. In such cases, where this visibility is quite immediate, perhaps the time given lacks Derrida's sense of a delayed repayment, and residencies might be better thought of as an exchange rather than a gift. Or, without going too deeply into these theoretical accounts of the gift, residencies can be thought to be caught up in the complexity that attempted gift-giving entails, eliciting expectations of reciprocity and entailing forms of exchange, while a true gift of 'time' remains elusive and largely rhetorical.

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[30] Ibid., 24. Also see Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. W. D. Halls (London: Routledge, 1990).
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., 41.
[33] Ibid., 3.

In an account that more specifically addresses gift-giving in an art context, Lewis Hyde's book *The Gift*, explores both creativity as a gift, and artworks as existing across both market and gift economies.[34] Of most relevance to residencies in Hyde's theory, is a link he draws between the idea of art (and artistic imagination) as a gift; and the conditions under which these gifts can be maintained and exchanged. He asks: 'How, if art is essentially a gift, is the artist to survive in a society dominated by the market?'[35] Of relevance to residencies, is Hyde's notion of the 'gift sphere.' He writes:

> the artist who wishes neither to lose his gift nor to starve his belly reserves a protected gift-sphere in which the work is created, but once the work is made he allows himself some contact with the market.[36]

Residencies often position themselves as such a place of shelter from the dictates of the market, taking care of an artist's basic financial needs so that their output need not be too heavily tied to wider trends and demands. According to Hyde, artists can support their own 'gift sphere' (a space for work de-coupled from the market) by providing for themselves with non-art related wage work, but such an arrangement might leave little time for artistic work.[37] For Hyde, the more ideal situation is one of patronage, where 'the artist's livelihood seems to lie wholly within the gift-sphere', and which Hyde says is 'not a wage or a fee for service but a gift given in recognition of the artists' own.'[38] Interestingly, residencies tend not to use the term patronage, preferring the language of the gift, arguably because they wish to even further distance themselves from any notions of making demands on an artist's time. Despite Hyde's contention that patronage is not a fee for service, history is filled with examples of particular demands and requirements made by patrons on the artists they support. The third way Hyde identifies for artists to support themselves is more directly through the market, a situation that

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[34] Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: creativity and the artist in the modern world*, (New York: Vintage, 2007).
[35] Ibid., 358.
[36] Ibid., 358-9.
[37] Ibid., 359.
[38] Ibid.

for Hyde means extra measures and care needs to be taken by the artist to create a 'protected gift-sphere' to avoid undue influence on their practice.[39] A major problem with these sharply drawn categories is that there are few artists whose support mechanisms neatly belong neatly to any of them, with most artists needing to combine forms of wage work, grants and residencies, and market sales to survive. Moreover, given the complexity of how artists receive both support and adapt to different forms of opportunity, the ability to clearly identify the pressures and demands of the market or of institutions or patrons, and their effect on artistic production from other spheres of life and livelihood is next to impossible. Furthermore, in an era of cognitive capitalism, much of what the market valorizes (such as the performance of ideas and displays of process), are practices things might once have thought to have belonged more to sheltered periods of retreat from the market. Yet many residencies share Hyde's idealism over the ability for such a protected sphere to exist, although, it is perhaps in their very erection of certain barriers to perceived extraneous imposition (including extreme forms of isolated retreat discussed in Chapter Three), that evidence a knowledge of the difficulty of this task. Rather than offering a pure 'gift of time' a major argument I make in this thesis is that residencies provide various forms of place-based and spatial solutions to the problem of time – providing the situational and material infrastructure for artists to try and carve out pockets of time for themselves. These situations are not evacuated of pressures and elicitations for forms of artistic performance and presence, indeed, in general, an artist's time will be somehow capitalised upon, promoted, or otherwise made visible as part of the arrangement. Residencies give time, and so do artists. And whether this best fits under the theoretical frame of the gift or is another form of exchange, the major point is that residencies are not evacuated of pressures, norms, obligations and expected performances. One might say

[39] Ibid., 360.

that the 'gift-sphere' in a residency becomes an inherently performative place that is never entirely separable from wider norms, trends, and pressures.

A 'Gift of Time' as a Problem-Idea

In her book *One Place After Another,* Miwon Kwon historicises and theorises site-specificity, 'not exclusively as an artistic genre but as a problem-idea, as a peculiar cipher of art and spatial politics.'[40] The notion of a problem-idea is drawn from Willaim Pietz' notion of the fetish as both an idea and a problem for theory, as a 'discursively promiscuous and theoretically suggestive' concept.[41] Although Kwon's use of this concept is little developed in her book, it seems crucial to me that her mode of theorising site-specificity is undertaken, not through analysis of site-specific art *within* particular socio-political contexts, but as a form of 'cultural mediation' *of* wider processes as they relate to urban spatial organization.[42] Part of this mediation, then, is produced by site-specificity's nature as a shifty, discursive problem, often marshalled to signal particular progressive politics. Another point of reference, is anthropologist Marilyn Strathern's intellectual history of the anglophone concept of 'the relation', where Strathern considers how the term acts as 'an attractor: a term that engages other terms, a concept in a field of concepts, an idea that draws in values and disseminates feelings, a substantive from which adjectives (relational) and abstractions (relationality) can be made exactly as though everyone knew what was meant.'[43] These approaches, both variants of intellectual history, provide something close to how I attempt to examine residencies through the vehicles of key concepts and related terms. These are often terms used to denote *types* of residencies, but they can also be understood as forms of sticky discursive problems that form

[40] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 15.
[41] William Pietz, 'The Problem of the Fetish, I', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 9 (1985): 5.
[42] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 3.
[43] Marilyn Strathern, *Relations: An Anthropological Account* (Durham; London: Duke University Press Books, 2020), E-book, 2.

part of the nexus of cultural mediation that residencies perform. The concept of a 'gift of time' – attracting notions of spatial-temporal removal and artistic autonomy – figures as an overarching governing problematic to which other ideas are often put to work.

In Chapter Two, I explore how museum-residencies have developed in relation to both trends in contemporary art programming in museums and the residency phenomenon and can be seen to uniquely mediate ideas about the artist and the museum through the form of residencies. Here, the 'gift of time' idea often signals artistic autonomy and access to the more private spaces of the museum, while ideas around special access and domesticity flow through residency projects and their framing. In Chapter Three, I argue that the idea of retreat is deployed as a typological categorisation for residency programmes (generally to describe rural or remote programs that most strongly emphasise the 'gift of time' idea) but can also be thought to refer to temporal-spatial practices within residencies and is also an idea discursively addressed and even critiqued by programmes and artists. In Chapter Three, I consider more experimental residencies in far less idyllic circumstances, that provide something of a window over the scene of artistic labour, showing artists striving to carve out time through the operation of a residency. Here, the residency 'gift of time' becomes even more starkly revealed to be something more akin to greater self-management, achieved through the structure of a residency. In all of these cases notions of artistic withdrawal, retreat and autonomy, mediated through the temporal-spatial organisation of the residency, are key tropes. Across a vast spectrum of residency situations, a central notion is that residencies provide a special time-space in which to develop work, even when this is almost performatively inhabited as a kind of fantasy or wielded as a device for better self-management.

The difficulty in writing this thesis is ever in the process of trying to understand sticky ideas and all that they attract, and my own use of these concepts to marshal, gather and frame residencies as the primary object of study (and not the ideas themselves). This is complicated by high degrees of discursive production within residencies, where trending discourses and

theories work their way through curatorial and artistic projects, often collapsing easy distinctions between when a topic is utilised in a reflexive autocritical way (as a mode of understanding and reflecting on residencies), and when it is tracking through residency practices as a popular topic of artistic research, site of intervention, or thematic of discursive production. For example, in my analysis of discourses around artistic labour, I consider both how such theories can be applied to residencies and how they flow through them, operations that are not neatly separable. Moreover, I also make use of artistic and curatorial projects as case studies to undertake my own expository thinking around residencies. The gathering device remains the potency of particular ideas. The primacy of thinking residencies as temporal-spatial removal, and secondarily, the expediency of concepts that expound upon this idea: the rightness of fit between the residencies' 'gift of time' and the use of semi-private museal spaces and ideas of the artist and the museum, of idyllic rural and remote space and ideas of retreat, and finally, the mediation of temporal-spatial boundaries within far more time-pressured situations, understood through the figure of the artist precariat.

In a different analytical mode than an intellectual history of terms, in his examination of the way culture has become expediently used as a resource in a more globalised world, George Yúdice develops the concept of 'performative force', meaning 'the conditionings, elicitations, and pressures exerted by the multidimensional field of social and institutional relations.'[44] Yúdice argues that performativity theory (namely following Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Judith Butler) has been 'based on the assumption that the maintenance of the status quo…is achieved by repeatedly performing norms', and has also been focused on the way identity-positions marginalized by such norms are both excluded or resist them. As a counter-point to this tendency, Yúdice is interested in how alternative positions and non-normative identities have their own performative forces, developed through histories of being

[44] George Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture: Uses of Culture in the Global Era* (Durham; London: Duke University Press Books, 2003), 39.

oppositional to a perceived norm or hegemonic force.[45] One of his early key examples is the case of identity politics in the United States, and the way people from minority backgrounds are often both enjoined to perform their resistant or alternative identities, but *also* to 'imagine their action within a fantasy structure.'[46] That is to say, subjects might knowingly adopt the scripts of alternative identity-position that are sanctified by particular institutions, such as universities, and also know themselves to be inhabiting a structure that deliberately plays out such scripts.[47] Yúdice also uses the example of contemporary performance art pieces, where the objective of the work is to challenge an audience's normative assumptions, but in doing so also assumes a conformist identity for the audience, enjoining them to perform such an identity within the context set-up by the work, something they may even frequently do knowingly or ironically.[48]

These arguments have been instructive in helping me to think through the complex ways that residencies often critically engage with certain topics but seem to remain wedded to a kind fantasy of escape and time-out. Indeed, many artist projects, curatorial frameworks and other modes of discursive production within residency programmes directly address ideas of retreat and withdrawal in knowing, performative, ironic, and critical ways that acknowledge the fantasy of ever achieving any pure form of it. For example, Nida Art Colony has often directly confronted its idyllic location as a discursive topic, for example, they ran a series of events and published a book with the ECAV – Ecole Cantonale d'Art du Valais in Switzerland on the topic of 'critical tourism' exploring the residencies' role in an age of 'destination tourism.'[49] Or many of the residencies at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (discussed in Chapter Two) have very deliberately leaned into the situation of responding to

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[45] Ibid., 47–48.
[46] Ibid., 49.
[47] Ibid., 48–50.
[48] Ibid., 50–51.
[49] *Tourists like Us: Critical Tourism and Contemporary Art*, edited by Federica Martini and Vytautas Michelkevičius (Vilnius; Sierre: Vilnius Academy of Arts Press; ECAV, 2013).

the museum's history and the 'ghost' of its deceased founder Isabella Gardner, re-creating certain ambiances of the past that are positioned as a result of the resident's embedded immersion in the museum and playing out a script that assumes a museums are 'static' and can be 'activated'. Residencies thus seem to elicit forms of performatively inhabiting a situation, responding to and reflecting on it, that accept, reinforce, or perform within a fantasy structure of temporal-spatial withdrawal, within a sanctified 'gift of time' being provided to artists through their removal from their 'everyday lives.'

Such projects and programmes fit with Elving and Kokko's description of residencies as 'a plurality of situated practices and reclaiming operations' and that reclaiming (time and space) can be 'active envisioning, sensing and making sense, and imagining into being.'[50] But such critical approaches, while often acknowledging retreat and alternative time-spaces as a kind of utopic fantasy, can elide some of the wider assumptions at play, leaving unchallenged ideas, for example, that forms of retreat through residency programmes are in direct opposition to an art world that is vastly accelerated; that artists generally have regular 'everyday lives' that can be directly contrasted to their lives in residencies; or that the open-ended, processual, inquiring and experimental modes of developing work often promoted by residencies are very different from the kinds of pressures and demands placed by the wider artworld for artistic products, services, and professional performance. This thesis asks, if residencies are positioning themselves through a lens of *alternativity*, what kinds of normative practices and discourses maintain this alternative posturing, and how do these also converge with broader tendencies they set themselves apart from? As the artists withdraws into the private spaces of a museum, a remote forest cabin, or inhabits an experimental structure for a residency, they also tend to become present in other ways: posting on social media, engaging audiences through an open studio, or embedding within a new community of peers.

[50] Elving and Kokko, 'Reclaiming Time and Space Introduction', 21.

Residency narratives, documentation and displays of process, and new relations, are all tied into wider forms of professional performance and productivity.

There are three broad areas I consider in this thesis, that complicate the performative alternativity of artist-residencies. Firstly, emphasizing the 'non-expectation' of the institutional arrangement (that artists are under no obligation to make work) can downplay the institutional agendas and place-based cultural capital that artist residencies generate to remain viable. These may be less based around the production of final artworks, interventions, or projects, but can still leverage the presence of artists in places to engage particular audiences, and align agendas with regeneration, tourism and heritage prerogatives, for example there is a pervasive trend of residencies inhabiting underutilised buildings or highlighting the use-value of particular resources such as archives. Moreover, there are many ways that residencies engender outputs. Indeed, it is difficult to entirely separate residencies' development focus from the kinds of demands for professional performance and production inherent to the wider contemporary art world, where open-ended, project-based working is common, which in turn engenders less clear distinction between finalised artworks and process-based outputs, and where social and working life is considerably blurred. Moreover, when projects do result from residencies (or coincide with them), residency periods and practices can operate as part of an authenticating chain of signification around particular artworks and projects, for example, that work has emerged from an embedded process of inquiry and sustained engagement. Thus, residencies as periods of development that are purported to be mostly private are inextricably related to demands to make the processual visible, to authenticate projects through research-based and place-based processes, and to engender direct engagements between working artists and audiences, even in the absence of final artworks.

Furthermore, practicing forms of temporal-spatial withdrawal and 'time-out' are increasingly considered a normative part of creative work and indeed neoliberal working modes in general, particularly regarding the stop-start patterns of freelance work and the need

for finely tuned self-management.[51] Overall, if one considers that the conditions for creative working generally are often marked by adapting and responding to different situations and managing time across them, rather than characterised by pure acceleration, residencies can look less like alternative time-spaces (even projective, imaginative ones) and appear more deeply enmeshed within an arts ecosystem that already valorises many of the same modes and practices. This isn't to completely dissolve residencies within a diffuse field of situations that artists work within, nor to dismiss their claims of difference, but to consider how performances of difference operate within wider contexts, and to consider how the performance of retreating is part of the 'cultural expediency' of artist-residencies.[52]

1.2 The Right Place

Space and Place

Alongside frequent claims around time, which usually emphasises the way time has been evacuated of certain demands and pressures, residencies also offer artists space and construct place-based identities that often emphasise uniqueness, novelty, and specificity. In traditional residencies, the space on offer is usually both a studio and a place to live that is considered 'away' from an artist's home or usual working situation. Embedded type residencies, where artists have some form of placement within an organisation, may be more like a workplace that the resident attends regularly. Finally, there are a plethora of more experimental models, where the 'space' offered is more like a temporary platform through which the artist's process is made visible, such as artists regularly making work in a studio open to the public, or various

[51] Gill and Pratt describe the normative conditions of cultural work as 'a preponderance of temporary, intermittent and precarious jobs; long hours and bulimic patterns of working', see Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt, 'In the social factory? Immaterial labour, precariousness, and cultural work', *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 25 (2008): 1–30, accessed 24 October 2021, https://doi.org/10.1177/02632764080977947.

[52] Yúdice describes cultural expediency as the ways culture is utilised as a resource in various industries, such as heritage, tourism and entertainment industries, as well as increasingly mobilised globally. Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture*, 3–4.

kinds of digital or virtual residencies where artists regularly post to an online platform.[53] In such instances, displays of process become the expected product.

In contrast to descriptions of the relatively 'free' time that residencies claim to offer, that use more generalised language, descriptions of the place or situation of the residency are often filled with more finely grained specificity, for example, rural and remote retreats often leverage familiar touristic tropes that distil local differences into sets of highly desirable features. In publicity materials, residencies tend to project the novelty and alterity of the situation on offer in broadly normative ways, relying on tropes of the exotic, the idyllic, and the strange. Residencies' more artistic or discursive production often complicates or even critiques these more reductive place-based tropes, but in many ways, this also serves to reify the more primary place-based identity for which such tropes are leveraged, for residencies to project themselves as places that are unique, desirable, and inspiring for artistic exploration. While rhetorically many emphasise autonomous development, offering ideal conditions for working, often with relative privacy, residencies exert a kind of performative weight that is part of their appeal. They are hardly neutral spaces of incubation, but full of charisma, idiosyncrasy, and performative alterity. They have strange histories, ghosts, eccentric patrons, unique rituals, create odd communities and strange bedfellows. Sometimes they suggest an ordeal, sometimes the height of luxury.

Residencies' place-based identities tend to fall into two broad categories. On the one-hand, they emphasise the residency situation as an opportunity for artists to experience a kind of time-out ideal for working – images abound of empty studios in remote places with tranquil surrounds signifying opportunities for autonomous, undisturbed, peaceful working time. Pascal Gielen has described these as residencies that are based around the model of the

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[53] Open studios within museums are discussed in Chapter 2.1: The Museum & The Artist's Studio. For an article on virtual artist residencies see Weronika Trojaeska, 'Virtual Artist Residencies – A Manual', *Interartive*, Special Issue #55, Art and Mobility, accessed 25 May 2021, https://artmobility.interartive.org/virtual-art-residencies-a-manual-weronika-trojanska/.

sheltered space of the studio but notes that such studios are also conditioned by the 'socially determined time of the host organization'.[54] He has labelled these the My Chronotype, as one that 'simulate the time and space conditions of the artist studio', and allow 'the artist to engage in introspection', often 'far from civilisation'.[55]

Cultural studies academic Sarah Sharma has written about a wide range of cultural practices today that position themselves as a response or remedy to a perceived culture of speed and acceleration.[56] Her critique rests on the idea that the practices that address contemporary 'cultural anxieties over time' are predominantly 'spatial solutions', that can also obscure the differential power relations created for some to enjoy experiences of slower time and overall the 'political complexity of the social experience of time.'[57] This is a critique I consider in regard to retreat-residencies in Chapter Three, where I argue there can be a reductive equivalency between the 'slow' temporalities supposed to reside in the rural and remote places where retreat-residencies are located, and the escapist or alternative identities that they project. A projective fantasy of retreat might still acknowledge, to varying degrees, the different temporal flows that accumulate in a residency, but residencies tend still to rely on the wide assumption that Sharma most critiques – that forms of spatial escape can remedy a more or less evenly distributed problem of accelerated daily lives.[58] Whether inhabiting a tower above a museum collection as its 'hermit' (Ansuman Biswas as Hermit-in-Residence at the Manchester Museum, Chapter 2.1), bunkering down in a tiny cabin on a small uninhabited island in a remote archipelago (a residency programme on the island of Källskär, Åland, Finland, discussed in Chapter 3.5), or constructing one's own temporary studio with cardboard walls in a disused industrial space (*Post-Studio Tales* residency, Berlin, Chapter 4.2) –

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[54] Paschal Gielen, 'Time and Space to Create and Be Human. A Brief Chronotype of Residencies', in *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, 41.
[55]Ibid., 44.
[56] Sarah Sharma, *In the Meantime*.
[57] Ibid., 21–22.
[58] Ibid., 1–25.

residencies frequently create symbolic spaces of withdrawal, separation, and retreat, co-constituted with wider place-based identities. In all of these cases, particular places are positioned as providing a kind of temporal solution, allowing artists to embed, immerse, and withdraw. But these sometimes fail to address more complex questions around how artists manage their time, often in situations of precarity. For example, what projects, work and family obligations are suspended to make time for residencies? Whose labour accommodates the artists to 'slow down' in residence? How might residencies as live-work situations represent a kind of totalizing horizon, where everything that occurs during them can be made possibly productive as process or project?

Residencies also often identity as proximate to places that are unique for site-specific or site-responsive working. While this thesis focuses on development-oriented residencies, which make no definitive production demands, artists are very often involved in some kind of situated or site-responsive practice, process, thinking, experimentation, or research, even if the residency isn't the site of a final artwork or intervention. Pascal Gielen defines such residencies in contrast to the more introspective 'My Chronotype' residency, as an 'Alter-Chronotype', motivated by giving proximity to certain forms of external content for an artist's work rather than emphasizing forms of introspection.[59] In the 'Alter' type, there is still an immersion in a new time and space, but time is 'swallowed up by an interest in and fascination for a thing, a skill, a natural or cultural phenomenon', and 'space is there precisely because it brings this alterity, this otherness or the other in proximity.'[60] I consider these categorisations relevant to different ways residencies construct their identities, but do not consider them as separate typologies in this thesis. This is because even those residencies that most strongly emphasise opportunities for introspection and withdrawal are usually traversed by a wide range of artists, many of whom are interested in site-responsive modes of working, research,

[59] Gielen, 'Time and Space to Create and Be Human', 46–47.
[60] Ibid., 47.

or learning. Residencies generally also promote themselves as unique places where forms of artistic fieldwork or research can be undertaken. Indeed, in many cases the construction of forms of temporal-spatial alterity are useful for both purposes – introspective retreat away from hyper-production, as well as proximity to exotic and charismatic sites, resources, and situations, ripe for artistic investigation, research, or performative inhabitation. A prime example of this is the way a sub-set of rural retreat-type residencies centre their identities around issues of ecological sustainability, where retreat to the countryside becomes a set of alternatives to urban life: providing artists with 'time-out' from their day-to-day lives, promoting sustainable lifestyles and food production often through communal practices, while also often encouraging artist projects which focus on environmental topics and which may incorporate site-specific forms of research and development.[61] Instead of any easy differentiation between residencies that are more self-oriented (spaces for reflection) or more site-specific (spaces for investigation and exploration), I would argue that residencies nearly always encourage processes that are attentive to the residency situation. On the one hand, residencies performatively *retreat* – often presenting quiet isolated spaces that promise freedom and autonomy; and on the other-hand they promise to be *transformative* through the alterity of the situation – embedded within unique environments, locales, or institutions, to be mined for new point of interests, research topics, materials, experimental processes, collaborative relationships, or tales to tell.

The Right Place

Relevant to understanding residencies in this way, is the work that has been done over the past two decades on public art and site-specific art. Miwon Kwon's understanding of a new phase of site-specific practice where sites of development, intervention, and display were not

[61] For discussions of ecological residencies see Chapter 3.3: Geographical Imaginaries of Retreat.

necessarily coincident is highly relevant here.[62] In Kwon's conception, artists were often engaged in multi-sited projects that became legible through the artists presence in places and conceptually held together through a kind of meta-discursive interest (such as a social topic).[63] This form of itinerant, project-based working is now a dominant mode of working. Here the paradigms of post-studio (working across multiple sites), as well as the rise of artistic research (as a mode of inquiry based in artistic modalities), that often use forms of fieldwork (durational processes in delineated 'fields'), as well as the and idea of 'the project' (as a kind of discursive framework for iterative modes of working), each speak in slightly different ways to forms of artistic practice that are often multi-sited and open-ended, and often produce a range of processual outputs.[64] Thus, even when residencies are development-oriented, expecting no final artworks, they are often vessels for a range of outputs that lean into the processual, the place-based, the ephemeral, and the small: public-facing talks, workshops, and open studios; studio-based ephemera from experimentations to small-scale often mobile artworks; documentation of performances and experiments; modes of autoethnographic or autobiographic modes that tend to narrativise the resident's experiences and exist on a spectrum between more personal travelogues to more conceptual durational performances.

A touchstone throughout this thesis, is this latter notion of the 'project', generally theorised as an on-going processual way of working often framed within the problematic of a blurring of personal and work life.[65] Bojana Kunst describes art projects as 'processual, contingent and open practice', a working mode she argues focuses unduly on possibilities in the future at the expense of connections to social life in the present, leading to a kind of

[62] Kwon, *One Place After Another*.
[63] Ibid., 3–4.
[64] Literature on each of these areas is referenced throughout this thesis, but the major touchstone I refer to throughout is ideas of 'the project'.
[65] I have recently contributed to an editorial introduction that includes a brief summary on ideas of the project and artistic autonomy, see Jessyca Hutchens, Anita Paz, Naomi Vogt, and Nina Wakeford, 'Working and not working with you,', *OAR: The Oxford Artistic and Practice Based Research Platform*, Issue 4 (2021), accessed 1 November 2021, http://www.oarplatform.com/working-working/.

unending speculative mode of working/living.[66] Boris Groys has written of the 'loneliness of the project', due to the way projects immerse subjects in a heterogeneous time that is desynchronised from the time experienced by society.[67] For Groys, the pleasures of large collective projects like exhibitions (or say residencies), might be to retreat from the time-pressures of social life, into a more immersive and separate time-space.[68] Project-time is antisocial in one sense yet promises an intensive and exciting form of sociality through a shared endeavour.[69] An interesting dilemma is to think how residencies can exist *as* projects or facilitate parts of projects. They both share a conceptual overlap with projects as separate time-spaces as suggested by Groys, and also facilitate the open-processual mode aspect of projects described by Kunst. Perhaps it is the case the residencies allow both individuals and collectives to step into 'project-time' – to create the time-space needed to focus on *particular* projects, within a overarching condition of unmoored, iterative, speculative, overlapping, multiple project-working.

Claire Doherty's notion of the 'situation' is also significant here, where she asserts that, for many contemporary artworks, the "situation' or 'context' is often the starting point', with context and situation broadly understood as 'an impetus, hindrance, inspiration and research subject for the process of making art, whether specified by a curator or commissioner or proposed by the artist.'[70] In many instances, the situation created by the residency acts as the trigger for site-responsive working, while in other cases, it becomes a more discursively determining curatorial or artistic project, with residents as participants. Residencies can provide a home-base for roving fieldwork or research in proximate locations, they can be more bounded situations where artists usually respond to something within a

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[66] Bojana Kunst, 'The Project at Work', *Sarma Docs #2: Bojana Kunst & Josefine Wikström*, poster series (Sarma Docs, 2015), 1.
[67] Boris Groys, 'The Loneliness of the Project', *Going Public* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011), 70–84.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Claire Doherty, Arnolfini Gallery, and Bristol University of the West of England, *Contemporary Art: From Studio to Situation* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), 7.

delineated field presented by the residency, or they can be more of a totalising situation, where the very act of residing constitutes participation in a project. I include even these more curatorially determined programmes within this thesis, when they still emphasise that the situation, however experimental or conceptual, is still an opportunity for individual residents to work on their own projects within the super-structure. Andrea Zittel, for example, expands her own practice, interested in different modes of living, by inviting artists to inhabit small structures designed by the artist in the desert, where they can experience some of the things familiar to other retreat-residencies (isolation, solitude, closeness to nature), but are also invited to think of the project in terms of being participants, experimenting with modes of living and making work.[71] Broadly speaking, residencies can be thought of as place-based development structures, where the borders between development, production and display, and even between modes of living and working, are being consistently blurred.

A major critique in discourse around contemporary site-specific art practice has been the degree to which this cultural production can align with various socio-political and economic exigencies. These include place-making and regeneration agendas, such as those set by tourism and heritage industries, and broadly speaking, for art to be used to reinvigorate particular sites (places, communities, institutions) in ways that enhance their cultural capital.[72] This discourse also reflects on how contemporary art has been instrumentalised as a kind of corrective to the flattening of locational difference produced by global capitalism, to 'rematerialize the singularity of place' in Robin MacKay's words.[73] In *One Place After Another*, Kwon considers how a new kind of itinerant site-specific practice, emerging from the 1990s, rested on particular chains of signification that legitimate this way of working: the artist's identity often mobilised as proximate to an overarching discursive site of interest (such as

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[71] The project, *A-Z West* (2000), is detailed on Andrea Zittel, 'A-Z West', accessed 27 May 2021, https://www.zittel.org/az-west.

[72] See for example Kwon, *One Place After Another*; Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture*; and *When Site Lost the Plot,* ed. Robin Mackay (London: Urbanomic, 2015).

[73] Robin Mackay, 'The Barker Topos', *When Site Lost the Plot,* 255.

interest in a 'particular place, history, discourse, identity') which then gives artists a critical purchase on producing location-based difference, singularity, and uniqueness.[74] But Kwon also argues that such differentiation of sites can take on a normative, promotional quality, and might end up contributing to 'the erasure of differences via the commodification and serialization of places.' [75] Kwon's critique rests both on considering the way self and place are reductively leveraged as 'discursive fictions', and on the 'destabilizations of ungrounded transience' experienced by artists, created by the romanticisation of such mobility (a critique which has even been favourably adopted within residency discourses).[76]

A similar line of thinking can be found in Hal Foster's famous critique of contemporary artists' adoption of pseudo-ethnographic processes in their discursive engagements with places, and communities. He argues that site-specific art practice was being used to animate sites, and that 'values like authenticity, originality, and singularity can return as properties of sites that artists are asked to define or to embellish'.[77] Such engagements rely both on a construction of the artist-subject and the site of intervention as projections of alterity, with the 'apparent authenticity of the one invoked to guarantee that of the other', and on an assumption that the 'site of political transformation is the site of artistic transformation as well.'[78] In a more recent formulation of this line of argument, Robin Mackay particularly emphasises the relation in terms of the artist as an expert in 'local global synthesis.'[79] In his depiction, the globe-trotting artist has a brand value associated with being able to "respond' to any site and figure its contingency against the indistinct, abstract ground of globalization.'[80] In

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[74] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 51.
[75] Ibid., 55.
[76] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 155–166. Kwon's critique of intensified global mobility in the chapter 'The Wrong Place', was re-published in the residency book *AWAY: The Book about Residencies*, ed. Alexandra Grausam (Vienna: Verlag für moderne Kunst, 2019), 292–302.
[77] Hal Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', *The Return of the Real: Art and Theory at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996), 1st edition, 197.
[78] Ibid., 198 and 173.
[79] Robin MacKay, 'The Barker Topos', 257.
[80] Robin Mackay, 'The Barker Topos', 255.

these accounts, the artist-nomad is a figure whose own identity-positions and their passage through the world are invoked to re-configure sites deemed to have been flattened by global capitalism, and yet such processes constitute forms of reductionism in their own right.

Artist-residencies have sometimes been mentioned within the discourse on site-specific art, as part of the institutional infrastructure that enables such mobile working, but are not interrogated more deeply than this. Some programmes that are more specifically tailored to social art projects have engaged with questions around the institutional role of residencies as mediators between local communities and international artists.[81] Though they may not require or encourage particular site-specific or community engaged interventions, development-oriented residencies still rely heavily on similar chains of signification: the valorisation of working 'elsewhere', and on providing access and proximity to sites that often signify forms of charismatic alterity. Often the residency is an enabler of access to places that might be considered broadly inaccessible and therefore present a highly unique opportunity for artists to investigate and inhabit – remote islands, small communities, private archives, heritage buildings. But the rhetorical focus of residencies as sites of development is on these sites as transformative of an artist's practice. Acts of dislocation and working 'elsewhere' become less a series of artist interventions than a kind of ritual parsing of artistic practice through regular periods of habit-breaking difference with attendant opportunities to discover new site-related content. There are fewer heroics around in-situ interventions (and attendant supposed transformative effects on institutions, communities, sites, and places) and a greater focus on the artist as a vector for subtle transformations to their ongoing practices and open-ended projects. The artist Alan Quireyns identifies residencies in a way that emphasises this understanding:

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[81] For example, these topics have been interrogated through the discursive activities of the programme *spaced 2*, a roving residency that 'brings together international and Australian artists with communities throughout Western Australia to explore the relationship between globalisation and local identity.' See the Spaced website, 'Background', accessed 1 June 2021, http://www.spaced.org.au/two/about/background/; and the catalogue *Spaced: Art out of Place,* ed. Marco Marcon (Perth, Australia: International Art Space Pty Ltd, 2012).

> A residency is not a journey. It is not casual. I am facing the challenge of living my life somewhere else for a couple of months. My work is the content. It survives all places, each new experience. It changes with the foreign environment, new people, and myself lends an edge to the work.[82]

In terms of their place-based identities, residencies don't simply facilitate artists in their site-specific or context-related engagements but hold their own institutional identities within places and are often involved in their own longer-term processes of embedding and building trust, good reputation, and public engagement within a given context. Instead of commissioning, and all the dilemmas that can arise from this, the development-residency places value on the presence of the artist in a place, engendering an encounter that from the outset is bound to be successful because presence and process alone is often sufficient evidence of use-value.

Against the image of the 'international flaneur' of site-specific art dropping in to distil local place into a brandable project, development-oriented residencies often rest on more marginal exchanges between artist, residency, and a site of interest (developed through the residency).[83] These programmes also emphasise the itinerant, project-based artist, but rather than one jet-setting between profitable commissions, they are managing more precarious multi-sited working, perhaps accreting some new site-related elements for their practice and offering up some exposure over their process within small to medium sized programmes, with programmes building up their own place-based identities around the flow of artists to a place, seeking retreat and inspiration. The artist Paula Roush, who has worked with residency formats as a mode of practice, has described one residency project she participated in (comprising interventions by four artists in rooms at the hotel *Pensão Ibérica*) as 'a specific micro-situation: the artist-curator-traveller-tourist-nomad who takes residency in the living

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[82]Alan Quireyns, 'The Temporary Resident, a Sequel…', *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, 32.

[83] James Meyer, 'The Functional Site; or, The Transformation of Site Specificity', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 32.

space of the non-residents', and also as a platform comprising a book, theme, residency, and structure.[84] Such artistic practices also accord with what cultural studies academic Nikos Papastergiadis has described as 'small gestures in specific places', which he says could be 'coda for the time when the place for art is on the move', in a time where 'the form of art bends to the circumstance, and the boundary with the everyday blurs.'[85] Such framings are fitting for the development-residencies construction of more subtle and processual exchanges.

In *One Place After Another*, Miwon Kwon contrasts the valorisation of mobility with an equally romantic ideal of local embeddedness. She prefers, instead, an approach that would emphasise the relationality of places: 'finding a terrain between mobilization and specificity—to be out of place with punctuality and precision.'[86] Similar optimism over the potential of work engendering more complex relations to place are to be found in other work on site-specific practice. Claire Doherty suggests that artists can both embrace a more nuanced version of place that would understand it as relational, and might also embrace an aesthetics of wrong place, not as romanticised dislocation, but through practices emphasizing disruption and discontinuity.[87] She writes how 'being situated, embedded, to feel that you belong or at least 'know' a place is not necessarily of artistic merit', and describes wrong place aesthetics as 'playful, psycho-geographical nature of the Situationist dérive.'[88] Nick Kaye, writing more on site-specific performance art and theatre, and relying on architectural theory and cultural geography, argues for 'strategies which work against the assumptions and stabilities of site and

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[84] Paula Roush, 'Migratory Aesthetics / travelling concepts / epistemology of the nomadic place', residency programme catalogue, *Projeto Figura-Pensão Ibérica*, ed. Mónica de Miranda (Lisbon, Portugal: Mónica de Miranda, 2010), 16.
[85] Nikos Papastergiadis, *Spatial Aesthetics, Art, Place, and the Everyday* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2010), 81–82. Also see Niko Papastergiadis, 'Small Gestures in Specific Places', *Empires, Ruins and Networks*, eds. Scott McQuire and Nikos Papastergiadis, (London; Melbourne: Rivers Oram Press and Melbourne University Press, 2005).
[86] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 166.
[87] Claire Doherty, 'Curating Wrong Places…Or Where Have All the Penguins Gone' (Bristol: Situations at the University of the West of England, 2008), PDF, available at https://www.situations.org.uk/resources/curating-wrong-places/, accessed 30 October 2021, book chapter originally published in *Curating Subjects*, ed. Paul O'Neill, (Amsterdam; London: De Appel, 2007), 100–108.
[88] Ibid., 4.

location.'[89] Mackay suggests the metaphor of 'the plot' as a form that might expound on the shifting nature of place-based engagements, wherein the protagonist / artist always reorients themselves when confronted by new information.[90]

Residencies might seemingly be exemplars of Kwon's notion of wrong place aesthetics as a kind of 'belonging-in-transience' – hosts often mediate and promote practices of embedding and thinking through the complexities of local sites, while also emphasizing hosting and hospitality to assist artists to be at home away.[91] Yet, Kwon also critiques Lucy Lippard's vision, in *The Lure of the Local*, for a kind of return to a sense of local place, arguing that Lippard misses the dialectical relationship between 'increasing abstraction of space and the "production" of particularities of place, local specificity, and cultural authenticity'.[92] Residencies present an interesting tension, because on the one hand they have increasingly imbibed critiques of intensified global mobilities and the production of place and yet they often construct place-based identities that heavily rely on more reductive ideas of local place and the sheltering of artists through facilitated connection to place. Tellingly, the Res Artis definition of residencies includes being 'Reflective of their lexical meaning as 'an act of dwelling in a place.''[93] To be reflective on *dwelling* points to a wider set of practices in residencies around artists becoming at home in the residency, to practices of hospitality, hosting and facilitation on the part of programmes, and being a good 'guest' on the part of the resident, not only in terms of social protocols but also through a certain discursive openness to the evolving nature of the situation and its transformative and sheltering alterity. As subjects, residents are often socialising, inquiring, learning, embedding, and responding.

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[89] Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art. Performance, Place and Documentation* (London; New York: Routledge; Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2006), E-book, 3.
[90] Mackay, 'The Barker Topos', 263–268.
[91] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 8.
[92] Ibid., 159. Also see Lucy Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicultural Society* (New York: New Press, 1997).
[93] Res Artis, 'Definition of Arts Residencies'.

In a slightly different formation to the embrace of 'wrong place' aesthetics and practices that would acknowledge the artist's complex relationship to site, where the artist relates through dislocation, and the site is filled with indeterminacies, residencies might also arguably be thought of as leaning more towards being 'right places'. While residencies might address the core of Kwon's critique around the mobilisation of self and site leading to 'undifferentiated serialization, one place after another', a turn towards the artist as a figure in retreat, might re-inscribe the artist, and indeed residencies, as permanent, open-ended projects – constructing artist subjects who are enjoined to ever be absorbing and relating to the contexts they travel through as guests.[94]

My interest in this thesis is in a trend within residencies where relations to site are neither a fetishization of creating from a position of 'being local', an uncritical celebration of high-flying global nomadism, nor a widespread promotion of practices that are discursively destabilizing sites in a way particularly attendant to being dislocated or out of place. Rather, I am interested in how the projective fantasy of being *in retreat* (embedded, hosted, sheltered) mediates the artistic and institutional practices of residencies and how these in turn are a form of cultural mediation of place. Retreat is not a true retreat from the world but overlapping artistic, curatorial and institutional practices that symbolically release the artist from pressures to reproduce place, while nevertheless assuming that time in 'new' places will have mutually beneficial transformative effects. While there is a lot to be said for the way that residencies are promoting practices that are complex ways of relating to place and transcience itself, greater interrogation is needed of the spatial and temporal politics of residencies as they increasingly mediate anxieties around the very mobility and acceleration associated with them.

1.3 Scope of the Thesis

[94] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 166.

Thus far I have introduced some of the general tendencies of artist-residencies. Due to my emphasis on notions of the artist in retreat, however, I engage specifically with broad typologies of residencies more aligned with this focus: museum-residencies that mediate private time in the museum and public engagement and are part of wider histories of engagement between museums and contemporary artists; retreat-residencies that provide artists with 'time-out' in rural and remote places and are usually historicised in regard to artist colonies; and more recent experimental models and projects that probe or intersect with ideas of the artist as a precariat, attempting to manage small pockets of time and space as part of ongoing project-based working. But before turning to summaries of these chapters, I want first to identify other broader historical trajectories and typologies that are significant within the residency field.

Residency Typologies

Part of the challenge in comprehensively historicising residencies, is that their contemporary form has resulted from the convergence of disparate cultural trends, something consolidated in the more pronounced professionalisation of the field in the 1990s. Today's expansive definition of residencies enables them to assert a wide variety of proximate institutional forms, but with in-depth broader histories of residencies nearly entirely absent, these historical claims often remain somewhat speculative. This absence of longer-term histories is not resolved within this thesis, but in analysing the representation of history, often as part of place-based identities, I hope to point outwards to probable historical trajectories in need of further scholarship, and to understand the gathering of historical narratives occurring through the recent proliferation of programmes. As well, while typologies of residencies are a common thematic in residency discourses, the ubiquity of hybridised and experimental models, and the slippery and often minimal character that I have described earlier, makes residencies

somewhat resistant to neatly bound typologies, something evidenced in the trend for residency websites to consistently identify sub-types and trends.[95]

That said, there are four broad sub-types of residencies that I have identified, each having a particular and slightly separated historical genesis, before residencies became a very widely known accelerating phenomenon in the 1990s. The type I focus on most in this thesis are artist-retreats, that often draw lineage to artist colony and patron/colony models that developed from the late 19th Century, predominantly in Europe and the USA, and which are most likely to embrace the 'gift of time' idea, tending to foreground artists having private time-out and often located in rural and remote places coded as idyllic and secluded.[96] Writer /artist colonies founded by wealthy patrons such as MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire (founded 1907) and Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, New York (founded 1900) have on-going programmes today, but as I go onto critique in Chapter 3.1, the broader association made between residencies and artist colonies is often a desirable and stylistic one rather than a historically cogent one.

A second and interrelated trend has been for early to mid-Century experimental art schools and art academies, particularly in the USA, to become part of the history of residencies. These include programmes such as Ox-Bow School of Art, Saugatuck, Michigan (founded by artists from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1912); Black Mountain College, Asheville, North Carolina (founded as an experimental college in 1933); Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, Skowhegan, Maine (founded by artists in 1946); and Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity, Banff, Canada (founded by the University of Alberta, 1933).[97]

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[95] For example see the thematic collections of residency programmes by TransArtists, that frequently compiles residencies by type, TransArtists, 'AiR Collections', accessed 3 June 2021, https://www.transartists.org/air-collections.

[96] For a lengthy discussion of the retreat-type model and history see Chapter 3.1: A Retreat Type Residency.

[97] See Ox-Bow, 'Our Story', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.ox-bow.org/our-story; Black Mountain College Museum and Art Centre, 'History', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.blackmountaincollege.org/history/; and Banff Centre, 'History', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.banffcentre.ca/history-banff-centre-arts-and-creativity. Also see Naomi Ekperigin, 'Ox-Bow', *American Artist* 76, no. 831 (September 2012): 34–37.

Skowhegan and Banff have on-going residency programmes today that extend their historic legacies. While I explore the notions of retreat constructed by Banff in particular, and the experimental educational activities of some programmes, I do not examine the more particular histories of alternative art school / academies, though undoubtedly the thread of pedagogical experimentation courses throughout the residency arena.

A third major historical trajectory has been for studio-providing facilities, from around the mid-1960s onwards, and often based in cities, to add international residency programmes, a historical thread leading to a vast variety of urban residency programmes in major art centres around the globe, centred around ideas of intercultural exchange, art world networking, and professionalisation. Sociologist and art-historian, Andrea Glauser, has written on these histories, even arguing that the 'terms "residency", "studio Programme" and, finally, "artist-in-residence" refer to heterogeneous practices and institutional arrangements.'[98] Often studio-based programmes are funded and operate through relationships to various 'sending institutions', including government arts funding bodies, and may also receive funding from local bodies interested in 'receiving' international artists to a city. A prominent example of this letter for is the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Artist-in-Berlin Program, which began offering international artists one-year residencies in West Berlin, initially funded by The Ford Foundation from 1963, and eventually partnering with the large studio-providing residency, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (founded in 1974).[99] Other early large-scale studio-models and leaders in the contemporary residency landscape include the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris (opened in 1965); and Acme Studios, London (founded by artists in 1972 as

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[98] Andrea Glauser, 'The Artist-in-Residence Caught Between Globalisation and Localisation', in *AWAY: The Book about Residencies*, 41. Also notably, Glasuer, in her book, *Verordnete Entgrenzung. Kulturpolitik, Artist-in-Residence-Programme und die Praxis der Kunst* (Bielefeld: Verlag, 2009), claims the term 'Artist-in-residence' arose from New York City Building Department regulations which allowed artists to use lofts as studios by posting an 'Artist-in-Residence' sign. 15, and footnote 10.

[99] Ibid., 41 and 45; and also see DAAD, 'Berlin Artists-in-Residence Program' accessed 20 October 2021, https://www.daad.de/en/the-daad/what-we-do/berlin-artists-in-residence-programme/; and Künstlerhaus Bethanien,'History', accessed 20 October 2021, https://www.bethanien.de/en/kunstlerhaus-bethanien/history/.

the Acme Gallery).[100] While this thesis does not look at these urban studio programmes specifically, the provision of artist-studios is a key component to most residencies as well as a conceptual locus around which many residencies operate.

Finally, a fourth typology has been embedded or placement type residencies, where often a single artist-in-residence is based in an institution or organisation (often a non-art one) in order to lend an artistic perspective or be an agent of social change within the hosting organisation, and where work is often framed within ideas of community or social engagement. In the UK this model largely arose out of the Artist Placement Group (APG), started by artist Barbara Steveni and involving John Latham in the mid-1960s, to place artists in government and industry settings, receiving Arts Council UK funding between 1968–1972.[101] In the USA, proximate forms with a greater focus on interdisciplinary art and technology collaborations include E.A.T – Experiments in Art and Technology, a non-profit organisation founded by engineers and artists in 1996 to connect artists with practitioners working in industry and science; Bell Labs, a research and development arm of AT&T, where during the 1960s, a number of employees began experimenting with computer art; and the Kohler Co Arts Industry Program (sponsored by a manufacturer of plumbing products), which began a non-profit arts centre in 1967, leading to residencies from 1974.[102] Today, embedded placements exist far and wide in all kinds of institutions and organisations. In

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[100] Cité Internationale des Arts, 'History', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.citedesartsparis.net/en/the-cite/our-history; and Acme, 'Archives', accessed 1 November 2021, https://acme.org.uk/about/archive/.

[101] See Tate, 'APG: Artist Placement Group – Chronology', accessed 10 September 2021, https://www.tate.org.uk/artistplacementgroup/chronology.htm; Anthony Hudek, exhibition text for *The Incidental Person*, apexart, New York, 6 January – 20 February 2010, accessed 10 September 2021, https://apexart.org/images/hudek/hudek.pdf; and Claire Bishop, *Artifical Hells*: *Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London; New York: Verso, 2012), Chapter 6: Incidental People: APG and Community Arts, 163–191.

[102] See Foundation Langlois, 'Collection of Documents Published by E.A.T.', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=237; Pamela M. Lee on E.A.T, in *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2004), 12–22; *Bell Labs Memoirs: Voices of Innovation*, eds. A. Michael Noll and Michael Geselowitz, IEEE History Center (New Brunswick, NJ: Amazon Books, 2011); Jon Gertner, *The Idea Factory: Bell Labs and the Great Age of American Innovation* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012); and Kenneth C. Knowlton, 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Scientist', *YLEM Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2005): 8–11; and John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 'Arts / Industry Residency Program For Artists', brochure, (Wisconsin: John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 2010); and John Michael Kohler Arts Centre, 'About', accessed 10 September 2021, https://www.jmkac.org/arts-industry/.

Ariane Berthoin Antal's study in organisational studies on placement-type residencies (which she calls 'artistic intervention residencies'), she notes the growth in interest since the 1990s by 'managers in the private and public sector' having 'discovered the potential of bringing in people, products or practices from the world of the arts to stimulate learning and change in the organization.'[103] While not a focus of this thesis, ideas of being embedded in particular situations and artists playing a social role cuts across the residency landscape.

Periodisation

While I do touch upon the longer histories of artist-residencies in this thesis, I am primarily concerned with more recent developments. It was in the 1990s that residencies began to be understood as an important sector within the art world. Glauser writes how they 'spread slowly in the post-war period and then rapidly in the 1990s.'[104] Their institutional identities and increased global spread were fomented by the creation of residency networks, namely, Res Artis, a professional body for artist-residencies, which launched in Germany 1993, and rapidly grew from a network of twenty-two residency-programmes, to now 550 members in over seventy-five counties; TransArtists (now part of DutchCulture), which began as a database of residencies in Amsterdam in 1993, and is currently the largest database of residencies with around 1400 listings as well as regularly producing research on residencies; and the USA-focused Alliance of Artists Communities initiated in 1990 as a project between eighteen residencies which currently has around 400 members in twenty countries and fifty US States.[105] Each of these networks and their development tracks the rapid proliferation of residency programmes from the 1990s, on as well as increased collaboration and networking

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[103] Ariane Berthoin Antal, 'Artistic Intervention Residencies And Their Intermediaries: A Comparative Analysis', *Organizational Aesthetics* 1(1): 44–67.
[104] Glauser, 'The Artist-in-Residence Caught Between Globalisation and Localisation', 43.
[105] Approximate figures based on websites accessed 3 November 2021. See Res Artis, 'Membership', https://resartis.org/membership/; TransArtists, 'About', https://www.transartists.org/en/about-dutchculture-transartists; and AAC, 'History', https://artistcommunities.org/history.

between programmes, triggering a swell of new research and discursive production predominantly produced by residency programmes.

While the 1990s has been an era of 'globalization and diversity' for residencies, and there has been significant global expansion, a majority of growth has still been concentrated firstly in Europe (including the UK), as well as North America and East Asia.[106] This can be partly attributed to an interest in cultural exchange and artist mobility in post-1989 Europe.[107] While residencies have significant global spread, significant asymmetries remain both in terms of numbers and available funding. Concentration of artist-residencies in Europe, the UK, and the USA, where there is also more substantial anglophone literature on histories of residencies, has led to this thesis being skewed towards those areas, as well as to engage in a critique of ideas of 'retreat' that has largely emerged from 'western' geographic imaginaries constructed within residencies.

To track the recent turn towards ideas of retreat, I have looked to the programmes and regions currently most active in leading these discourses. While the thesis doesn't limit itself to any specific geographies, it undoubtedly preferences anglophone discourses and focuses on programmes prominent in the largely European- and North American-centred residency sector. For example, there is a more entrenched history of museum-based programmes in the USA and UK, as reflected in Chapter Two: Residing in the Museum, and a greater focus on retreat in rural European and UK programmes, reflected in Chapter Three: Residency as Retreat. To try and understand what I argue has been a recent turn towards ideas

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[106] See *ON-AiR: Manual Workshops* (Amsterdam: TransArtists, 2010), accessed January 16, 2014, https://www.transartists.org/sites/default/files/attachments/On-AiR_Manual_Workshops.pdf, 6. In 2008, 56% of all residencies listed on the international TransArtists database were located in Europe, see Andreas Wiseand, *Mobility Matters, Programmes and Schemes to Support the Mobility of Artists and Cultural Professional*, Final Report, An ERICarts Institute Study for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, October 2008, accessed 3 November 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/policy/cultural-creative-industries/documents/mobility-matters-report_en.pdf, 40. Also see Glauser, 'The Artist-in-Residence Caught Between Globalisation and Localisation', 43.

[107] For example, The RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project, 2009–2011, began as a programme to look at the mobility of Eastern European art professionals, and was supported by a pilot project for artist mobility by the European Commission. See *Re-Tooling Residencies.*

of the artist in retreat, I have concentrated on the recent history of prominent programmes that exemplify this trend, and touch upon wider examples and slightly longer histories where relevant.

Over the last decade, residencies have continued to diversify in terms of their models and approaches, and much of this thesis looks at fairly recent discursive trends I was able to observe throughout my research period. A much cited report within residency discourses, is *The European Agenda for Culture Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencie*s (2014), which highlighted the significance of the residency field within Europe, and gave official credence to a whole host of emerging models including 'nano-residencies', small 'artist-led' programmes, and 'research-based' and 'thematic' residencies, as well as highlighted the residency fields interest in issues of environemental sustainability and refugees (with the report noting the trend for programmes to act as 'save havens' for artists at risk).[108] In many ways the report consolidates on-going tensions between the social and political *concerns* of residencies – addressing topics thematically and through access and sustainability initiatives; the precarity of most residencies as small to medium sized organizations as well as of the artists that navigate them; and wider hegemonies within the field.

Literature

In this introduction I have largely focused on very recent literature on artist-residencies as well as discourses on site-specific art which are particularly relevant to the residencies' relationship to place. In each of the chapters I draw upon discourses that are relevant to each of the residency types: work in museum studies and art historical literature on the museum (Chapter Two); literature from the social sciences, cultural studies, and art history that relate to ideas of

[108] European Union, *The European Agenda for Culture Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencie*s, Open Method of Coordination (OMC) Working Group of EU Member States Experts on Artists' Residencies, December 2014, accessed 10 January 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/policy/cultural-creative-industries/documents/artists-residencies_en.pdf, 15–24; and 25–33.

retreat, the rural, and 'slowness' (Chapter Three); and literature from the social sciences and art history that relate to theories of creative labour under contemporary capitalism as well as contemporary artistic working modes such as the 'post-studio' condition and project-based working (Chapter Four). A much wider set of literature on institutional art histories formed the background for undertaking this thesis, particularly work on intersections between globalisation, biennales, and exhibitions (relevant to the global spread and intercultural exchange aspect of residencies), work that has addressed smaller, artist-run, quasi-institutional programmes (relevant to the many small and artist-run residencies that I reference throughout this thesis); and work that has been done on intersections between contemporary art, globalisation, and temporality.[109]

Fieldwork

Given the dearth of art historical literature on artist-residencies, this thesis has been shaped by direct engagement with the discursive production of residency programmes and networks; including engagement with residency catalogues and websites, through participation in residency meetings, conferences, and events throughout the writing of this thesis, as well as

[109] This includes, on biennials, Bruce Altshuler, *Biennials and Beyond: Exhibitions That Made Art History. 1962-2002* (London: Phaidon, 2013) and *Salon to Biennial: Exhibitions That Made Art History. 1863-1959* (London: Phaidon, 2008); Charles Green and Anthony Gardner, *Biennials, Triennials, and documenta: The Exhibitions that Created Contemporary Art* (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2016); and *The Biennale Reader*, ed. Elena Filipovic, Marieke van Hal, and Solveig Øvstebø (Bergen: Bergen Kunsthalle; Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2010).
On alternative institutional and curatorial models, *Institutional Attitudes: Instituting Art in a Flat World*, ed. Pascal Gielen (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2013); *Institutions by Artists (Volume One)*, ed. by Jeff Khonsary and Kristina Lee Podesva (Vancouver: Fillip Editions and the Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres, 2012); *Politics of Study,* ed. Meineche Hansen and Tom Vandeputte (London: Open Editions; Odense: Funen Art Academy, 2015); *Self-Organised*, ed. Stine Hebert and Anne Szefer Karlsen (London: Open Editions; Bergen: Hordaland Art Centre, 2013). On art, time, and the global, Charlotte Bydler, *The Global Artworld Inc.: On the Globalization of Contemporary Art* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2004); Keith Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013); Peter Osborne, *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art*. (London, Verso, 2013); Terry Smith, *What is Contemporary Art?.* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009); and *Time: Documents of Contemporary Art,* ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery; Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2013); and Marcus Verhagen, *Flows and Counterflows: Globalisation in Contemporary Art* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2017).

through a number of case studies based on site-visits and interviews.[110] As part of early background research, I visited quite a number of programmes and engaged in artist studio visits. These early experiences then shaped later more formal research fieldtrips, which became the basis of first-person case studies in Chapter 3.5: Small Island Residencies and Chapter 4.2: 12 Days in Venice. Rather than seeking to find highly paradigmatic examples of programmes to exemplify the field (an arguably futile endeavour given the wide variety of programmes), these case studies were used to give texture and detail to the tendencies I had identified by surveying programmes quite broadly, attempting also to pick-up on some of the rhythms and norms I had noticed through other studio visits. In all cases, I was also a resident in these programmes or one close by, but my accounts of these programmes focus primarily on interviews with staff and artists, rather than centring my experiences as a participant in a programme. My role at these residencies was very much as an art historian conducting research on these programmes, primarily investigating how former and current residents used and experienced them, and using my embedded position to access archival materials, collect first-hand accounts through semi-structured interviews, and to visit relevant sites.

1.4 Chapter Summaries

In **Chapter Two: Residing in the Museum**, I focus on the quite recent development of residency programmes within museums, both art and non-art museums. While museum-residencies are a narrower area of residency development than the focus on retreat that follows it, this area was chosen to exemplify the ways that residency programmes can become

[110] Important conferences for understanding the field and ideas of retreat and shaping this thesis included attending *Residencies Reflected*, symposium, 16–18 November 2016, Helsinki, co-organized by the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki, HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme, and Frame Contemporary Art Finland; and the Res Artis Meeting Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland, 'Exploring Sustainability Under the Midnight Sun', 18–20 June 2018. I also attended Res Artis Meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark, 'Prepare for Production: On Residencies and Artistic Production' three day conference, October 25 –27, 2017, hosted by Danish Art Workshops, in collaboration with the Fabrikken/ The Factory of Art and Design, and many other smaller residency events, panel discussions and symposia.

intertwined with other curatorial and programming trends within contemporary art. As museums are already uniquely invested in questions around their management of public and semi-private spaces and public accessibility, as well as on mediating these functions through engagements with contemporary artists, museum-residencies are unique places to make visible the potentialities of residencies as a relatively new form of programming and cultural mediation. Here, I argue, ideas of temporal-spatial withdrawal and a 'gift of time' are often played out through a politics of access – the artist-in-residence withdraws into the museum to undertake research or develop new work, and is often granted special access to collections, and in turn, some of their time is made visible and accessible to museum publics.

This chapter progresses through an introduction focusing on broad issues of access, and then onto key paradigms where museum histories and residency programming intersect: the ways the museum and the artist studio have historically overlapped (2.1: The Museum & The Artist's Studio); the intersecting development of museum intervention art from the 1990s and the use of artist-residencies (2.2: Museum Interventions); the trend of artist-residencies within museum education & learning departments (2.3: Artists as Educators); broad tendencies within museums to use contemporary art and residencies to 'activate' and 'enliven' collections (2.4: The Museum as Mausoleum & Contemporary Activation); and finally intersections between cultural identity, access to collections, and museum-residencies, with a focus on case studies of residencies by Indigenous artists in colonial collections (2.5: Indigenising the Collection). This chapter makes the case that museum-residencies, as a still growing form of programming within museums, are desirable as a durational and processual format that brings the artist into embodied connection with museum sites, and that by offering artists a 'gift of time', the museum mediates issues around access and activation.

In **Chapter Three: Residency as Retreat**, I tackle the central argument of this thesis (that there has been a turn towards ideas of retreat), through the type of residency that most reflects this trend: rural and remote retreat-type residencies. While the artist-residency may

have sometimes been associated with the peripatetic figure of the artist-nomad, travelling the globe, networking, and making site-responsive works, a more withdrawn figure has emerged in recent years, particularly with the proliferation of small-scale residency programmes in rural and remote locations: the artist in retreat. Drawing a lineage with an earlier movement of artists, fleeing the city for rural arcadia to form artist colonies in the late 19th and early 20th Century, such programmes rely both on earlier Romantic ideas of the artist in retreat, updated for the contemporary situation of the 'artist precariat' in need of temporary rest and repose, particularly from the intensive demands of an artworld depicted as accelerated and hyper-productive.

This chapter begins by mapping out the characteristics of a retreat-type residency, including its relationship to historical antecedents (3.1: A Retreat Type Residency); and then progresses onto the contemporary recuperation of ideas of retreat in relation to residencies (3.2: A Politics of Retreat). I then turn to two broad areas of overlap between retreat-residency cultures and wider cultural trends: the imbrication of residencies within trends related to geographic imaginaries of the rural, including the way residencies are both part of rural gentrification trends and engaged in producing counter-representations of the rural (3.3: Geographical Imaginaries of Retreat); and then to the way residencies are part of a broader cultural turn towards 'slowness' and ideas of retreat (3.4: Slowness & The Artist in Retreat). Finally, I look to the case of three small residency-retreats on islands in the Åland archipelago that negotiate some of the balancing acts these programmes broadly perform, reflecting subtle exchanges between artists in search of small pockets of support to make context-related work, and the place-based identities of small programmes based on ideas of retreat (3.5: Small Island Residencies). Broadly, this chapter argues that there has been a recent return across residencies towards ideas of retreat, that is both imbricated within wider cultural anxieties around 'finding time' and 'slowing down', and that residency programmes also mediate and discursively address these ideas.

In **Chapter Four: Residency Work** I consider experimental residency models that are far from constructions of a 'rural idyll', instead choosing far more minimal, strange, or intensive conditions and situations through which to host a residency. If museum-residencies and retreat-residencies both represent forms of withdrawal, through which the artist largely departs from their usual working modes to immerse in the residency-situation and enjoy some form of autonomy and privacy; smaller, experimental models sometimes turn to the scene of contemporary artistic labour itself, giving visibility to the intensities and balancing acts of artistic working today. This chapter interweaves discourses on contemporary artistic labour with three focused case studies: I look at the online Residency for Artists on Hiatus (RFAOH) which takes one aspect of contemporary artistic practice (periods of lower activity that artists often face during their careers) and uses this as the conceptual situation for a residency (4.1: Residency for Artists on Hiatus). I then turn to a case that is at almost at the opposite end of this programme in terms of participation in artistic activities – a project called *Post-Studio Tales*, where artists lived and worked in a shared studio space that was also an exhibition open to the public (4.2: *Post-Studio Tales*). Finally, I look at a work and residency programme run by the British Council, in which I took part, wherein invigilators for the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale were asked to produce a site-specific research project, thus treating their temporary work situation as a field-site to be 'inhabited' for artistic purposes (4.3: 12 Days of Research in Venice). As a variety of less 'idyllic' situations are inviting artists to take up residence, these programmes further explicate the ways that modes of residing entail a kind of constant responsiveness, adaptability, and intentional embrace of a situation for the purpose of developing work.

2 Residing in the Museum

A *Huffington Post* article on museum residency programmes begins, 'nowadays, museums seem to do everything but give visitors a room for the night.'[111] But if this privilege isn't yet being extended to regular members of the public (who are nevertheless frequently offered a wide range of other activities such as shopping, dining, attending classes, late-night parties, and other special events) many artists *are* being offered the chance to 'reside' in the museum, either symbolically (through a kind of regular access to the museum's spaces and resources, and perhaps a studio space), or more rarely, invited to actually live and work on-site.[112] A diverse range of artist-in-residency programmes within museum contexts are now frequently a part of wider public programming, giving visitors some form of access to an artist's process (through talks, open studios, online documentation and so on), while the artist becomes interpolated as something like the ultimate visitor; promoted as being able to access and spend time with rarely seen collections or to create new works out on the museum floors.

A major challenge in analysing the institutional character of residency programmes generally is that they are very often embedded within larger institutions, from placements in a variety of non-art contexts, including a variety of public institutions such as hospitals, schools, libraries, archives, and museums, to being used by contemporary art institutions such as galleries, studio providing facilities, and biennales. This opening chapter addresses the relatively small but burgeoning arena of residency programmes in museums (both art and non-art museums). Although there is little written specifically on this phenomenon, it has been identified as a sub-type by the residency network TransArtists, and museums that run

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[111] Daniel Grant, 'Museum Residencies Offer Opportunities for Artists', *Huffpost*, December 13, 2016, accessed 3 June 2021, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/museum-residencies-offer_b_8799614.

[112] Larger-scale live-work programmes exist at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston; and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin.

residencies are beginning to reflect on this type of programming and share knowledge.[113] Given the museum's broad prerogatives towards public education and engagement, this might suggest they lean more towards socially engaged placement-type residencies than towards residencies that offer more free and private time to develop work (which are the main focus of this thesis). Yet, museum-residencies are of interest precisely because they offer something of a leavening between the more social concerns of many residencies in non-art contexts, and the more pronounced isolation of remote retreats. Often allowing artists to access semi-private spaces within the museum, while also usually encouraging forms of public engagement, museum-residencies are a unique case study in regard to the broader question of how residencies negotiate and perform the provision of 'free' time to artists, while also representing and making this time accessible in different ways.

Given the dearth of theorisation of artist-residencies generally, the museum, as a major topic in art history, provides a useful bedrock to consider how residencies can overlap with broader tendencies in contemporary art. In this case, residencies can be viewed as a relatively new way that museums negotiate their interactions with living artists and bring contemporary art practice into the museum. How does the residency as an institutional form become legible and significant in a context already heavily invested in the artist as a symbolic figure? How do residencies overlap, extend, draw upon, and also depart from the history of artist interventions in museums (projects where artists have often critiqued the museum from within)? What new values, modes of audience engagement, or interpretation and interaction around collections, are elicited by residencies as a relatively new form of programming? Moreover, while museum-residencies have been used for a variety of purposes – including as

[113] For example see TransArtists, 'Inside the museum', accessed 3 June 2021, https://www.transartists.org/article/museum; a study on museum residencies by the Alliance of Artists Communities, 'Residencies in Museums', accessed 3 June 2021, https://artistcommunities.org/context-museums; and the conference Artquest, 'The Artist Researcher: artists and museums working together', 7 June 2019, The Foundling Museum, London, webpage for the conference accessed 3 June 2021, https://www.artquest.org.uk/project/the-artist-researcher/.

part of prerogatives to increase access to collections, to commission new work, to create new interpretive and educational experiences, and to engage different audiences – they have also tended to use similar language to residencies more broadly, promoting the ways they provide time and space for artists to develop work relatively autonomously. It is therefore useful to think through museum-residencies as a site of cultural mediation that combines existing and longstanding narratives about contemporary artists and the museum, with the more recent and specific role of artist-resident. Museum-residencies are not merely practical means to different programming ends, but I argue, they carry symbolic force, one I argue is very much linked to ideas of residing, often of positioning the artist as a kind of mediator, even at times, carrying a kind of domesticating potential within the museum.

This chapter progresses through an introduction focusing on broad issues of access, and then onto key paradigms where museum histories and residency programming intersect: the ways the museum and the artist studio have historically overlapped, with residency open studio models as a more recent development (2.1: The Museum & The Artist's Studio); the intersecting development of museum intervention art from the 1990s and the use of artist-residencies, the later placing a greater emphasis on development-processes and being embedded in the museum (2.2: Museum Interventions); the trend of artist-residencies within museum education & learning departments and the role of the artist-resident as an educator (2.3: Artists as Educators); broad tendencies within museums to use contemporary art and residencies in order to 'activate' and 'enliven' collections constructed as static (2.4: The Museum as Mausoleum & Contemporary Activation); and finally intersections between cultural identity, access to collections, and museum-residencies, with a focus on case studies of residencies by Indigenous artists in colonial collections (2.5: Indigenising the Collection).

A Politics of Access

A major thematic throughout this chapter, is to understand museum-residencies as particularly interlinked with ideas of access in museums. Writing in 1992, Eilean Hooper Greenhill noted the many ways museums were opening up formerly private areas and functions of the museum for greater visibility, scrutiny, and interaction, both through forms of 'behind-the-scenes' access to collections, such as open days and open storage, as well as through more collaborative approaches to learning and public programming.[114] Residencies can be seen to align with museum values to promote broader public access, understood both in terms of increasing forms of access to collections as well as diversifying forms of viewer engagement to reach wider audiences. As anthropologist Michael M. Ames wrote in 1992: 'Today, democratization of museums not only means extending access to a wider range of people, but also entails the obligation to work to make the people come'.[115] Through residencies, artists often mediate and represent their own special access to less visible areas and collections, as well as give visibility to their own creative processes. Moreover, residencies have been utilised as part of educational strategies to engage more diverse audiences or communities.[116] As I will go onto discuss in the final part of this chapter (2.5 Indigenous Artists in the Museum), oftentimes the cultural identities of residents has been relevant to artists accessing and using certain materials or collections and the protocols and practices around their access might be linked both to their status as artist-residents and as members of particular communities. Residencies can almost become a kind of performative scene of access, glimpsed and made visible in different ways.

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[114] Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), Adobe e-Reader edition, 200.

[115] Michael M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 2nd edition, eBook, 84.

[116] This is explored in an article by Ernesto Pujol, 'The Artist as Educator: Challenges in Museum-Based Residences', *Art Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001): 4-6.

The museum-residency trend intersects with a much longer history of artists given access to museum collections and spaces in order to develop new artworks and installations. In museum-residencies, this access itself is often given greater visibility and symbolic weight. The depiction of relationships between museums and contemporary artists has frequently focused on a kind of critical antagonism, either of artists seeking to wrest greater autonomy for their artworks away from curatorial or historical framings, or of the artist as an intervenor, directly critiquing the ways museum's produce knowledge and authority. Increasingly though, residencies shift the frame onto exploratory artistic processes within the museum and position the museum as a kind of patron of artistic development, offering the residencies' famous 'gift of time', albeit one very much conditioned by the museum's public functions. In their survey of museum-residencies, the Alliance of Artists Communities note numerous benefits to such programmes in the project summary, including that museums already have strong infrastructures in place (of resources and staff) to support artists; that museums can offer 'significant opportunities for artists to interact with the public'; that this can 'highlight the value of the work a museum is doing'; and that the museum itself (including holdings, staff, and interactions with museum visitors) 'functions as an energizing source for artists in residence.'[117] Museums thus offer themselves up as a kind of total site of support and inspiration, and in turn, very often artists will engage with their collections, programming and audiences.

A Hermit-in-Residence

Take the following case, in many ways emblematic of how residencies can extend both particular special access to the museum to a contemporary artist, and then have this access in some ways performed and mediated for wider publics. In 2009, then-Director Nick Merriman

[117] Alliance of Artists Communities, 'Residencies in Museums'.

designed a project for the Manchester Museum, for an artist to become a 'Hermit-in-Residence' in a secluded Victorian Gothic revival tower of the museum. The selected artist, Ansuman Biswas, proposed a project that would entail relative isolation in the tower over forty days and forty nights. Merriman had initially envisaged the project to address environmental sustainability, and Biswas ended up applying longstanding interest in ideas of 'deep ecology' (an environmental philosophy that nature has value beyond its instrumental uses by humans) to focus on the sustainability of museum collections and issues around ethical stewardship and object disposal. Ecological thinking was present through frequently phenomenological, agentic, and relational conceptualisations of materials from the museum in Biswas' writing and performance.[118] He put forward a provocative proposal to the museum and its publics to investigate forty objects during his time in residence, and to 'destroy' any that did not receive a public case for retaining them. This was defined as some form of public appreciation for the object and largely conducted through open discussions on Biswas' project blog. Oftentimes, Biswas entered into debates with commenters, who included staff and volunteers from the museum, as well as other museum professionals, with Biswas often inciting people to give more specific ideas, uses and actions for objects and rejecting proposals that were too generalised, such as those evoking very broad justifications for museums and collecting.[119] The project provoked a wide range of press coverage and sustained public engagement through Biswas' blog – both considered highly successful outcomes by the museum.[120] While the project provoked debate through the blog, it was largely embraced by the people and communities it engaged, including the Museums

[118] See generally, The Manchester Hermit, accessed 30 October 2021, https://manchesterhermit.wordpress.com/.
[119] A summary of proposed actions following discussions taken can be viewed on the Manchester Hermit blog, The Manchester Hermit, 'Actions', accessed 3 June 2021, https://manchesterhermit.wordpress.com/posts/.
[120] According to The University of Manchester Annual Report 2008-2009, The Manchester Museum: 'The 'Manchester Hermit' 8 week artist residency raised challenging issues around the value of collections, and generated an unprecedented amount of national and international media attention, as well as over 30,000 blog views. The 'advertising equivalent' of the media coverage has been calculated at £173,986.', 9.

Association, whose Ethics Committee Merriman briefed midway through the project to discuss the dilemmas around object disposal raised by the project.[121]

While this project took the form of a socially engaged durational performance, inhabiting the form of the residency in a more performative and fulsome way than an average museum-residency, I raise it here as an example of wider tendencies and potentialities within museum-residencies. Museum-residencies frequently cast artists in a role they have long played in the museum – a liminal figure and sometimes mediator between institution and audience, a kind of insider-outsider. As Kynaston McShine has written of the artist's 'unique relationship' to the museum: 'They are, at once, visitors and users of the institution and the creators of the objects that constitute the institution.'[122] Within a residency's usually quite flexible modes of presentation and representation, both the presence and processes of artists takes on a kind of demonstrative role in regard to finding use-value for collections. Across his blog, as Biswas goaded audiences and staff to make stronger cases for the immediate future of collection items, he also acted as an exemplar of passionate engagement. In a lengthy response to a comment posted by Henry McGhie – then Head of 'the Natural Environments' Team and Curator of Zoology at The Manchester Museum, who wrote a short justification for saving an Ice Age era hyaena skull (found at Creswell Crags close to Nottingham) – Biswas stated that 'the abstract reasons you give leave me a bit cold' and that:

> I am not interested in being lectured at by someone who thinks I should be interested in something. I want to be inspired by someone's enthusiasm. I'll gladly listen to anyone who is clearly interested in what they are saying and believes it with their whole heart.[123]

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[121] Miranda Stearn provides a comprehensive summary of these issues and the briefing to the Ethics Committee, in Miranda Stearn, 'Art and Destruction: The Artist as Anti-Curator in the Museum', in *Art and Destruction*, Jennifer Walden ed., Unabridged edition (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), footnote 9, 43.
[122] Kynaston McShine, *The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1999), 6.
[123] The Manchester Hermit, 'Comment posted 06/07/2009', accessed 3 June 2021, https://manchesterhermit.wordpress.com/2009/07/06/memento-mori-ii/#comment-214.

Janet Marstine notes that key 'to the success of the project was the tension Biswas maintained between insider and outsider positionings.'[124] Crucial for Marstine is how this was enacted spatially. On the one hand Biswas was alone in his tower and effectively 'outside the museum', and on the other hand he was metaphorically at its centre, for 'he hovered inside the building, just above the natural history collections', a symbolism that was visually reinforced through a webcam documenting his daily life and the artist's blog.[125] It is precisely this kind of embodied spatial mediation that is performed so potently by residency projects and gets to the core of their symbolic function: the progress, processes, and movement of the artist through and across museal spaces (posting online, entering a private studio, allowed into the stores, encountered interacting with permanent displays or working with museum staff) can become allegorical for the multivalent ways the museum can be engaged with.

Biswas' sequestration in the tower is a particularly potent insider-outsider metaphor, but in other programmes, the presence of artist-residency studios, or even the presence of artist-residents untethered from a designated workspace but encountered investigating different sites, can perform a similar function: to enact a passionate and often very intimate engagement with museum sites and objects, performed by a figure constructed as deserving of 'special access' to the museum, less inhibited by institutional protocols in some regards, and crucially for museum-residencies, often encountered or represented in the flow of these processes. Often striking different registers at different times, residency programmes arguably carry weight as performances of the museum's very heterogeneity and their openness to multivalent interpretive strategies. The narrative of the artist's own ongoing engagement, finding and probing sites, objects, or spaces of interest, becomes a kind of exemplary story of how the museum can be passionately and creatively engaged with. This accords with Nicholas Thomas' description of how contemporary artists can 'draw attention to the sense in which

[124] Janet Marstine, *Critical Practice: Artists, Museums, Ethics* (London; New York: Routledge, 2017), 69.
[125] Ibid.

the collection is not only a relational assembly in manifold senses, but a creative technology, something that can be used to make new things.'[126] In Biswas' case, this use of the collection as a 'creative technology' was demonstrated as a dynamic, relational and continuously unfolding process, as the result of his embedment on-site, rather than simply the final product of his own private use of the collection.

2.1 The Museum & The Artist's Studio

The emergence and rise of artist residencies in museum contexts can be seen within the broader historical circumstance of shifting relationships between living artists and museums. As Kynaston McShine has written: 'Since the public museum came into being, in the late eighteenth century, artists have regarded it with a mixture of reverence, suspicion, complicity, and disdain.'[127] Within contemporary art, a history of artists directly taking on roles of critique, curation, and intervention in the museum, as well as an evolving collaborative approach to living artists making work intended for the museum, have broadly characterised this relationship.[128] There have ever been relationships of patronage and dialogue between museums and living artists, but in very broad terms, a turn towards less purely acquisitive approaches and towards more collaborative and involved relationships around commissioning and display (even if positioned as critical or antagonistic) has been a persistent teleology of artist-museum relationships from the 1960s onwards. Lucy Lippard's prediction, in regard to conceptual art, that collectors would need to shift away from possessing objects, towards patronizing art *activity*, would also come to extend to museums, which would increasingly respond to the demands created by conceptual art, minimalism, and site-specific act practice

[126] Nicholas Thomas, *The Return of Curiosity: What Museums Are Good For in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 131.
[127] McShine, *The Museum as Muse*, inside cover.
[128] Ibid.

by taking a more personal and collaborative approach to exhibition-making.[129] As these art practices increasingly made demands around the presentation of works, it became no longer feasible for museums to simply acquire discrete objects and incorporate them within existing display modes, but necessary for them to work directly with artists. As Lane Reylea has written, this shift was also predicated on 'the increased professionalization of the art world and its corresponding etiquette of collegiality', an environment where museum curators and artists often interacted through loose horizontal networks within a shared social scene.[130]

Museum-residencies have been a rare incursion into the arena of shifting relations between contemporary artists and museum programming prior to the 1990s, but there are a few notable cases in the United States. In most of these cases, residencies have found a particular alignment with core values promoted by the museum. An artist-in-residence programme at the Exploratorium (a museum of science, art and human perception) in San Francisco has, since its inception in 1974, invited 4-6 artists every year to develop projects for the museum, resulting in temporary exhibitions, performances, public programmes, as well as artworks that have become part of the permanent collection. One of few early examples of an ongoing museum residency programme, the model is uniquely suited to the museum's interest in fostering research and experimentation, and working across art, science, and learning. In the early years, projects often reflected the rise in large site-specific projects, often resulting in large sculptural installations, but has also long included a wide diversity of practices, often highlighting notions of collaboration and interdisciplinarity.[131] In contrast to an acquisition approach, or even a commissioning one, the residency brings both the benefit of having projects be responsive to site, as well as affirming the primary value of the museum as a place

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[129] Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 8. Lane Relyea expands upon this shift in Lane Relyea, *Your Everyday Art World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), 34-37.
[130] Ibid., 36.
[131] 'Exploratorium Arts Booklet, April 2013–April 2014', San Francisco: Exploratorium Center for Art and Inquiry, 2014, 3.

of exploration, becoming a site of ongoing research, investigation and development for its residents.[132]

In another early case, at the Studio Museum Harlem, residencies also aligned with a primary value and prerogative of the museum: to support and promote the work of artists of African and/or Afro-Latinx descent. Operating since 1968, year-long residencies have supported the professional development and institutional exposure of many artists and the programme has gained a prominent reputation for incubating artists who would go on to have highly successful careers.[133] While distinct from most later museum residencies that not only provide patronage but also expect a site-responsive project or research, it stands as a prominent and successful example of how institutions could use residencies as a way to signal their commitment to the development of emerging artists. Both of these programmes are fairly unique (with the residency trend really only picking up pace from the 1990s) but can be seen as part of a gradually rising culture of institutions facilitating artistic development at the site of the museum.

In his 1997 book *Experience or Interpretation: The Dilemma of Museums of Modern Art* former Tate director Nicholas Serota argued that modern art museums had, over the preceding decade, progressively shifted away from being places that primarily used art works in interpretative displays related to the history of art, towards ones that gave greater autonomy to individual artists and their artworks.[134] He identified several changes, from curatorial practices of the 1990s giving greater space and attention to the works of single artists;

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[132] For a longer discussion of the value of the residency programme to the museum's ethos, see Marina McDougall, 'The Exploratorium: art as inquiry', in *Art in Science Museums: Towards a Post-Disciplinary Approach,* Camilla Rossi-Linnemann and Giulia de Martini eds. (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), E-book, Chapter 5.1.

[133] On the reputation and impact of the programme see Shantay Robinson, 'Studio Museum in Harlem Ushers in Residents of the World's Stage', *Black Art in America*, January 16 2019, accessed 10 June 2021; and Melissa Smith, 'The Studio Museum Residency Has Shaped the World's Understanding of Black Contemporary Art. That's a Lot of Responsibility', *artnet news*, September 3 2019, accessed 10 June 2021, https://news.artnet.com/market/studio-museum-residency-analysis-1638781.

[134] Nicholas Serota, *Experience Or Interpretation: The Dilemma of Museums of Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000).

increasing involvement by living artists in how their work was displayed; and the rise of site-specific practices in the museum and artist projects which engaged with the 'taxonomies and history of the museum itself.'[135] On the one hand, the emergence of residencies might be seen to dovetail with this larger trend: giving time and space to artists to develop work on-site would certainly appear to signal greater autonomy for artists and their artworks within museum contexts, warding off the old charge that museums decontextualise objects by taking them from their sites of production to utilise them within curatorially determined narratives.[136] On the other hand, as I will go on to discuss, residencies have also been used to fulfil wider programming needs and are therefore arguably tethered to the museum's key priorities, narratives, and agendas rather than the artists.

In Serota's account, following the rise of site-specific installations and sculptures, 'realized in the place of exhibition itself,' the gallery and museum had become a kind of studio.[137] Daniel Buren's famously mistrusting account of the studio depicted it as performing an 'idealizing and ossifying function' as an ivory tower of production, and the secondary frame of the museum/gallery as subjecting the artist's work 'to conform to the banality of the space that receives it'.[138] Buren's own heroic depiction of Constantin Brancusi's actions to thwart the dispersal of his work, bequeathing his entire studio in 1956 to the French state to be reconstructed posthumously, is one example of wider trends wherein the museum has sought to exchange values with the artist's studio. Forms of coincidence between production and display in the museum have included studio reconstructions such as Brancusi's, site-specific installations, and the introduction of all manner of studio-type situations in museum

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[135] Ibid., 38.
[136] Daniel Buren, translated by Thomas Repensek, 'The Function of the Studio', (English) *October* 10, (Fall 1979): 51–58.
[137] Serota, *Experience Or Interpretation*, 38.
[138] Buren, 'The Function of the Studio', 55.

spaces, from visible conservation labs to education studios, to on-site residency-studios. As Lane Reylea has written, citing changes from around the 1960s,

> the studio and the museum begin to recede as emblems of a former static binary division between the work's birthplace and its entombment, between the autonomous, inward-turned chamber housing the artist's unique, individual creativity and the museum's equally impervious permanent collection representing a transcendent "official"—national, canonical—culture. What supersede them are more temporal, elapsing events, spaces of fluid interchange between objects, activities, and people.[139]

Open studio models in artist-residencies, where artists actually make work on-site in publicly accessible studios, might be characterised in terms of a far more fluid flow of temporalised spaces for showcasing artistic and museum-based processes. However, I would argue that they are not simply an example of a dissolving dichotomy between studio and museum but can also be an almost nostalgic re-performance of this binary. Take, for example, the case of textile artist Mackenzie Kelly-Frère who in 2011 was asked to participate in an open studio artist residency, responding to the exhibition *Laurie Herrick: Weaving Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* at the Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland, Oregon, by creating a new woven work within the space of the exhibition itself. This was part of a supplementary programme around the main exhibition that curator Namita Gupta Wiggers describes as 'adding a contemporary lens on how work from the past can be used to shape the future through the living craft of weaving.'[140] Kelly-Frère, while enjoying the ways the programme challenged his practice and thinking, also describes it as a 'spectacle' and 'performance' and as a 'fetishization of process', functioning very differently from his usual studio practice due to having to work in public.[141]

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[139] Reylea, *Your Everyday Artworld*, 37.
[140] Namita Gupta Wiggers, 'Introduction to Laurie Herrick, Weaving Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', in *Laurie Herrick, Weaving Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (Portland: Museum of Contemporary Craft, 2011), 2.
[141] Mackenzie Kelly-Frère, 'When the Studio Becomes the Spectacle: A Reluctant Itinerant Weaver Talks About the Weather in Alberta', *TEXTILE* 14 (January 2, 2016): 74–83, 75.

One the one hand, residencies such as these give literal space over to artists and their processes, but oftentimes, these processes are also being symbolically tied to collections or exhibitions, as in Kelly-Frère's case.[142] The Museum of Art and Design (MAD) in New York runs a programme that sits somewhere between a residency and an artist-taught workshop. Each day, from Tuesdays through Sundays, a different artist or designer is scheduled to attend the museum to make work within a studio that is open to the public.[143] Artist Derek Haffar, who was a studio artist in 2014, described how visitors, who could either enter the studio and interact with him, or watch from the outside, were 'often a little confused. The studio is the first thing they see right out of the elevator, and they expect an exhibit.'[144] A kind of cross-identification is at play between the open-studio residency, which exposes contemporary practitioners at work, and the collections, which sit in close proximity, the two exchanging meanings and values.

In other cases, artist-residents have a more private studio that is made intermittently accessible through studio visits or tours. For example, nine-month long residencies at the V&A residencies, hosted by their Learning Department, entail work in three on-site studios, including one specific to ceramics, a programme which emphasises both the artist as having unique access to the museum's collections and being able to conduct in-depth research, as well as being available to museum visitors through open studios, where audiences are given 'a chance to see the artists at work and discuss their process and practice.'[145] As a visitor on two

[142] For example, the residency / open studio event, *Studio System II*, 2018, at the Torrance Art Museum, California, see David S. Rubin, 'An Artist Residency Urbanized', Torrance Art Museum, accessed 11 June 2021, http://www.torranceartmuseum.com/news/2018/7/11/visual-art-source-editors-roundtable.
[143] Museum of Arts and Design, 'Artist Studios', accessed 11 June 2021, http://madmuseum.org/programs/artist-studios.
[144] Lisa Chau, 'Interview with Museum of Arts and Design's Artist-In-Residence, Derek Haffar', *HuffPost Arts & Culture*, 23 June 2014, accessed 11 June 2021, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/interview-with-museum-of-_b_5513882.
[145] Victoria and Albert Museum, 'Open studios', accessed 3 June 2021, https://www.vam.ac.uk/whatson/programmes/open-studio.

occasions to these studios, I had the sense of being given special access to a semi-private behind-the-scenes area of the museum.[146]

As part of programming in relation to exhibitions or collections, it could be argued such residencies primarily serve to amplify existing narratives and taxonomies within the museum, with artist activities acting as partly demonstrative of modes of making that can be tied to the collections, adding personal, affective, and tactile dimensions around more ocularcentric and static displays – something I explore further later in this chapter in regard to persistent metaphors of 'activating' and 'enlivening' collections (2.4: The Museum-as-Mausoleum & Contemporary Activation). Speaking on the success of the ceramics residency studio at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (V&A), Senior Curator Alun Graves notes how its location near the galleries means it is 'completely integrated within the interpretive framework of the gallery'.[147] Art Historian Glen R. Brown notes in the same discussion that this demonstrative role has a long history in regards to painting, such as painters working out in the public galleries of the Louvre.[148] Instead of the museum *as* studio, or the museum and studio as ontologically dissolved, such spectacles stage the artist's studio as an interlocutory and educational site in relation to more fixed displays, creating a narrative of the continuity of artists' practices across history while making use of the fairly contemporary phenomenon of the artist as a mediator and interpreter of collections. Moreover, oftentimes the work artists make in residency studios will not go on to be displayed at the museum (other than as part of an open display of process). If curators were once accused of usurping the autonomy of the

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[146] I undertook two studio visits to interview artists-in-residence, including one public studio visit tour, at the V&A. These included an interview and studio visit with Jamie Jenkinson, 23 September 2015, at his studio the V&A; and an interview and studio visit with Yiyun Kang, 14 March 2016, at her studio at the V&A.

[147] Alun Graves, Glen R. Brown, Namita Gupta Wiggers, Christie Brown, Clare Twomey, and Hyeyoung Cho, 'Conversation: Artists Residencies in Museums', *CREAM* (blog), April 1, 2019, transcript of a conversation held at Pompidou Pavilion, Musée National de Céramique, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Paris, 6 May 2016, accessed 11 June 2021, https://cream.ac.uk/ceramics-research-centre-uk/conversations/conversations-musee-national-de-ceramique-sevres-paris/conversation-2-artists-residencies-in-museums/.

[148] Ibid.

artist by choosing the way art objects were to be displayed, now it is oftentimes the artist (rather than the work of art) that might be used as part of wider museum display narratives.

2.2 Museum Interventions

In the wider picture of museum culture (beyond the modern art museum), it is also the case that more fixed and authoritative display narratives have been disrupted by more self-reflexive, multivalent, and visitor-centred approaches. Critical artist interventions, and later, museum-residencies, are not simply marked by forms of greater artistic autonomy away from curatorial framings of their work but can also be seen as part of a complex interplay between contemporary art and museum practices, that could coincide in their concerns over issues of representation, context, and knowledge production. As Claire Robins has written on artist interventions (an amorphous area that traverses various ways contemporary artists have made work within museums that is seen as a form of critique), museums were incentivised to work with artists in order 'to discuss multifaceted aspects of their collections with a public', including being able to help shine a light on museum processes such as the historical context for collection choices.[149] Given space to become the interpreters, artists also become part of a larger narrative writ large in the museum: that of collections being opened up to a wider variety of interpretation and use, and to formerly hidden processes being made more visible.

This new role for artists within the museum occurred against a backdrop of broader changes in museum cultures. In the late 1980s, the field of Museum Studies became increasingly focused on issues of cultural representation and the various contexts and practices which shaped the production of meaning within museum contexts. Art historian

[149] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum: The Pedagogic Potential of Artists' Interventions* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2013), E-book, 5.

Peter Vergo famously identified a 'new museology' that turned away from analysing the various methods used by museums (to conserve, educate, administer and so on), towards more theoretical concerns regarding the purposes of museums and their role within society.[150] Sharon MacDonald has identified three broad areas of interest indicative of this shift: from understanding museum objects as having 'contextual and situated' meanings; to greater examination of social and economic forces once seen as outside of the scope of museology, such as commercial and market driven imperatives; and finally an increased focus on visitor reception and perception.[151] This more visitor-centred and reflexive turn in museology was reflected in museum practices, including the increasing use of contemporary art as a means to provide a form of critical mediation of collections.

The 1990s saw a shift in the nature of museum-based art, as it partly moved on from the political and epistemological concerns of Institutional Critique, which was primarily focused on the art world and its institutions, towards a more general interest in museum practice, with a greater number of interventions occurring in non-art museums.[152] Miwon Kwon positions this shift within a more general transition from a 'critique of the cultural confinement of art' to a much broader 'critique of culture' that was 'inclusive of nonart spaces, nonart institutions and nonart issues.'[153] Throughout the 1990s, museum commissions for artist interventions steadily grew, leading many museums to integrate such collaborations into their ongoing programming.[154]

In general, museum-residency programmes have predominantly emerged more recently, following in the wake of this commissioning trend, and continuing to engender a connection between artists and museum collections, while not necessarily resulting in

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[150] Peter Vergo, *New Museology* (London: Reaktion Books, 1989), 3.
[151] Sharon MacDonald, 'Expanding Museum Studies: An Introduction', in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon MacDonald (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), E-book, 2–3.
[152] See Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*; and Dr Jennifer Barrett and Dr Jacqueline Millner, *Australian Artists in the Contemporary Museum* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2014).
[153] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 24.
[154] Claire Robins argues this in *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, 1.

exhibition projects. Some significant early intervention projects were supported by residencies, and in some cases, artist intervention and artist-residency have been used almost interchangeably.[155] For example, Fred Wilson's seminal 1992-93 exhibition *Mining the Museum* (a project I will look at in more detail shortly) was the result of a one-year long residency in Baltimore, but not every site-specific engagement involving research into collections has been called a residency even if these situations often share much in common. Art historian Khadija Carrol-La briefly describes museum residency programmes as where the institution 'to some extent fosters interventionist thought' – suggesting residencies as developmental stages preceding museum interventions.[156] Angela Weight, who was the Keeper of the Department of Art at the Imperial War Museum (IWM) from 1981 to 2005, and who worked on many contemporary artist residencies and commissions, has noted how 'Artists' residencies were fairly ubiquitous by the early 1980s', having arisen out of the Artist Placement Group residencies that were later adopted by the Arts Council England. The Arts Council provided support for the first IWM residency, a three-month long residency by Denis Masi in 1981, whose artistic processes were made accessible to the public through weekly studio hours, a 'bit like an animal in a zoo actually', in Weight's opinion.[157] For Weight, this public element is crucial to defining something as a residency, describing a later engagement with the artist Bill Woodrow to prepare an exhibition engaging with the institution, as 'not a residency in that he did not have to be in a studio space or meet the public.'[158] Indeed, some form of public

[155] For example, museum interventions and museum residencies were considered jointly (and without clear distinction) at the seminar 'Artist-in-residence/artist interventions in museums', A Museum and Gallery Services Queensland seminar, in partnership with The University of Queensland Art Museum and the Museum Studies program, School of English, Media Studies and Art History, 5 August 2009, see a summary of the event by Louise Martin-Chew, 'Artist-in-residence/artist interventions in museums', accessed 11 June 2021, http://www.magsq.com.au/_dbase_upl/LMC%20article%20FINAL.pdf.
[156] Khadija Carroll La, 'Object to Project: Artist's Interventions in Museums', in *Sculpture in the Museum*, ed. Christopher Marshall (London: Ashgate Press, 2012), 219.
[157] Catherine Moriarty and Angela Weight, 'The Legacy of Interaction: Artists at the Imperial War Museum 1981–2007', *Tate Papers*, No. 9, Spring 2008, accessed 11 June 2021, https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/09/the-legacy-of-interaction-artists-at-the-imperial-war-museum-1981-2007.
[158] Ibid.

interaction or publicity, even if minimal, tends to characterise museum-residencies, although there are also more research-based residencies that do not provide studio-space.[159] As in the IWM example, oftentimes a residency has specific funding attached, usually engendering some form of public programming or promotion around the artist's processes in the museum.

Mark Dion, for instance, has undertaken his paradigmatic excavatory investigations into the way museums produce scientific knowledges at many collecting institutions, but he has officially been an artist-in-residence less often. His residencies reveal a spectrum of different relationships between museums, external funders, and artist, and reveal the diversity of ways museum-based projects are developed. Significant residency engagements by Dion include a 2003 residency with artist J. Morgan Puett at the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia; a three year residency at the Manchester Museum initiated and supported by the University of Manchester's AHRC Research Centre for Studies of Surrealism and its Legacies, Manchester Museum, resulting in Dion's *Bureau of the Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacy* (2005); a 2011 FOR-SITE Foundation residency that enabled development for an exhibition at the Oakland Museum of California; a 2019 artist-residency at the V&A as part of a wider collaborative research project on the influence of Wunderkammern, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; and two production focused residences in 2015 and 2019 at the IMMA specifically linked to two off-site exhibitions. Instead of a strict demarcation between museum-residencies and other ways that contemporary artists have engaged with collections, residencies can both be understood as part of the way that new commissions, exhibitions, and projects develop, as well as, increasingly, holding their own weight as a particular form of engagement that tend to allow some form of focus on the artists' development processes. Although there has been a trend towards more programmes that are development-oriented and do not guarantee, or indeed allow for, large-scale production

[159] Research-based residencies were discussed at the conference, 'The Artist Researcher'.

outcomes, residencies remain imbricated within processes of commissioning larger-scale interventions or projects. I want to turn briefly now to two prominent examples where the residency format has formed a prominent aspect of the representation of a contemporary art project within the museum. That is to say, while residencies linked to production can oftentimes fade into the background in comparison to later outcomes, in some cases they have can form an important part of the symbolic apparatus around a project. Such projects have given added weight to the meaning of residencies in museums, as something beyond simply a facilitating arrangement for a project.

Mining the Museum and the Museum as Field-Site

In the lead-up to his exhibition *Mining The Museum* (1992-1993) at The Maryland Historic Society – one of the seminal museum interventions of the 1990s – Fred Wilson undertook a residency in the museum, making frequent visits, working from an office, and spending time in the collection; discovering, researching and selecting objects that would end up in his now famous arrangements.[160] The Contemporary, a Baltimore based arts organization that facilitated the project, had at the outset asked The Maryland Historic Society to agree that they 'would not refuse Wilson access to any part of the collection and would accommodate whatever requests he made, and Wilson would become part of the project staff, wearing whichever hats were required: curator, registrar, archivist, director; or trustee.'[161] This high level of access was designed to allow for uninhibited critical exploration of the museum and its practices. Concerned that museum staff would already have a 'set vision of the collection', The Contemporary arranged for independent volunteers to assist with Wilson's research.[162] Co-curator of the exhibition, Lisa G.Corrin, writes: 'The result was that Wilson excavated

[160] For a full account of the exhibition and Wilson's residency see Lisa Graziose Corrin, 'Mining the museum: artists look at museums, museums look at themselves', in Fred Wilson, *Mining the Museum: An Installation*, ed. Lisa Graziose Corrin (Baltimore; New York: New Press, 1994), 1–22.
[161] Ibid., 12.
[162] Ibid.

important new information about objects and, in several cases, discovered objects not known to exist by any museum staff.'[163] Corrin recounts one such incident (described by Wilson in a lecture to The Seattle Art Museum) where a Ku Klux Klan mask, recorded in the files, needed to be searched for.[164] Once located, Wilson recalls a staff member saying, 'Well, we just don't know what to do with things like that.'[165] The anecdote suggests that the item was doubly lost, arguably both through error and wilful avoidance, a situation addressed by Wilson's public exposure of the object, which he arranged inside an antique baby pram as part of the installation, *Modes of Transport 1770-1910*.

Corrin's depiction of the residency characterises it as a period of fairly unfettered investigation, one with the potential to spread out into every corner of the museum, both spatially and conceptually, arguably giving the resulting project a degree of critical integrity or authenticity, as Wilson's selections were positioned as based on a long investigative process. At the same time, most critical responses on the project have largely focused on the final exhibition and Wilson's playful subversions of museum practices and conventions. On the installation *Metalwork*, an arrangement of silverware and slave shackles in a display case, art historian Frazer Ward argues that: 'The effect of this was to reveal not so much the exclusion of the material evidence of an alternative historical account from the collection but the ways in which it had been suppressed in categorization and display.'[166] But while Wilson's critique of the museum extended far beyond an excavation of suppressed objects, it is arguably centred on evoking exactly this process. His mining of the museum, on one level a critical examination of institutional conventions, was also an actual process of discovering materials in the private spaces of the museum and making them visible. But in this way, Wilson's time

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[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid., Footnote 49, 21.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Frazer Ward, 'The Haunted Museum: Institutional Critique and Publicity', *October* 73 (July 1, 1995): 87.

in residence, accessing the collections, is also somewhat eclipsed and accumulated by the exhibition, positioned as a period of preparation for a fairly totalizing critique of the museum.

As residencies have become more commonplace, few enable the time and level of access granted to Wilson at the Maryland Historic Society – Wilson worked on and off for nearly a year, spending the two months before the opening more permanently on-site, and worked with nearly a hundred people – nor do they usually expect such totalizing critique.[167] The Maryland Historic Society struggled after *Mining The Museum*, not because of any controversy stirred, but because of their inability to sustain ongoing critical projects.[168] The development of more continuous contemporary art programming of artists' interventions has had success elsewhere, notably at both the Imperial War Museums and The Freud Museum, while open-ended residencies, such as at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, The Hammer Museum, and the V&A, have brought the benefit of allowing ongoing processes of artistic development and research to be made visible, and have also led to major intervention or installation projects.

In contrast to the way that notable museum interventions have at times been facilitated by an artist-residency as a period of research and development that precedes a later outcome, other major artist projects, such as Biswas' Hermit-in-Residence example, have either used the format of a residency as part of the project or the residency has taken on far greater significance as part of the symbolic structure of a project. Clare Robins concludes her book on artist interventions with a chapter designating artist interventions of the 21st Century as 'affable interventionists', arguing that interventions had been veering even further away from 'parodic and ironic methodologies towards closer affiliations with museum professionals.'[169] This affable turn towards co-production certainly dovetails with the trend

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[167] Details of Wilson's residency are according to Lisa Graziose Corrin, 'Mining the museum'.
[168] This is according to George Ciscle, Director of The Contemporary during the exhibition, quoted in Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, 213.
[169] Ibid., 199.

towards museum-residencies, also arguably attributable, as Robins suggests, towards ongoing professionalisation in the museum field.[170] A growth in museum studies, museum education and curatorial courses, and more diversified roles for artists within museums (as well as the frequent overlap between artists and museum professionals), have no doubt contributed to a sense that museum-residencies exist to enable processes in a broadly collaborative way, rather than solicit perspectives positioned as antagonistic or entirely from outside. That being said, there is still often a sense that artists can do something beyond what museum professionals may be able to in their more official roles. Alun Graves has spoken on how there is both an overlap between artists and museum professionals, with artists often taking on roles as educators and curators, but at the same time, 'the artist has the ability to operate in ways that are curatorially transgressive.'[171] In the same discussion, curator Namita Gupta Wiggers notes how residencies can shift the authoritative role of the curator, but also that curators 'ultimately give the permission' for certain actions.[172] Nevertheless, this discussion broadly emphasises the way these curators involved in residencies see the artists as being able to expand on their role and allow things to happen.[173]

Craig Richardson has even suggested the use of 'embedded reinterpretation' as a replacement for the term 'intervention' due precisely to the oftentimes collaborative nature of artist-museum relationships, and the tendency of artists 'approaching the environment as auto-ethnographers, potentially utilising the narratives in the museum in their engagement with resident artefacts'.[174] For Richardson, while artists may take a variety of approaches to interpreting collections, including phenomenological responses, or in-depth archival research, importantly, the framework for this production does not construct the artist as a 'critical

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[170] Ibid.
[171] Graves et al., 'Conversation: Artists Residencies in Museums'.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Craig Richardson, 'Artists' 'Embedded Reinterpretation' in Museums and Sites of Heritage', *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 17, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 22.

outsider', but tends to situate them 'not simply *in* a museum but also *in* history, into which they bring newly found unknowns.'[175] The embodied presence of artists in close relation to collection objects is often a key trope within residencies, one that shifts the focus from artists *coming in* to disrupt and intervene in museal processes and histories, towards their immersed, embedded, embodied, and often highly affective and subjectivised encounters with museum collections. Richardson describes such tendencies as 'expansionary', and 'towards extending or even unsettling the Museum's seemingly static conditions.'[176] This expanding, extending, or unsettling of supposed 'stasis', can in residencies be performed through the embedded processes and presence of the artist in the museum, such as in Biswas' dialogic project connecting largely overlooked collection items to new audiences / participants online over the course of his 'hermitage', one that centred on broadcasting his residency processes via the webcam and blog. The narratives of such projects hinge on the artist becoming interested in, curious or passionate about things in the museum, and often representing them working closely with objects or sites in the museum.

Take for example a major residency project at the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt called *Object Atlas – Fieldwork in the Museum* (2011), where seven artist-residents were asked to inhabit new facilities of the museum that were being launched and to make their own selections of materials from the museum's ethnographic collections in addition to creating new responsive artworks for an exhibition. These new facilities included apartments, an image archive, new exhibition spaces, educational spaces, and the 'Weltkulturen Labor', described as 'an experimental lab for analysing and comparing objects and developing new productions.'[177] A press release for the exhibition began, 'seven artists were invited over the course of 2011 to undertake expeditions into the heart of the museum's stores in Frankfurt' emphasizing the

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[175] Ibid., 23.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Clémentine Deliss, 'Object Atlas: Fieldwork in the Museum', in *Object Atlas: Fieldwork in the Museum*, ed. Clémentine Deliss (Bielefeld: Kerber Verlag, 2012), 18.

processual and embedded nature of the project.[178] A comprehensive catalogue on the project notably emphasises the processes of contemporary artistic 'fieldwork' through the residency programme almost as much as the final exhibition. Curator Clémentine Deliss' catalogue essay draws upon synergies between the long struggle for the collection to find adequate space for display, the new flexible laboratory spaces of the new facilities, and the nature of the *Object Atlas* project as something that is about 'display and method'.[179] By having artists come in and make use of the collections through the new facilities, they could become exemplars for new more open-ended, discursive and flexible approaches towards research and display. The residency is clearly part of a domestic turn for the museum represented by the new live and work spaces, facilities engendering what Deliss describes as leading to 'a domestic cycle of research that takes on an emphatically human dimension in which day and night combine.'[180] Akin to *Mining the Museum,* this project finds connections between quite literal processes of artists standing-in for museum professionals (here anthropologists) and evoking a spatial journey into collections depicted as having been for too long underutilised. Here the role of *residing* takes on an even more significant dimension, as artists were some of the first to make use of the live and work facilities. The artists were less outsiders / intervenors, there to metaphorically 'mine' the museum, but were notably invited to actually live there, to make themselves at home in the collection. The residency thus took on a kind of domesticating potential, aligned with the museums' desire to provide greater, more meaningful and personal access to collections.

2.3 Artists as Educators

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[178] E-flux announcements, 'Object Atlas', accessed 11 June 2021, https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/34645/object-atlas/.
[179] Clémentine Deliss 'Object Atlas', 19 and 11.
[180] Ibid., 21.

Residencies have increasingly been initiated by museum education departments, that to some degree, have imbibed some of the lessons and methods of artist interventions. Residencies may be an ideal fit for education departments not only because they can solicit the artist as part of educational programming, but because the museum is also framed as a site of learning for the artist. In contrast to residencies tied to curatorial departments, these residencies rarely result in an exhibition project, but usually entail some form of public programming such as talks, workshops, tours, and open studios. There is also a somewhat separate but relevant trajectory, particularly in the United States, of artist-residencies based in schools that have then worked closely with museum education departments to run learning programmes with partner schools. The Guggenheim's Learning Through Art (LTA) programme, for example, sends teaching artists into New York City public schools where they develop art projects that incorporate visits to the museum. As such programmes primarily entail the artist being resident within a school, I don't discuss such programmes here, but they can certainly be seen as part of a spectrum of ways that artist-residencies and museum educational programming overlap.

Possibly the earliest case of an artist-residency in a museum context is a programme that began in 1963, administered by the American Federation of Arts and sponsored by the Ford Foundation, to award teaching residencies for artists in museums across the United States, in the hope that hosting museums would then also hold exhibitions of the resident-artists' work, although in some cases exhibitions were arranged first and residencies then followed (some were even offered and declined by exhibiting artists), maintaining something of a separation between the artist's educational work (such as giving lectures) and their involvement in exhibitions.[181] Today, there are a plethora of ways that residents are engaged as part of learning activities, both in more routine activities such as artist talks, workshops,

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[181] An archive of this programme is available at the Smithsonian, Archives of American Art, American Federation of Arts records, '3.1: Artists in Residence (Ford Foundation), 1957-1966', accessed 11 June 2021, https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/american-federation-arts-records-5411/subseries-3-1.

and open studios, and sometimes in ways more integrated into the form of projects. The New Museum, New York, uses seasonal themes generated by their artist-in-residence to schedule a wide-variety of public programming and engage community partners; and the J. Paul Getty Museum's Getty Artists Program (GAP) hosts yearlong projects that have generally engaged large student groups in collaborative ways.

A criticism of the educational role of residencies has been made by artist Ernesto Pujol who, noting a trend in the US towards 'open-process museum-based residencies', argues both that these can amount to a 'deprofessionalised spectacle' of the artists' creative process, and that there exists a hierarchical divide between education and curatorial departments, with invitations from the former not seen to carry as much weight. In Pujol's view this has created an 'unacceptable cultural landscape of parallel programming.'[182] Pujol argues that this problem is all the worse for the fact that education departments often solicit artists from minority backgrounds to do residencies as part of a desire to connect with local communities, yet such projects are often ignored by the wider art world.[183] Writing on educational projects more broadly, curator Sally Tallant has also critiqued the hierarchy and division of labour between education and curatorial departments and called for a more integrated approach.[184] A counter-argument might be that there are now a growing number of artists whose work is well suited to educational departments and who might not desire a traditional exhibition outcome. Many have noted a pedagogical or educational turn in contemporary art, which has seen many artists adopt strategies that resemble educational methods, such as the incorporation of lectures, talks and workshops into their work.[185] Tallant has also argued, however, that such 'pedagogic projects', supported by curators, may lead more to an educational aesthetic than an

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[182] Pujol, 'The Artist as Educator', 5.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Sally Tallant, 'Experiments in Integrated Programming', *Tate Papers*, no. 11, Spring 2009, accessed 11 June 2021, http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/issue-11.
[185] See generally *Curating and the Educational Turn*, Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson eds. (London; Amsterdam: Open Editions; de Appel, 2010).

educational end (where the product might be 'a spectacular event rather than an educational experience') and noted some curators have tended to distance such projects from the work of educational departments.[186] Residencies also sometimes use artists in more or less standardised educational programming, such as slotting into regular open studio hours, so the opportunity for more expansive artist-led pedagogical projects may be limited in such circumstances. One thing to be further considered, though, is that educational activities, while still subject to divisions within the artworld, are a professional reality for many artists, so development in this area can still be valuable even if it is not seen as part of the direct content of an artist's work, and artists have been known to fully exploit the pedagogical potential of residencies. Take, for example, a fifteen-month long residency by Peter Hristoff at The Metropolitan Museum of Art that included a whole range of public programmes designed by the artist:

> The suite of programs and projects encompassed by his residency included monthly blog posts, drawing programs in the galleries, and a two-day long "marathon" in the studio…Hristoff also presented two gallery talks to foster dialogue with adult visitors, and designed an international collaboration between himself, the Met's high school interns, and traditional weavers in Turkey. Since the conclusion of his residency, Hristoff has continued to integrate The Met into his teaching at SVA.[187]

While Hristoff's own art practice is primarily concerned with object making, and he spent significant time in-residence sketching in the museum, he also identifies as an educator, and a residency such as this could cater to both sides of his professional identity. While teaching and audience engagement activities may indeed often be looked upon as lesser opportunities than exhibition opportunities, it's not uncommon to find residencies where artists have specifically chosen to add elements of public engagement and explication of their processes, such as a personal blog, or for artists to initiate their own informal research-based residencies

[186] Sally Tallant, 'Experiments in Integrated Programming'.

[187] Jacqueline Terrassa and Maya Valladares, 'The Art Museum as a Generative Site: A Case Study of The Metropolitan Museum of Art ', in *Academics, Artists, and Museums: 21st-Century Partnerships*, eds. Irina D. Costache and Clare Kunn (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Taylor & Francis, 2019), E-book, Chapter 13.

in museums. On the other side of this equation is the fact that many programmes, which do not automatically offer exhibition opportunities, may end up working with some of their residents on larger projects, potentially meaning artists are in a position of needing to maximise opportunities that may come with few guarantees.[188] While the pathways between residencies and larger display or project opportunities within the museum are far from routine, the overall trend is towards more programmes that are uncoupled from direct exhibition opportunities.

Some residencies might be viewed as indicative of what Andrea Fraser has famously described as the turn towards artists providing 'services' within institutional contexts – forms of work undertaken as part of projects that, Fraser argues, can be distinguished from other kinds of similar artistic practice by being 'constituted in relationship to externally determined interests or needs.'[189] For Fraser, a 'service' is not only a type of work but refers to the set of economic and social relations created by that work, usually with the artist providing something that aligns with particular institutional values and strategies (for example, as part of public education, social outreach, or institutional self-critique). In an article for museum professionals arguing why they should start a residency, the author defines residencies in overtly 'service' based terms, describing them as 'when a museum recruits a person (or group of people) with a specific skill or attribute to produce work, provide advice, and/or promote the museum for a defined period of time.'[190] This seems a rare moment of transparency from

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[188] This issue was touched upon in a panel discussion on research residencies between Tim Corum, Horniman Museum and Gardens; Alison Duke, Collections Manager, Foundling Museum, and Bethany Haynes, Senior Producer, Battersea Arts Centre. Corum mentioned that there was funding at the Horniman for residencies but not for outputs, but that some projects had occurred. Duke mentioned a residency at the Foundling Museum that had been self-initiated by a PhD student. This conversation reveals the evolving and sometimes adhoc nature of some residencies, that begin from the artist entering the museum as a researcher. Tim Corum, Alison Duke, and Bethany Hayes, Panel 1: 'A Collections Perspective', panel discussion, at Artquest, 'The Artist Researcher'.

[189] Andrea Fraser, 'What's intangible, transitory, mediating, participatory, and rendered in the public sphere? (1996)', in Andrea Fraser, *Museum Highlights: The Writings of Andrea Fraser*, ed. Alexander Alberro (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005), 49.

[190] Ashleigh Hibbins, 'What Exactly is an Artist-in-Residence (and Should Your Museum Have One)?', *Museum Hack*, 25 October 2020, accessed 11 June 2021, https://museumhack.com/artist-in-residence/.

a museum professional, as the promotional language around residencies generally casts the museum more purely as disinterested patron, providing things such as time and space and the chance to access collections. What needs further interrogation are the forms of symbolic value residencies create and how these align with different institutional values beyond the patronage of artists and the desire to work collaboratively, such as providing greater visibility to collections and creating forms of vicarious public access or agency, bringing liveness, tactility and sociality to ocularcentric displays, and suggesting the museum as a place of ongoing research, investigation, self-reflection and reinterpretation.

2.4 The Museum-as-Mausoleum & Contemporary Activation

One of the most prevalent theorisations of the museum remains the notion that in plucking objects from the ordinary flow of time and preserving them for posterity, the museum also separates them from more meaningful cultural lives, thus stripping them of their vitality.[191] This notion that 'museums kill culture' has been, according to Didier Maleuvre, a persistent 'doxa of modern philosophy', and that far from being a critique that scholarship has worn out, 'the question concerning an authentic rapport to culture is raised every time the museum is the object of serious analysis.'[192] Not only in theory but in practice, museums have addressed questions over the decontextualization of objects, inauthenticity, and accessibility in a myriad of ways, and contemporary promotional and educational language remains infused with terms that attest to the museum's vitality and desire for lived connection, such as activating,

[191] Didier Maleuvre writes, 'In a line that runs from Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy (the cultural eminence who, in France, first theorized the antimuseum critique) through Hegel, Nietzsche, the first historical avant-garde, Dewey, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, esthetic discourse has bemoaned the separation of art from existence, a separation for which the museum is held largely responsible.', in Didier Maleuvre, *Museum Memories: History, Technology, Art* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999), 2.
[192] Ibid., 20.

engaging and enlivening collections. Adorno famously employed the museum-as-mausoleum analogy, calling museums the 'family sepulchres of works of art' that 'testify to the neutralization of culture', while also acknowledging that it is the very operation of creating distance in the museum, between an object and its original context, which both facilitates a viewer's pleasure and causes questions over their vitality to arise.[193] Adorno argues that such questions triggered by the museum 'would probably never occur to anyone who was at home with art and not a mere visitor.'[194] Adorno finds redemption for the museum precisely in giving in to its sepulchral quality, suggesting that visitors 'pick out two or three paintings, and concentrate on them as fixedly as if they really were idols', essentially arguing that if museums are burial sites, then it is obscene to worship at every tomb.[195] This idealised use of time in the museum – a focused, contemplative and respectful visit to a select few objects – might come close to the kind of time that museum-residencies often purport to afford. Time to spend with the objects of the museum, to seek inspiration, sometimes after hours, when the crowds are gone, and often enabled by special access to the collection, yet still only ever as a temporary guest, a fascinated, curious, passionate or adoring visitor. It is this quality of focus and attention that arguably has come to define some residencies, which in some cases do not provide dedicated living or working space but are characterised by a series of visits to the museum. Take for example, a research residency by the artist Lucy Cash at the Foundling Museum, comprehensively documented through a blog and resulting in an iterative series of 'small interventions' across different sites she investigated at the museum.[196] The diary-style of the blog highlights the highly personal and inter-subjective nature of Cash's research and encounters with people and objects.[197]

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[193] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Valéry Proust Museum' in *Prisms* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1983): 175 and 179.
[194] Ibid., 179.
[195] Ibid., 185.
[196] Excerpts of Cash's original blog for the project can be found on her website, Lucy Cash, 'Foundling Museum Residency', accessed 12 June 2021, https://luminous-cloud.com/all-work/foundling-museum-residency.
[197] Ibid.

At the same time, many residencies can be thought to readily align with depictions of the museum that were particularly propounded within postmodern theory as an over-activated and spectacularised space associated with mass consumerism and interlinked with the wider visual landscape of commodity capitalism. Philosopher Jean Baudrillard's famous subversion of the sepulchral metaphor in his depiction of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in 'The Beaubourg-Effect: Implosion and Deterrence', depicts it not as a mausoleum but as a carcass of culture, defined by a ceaseless flow of the masses, which are the museum's 'only contents', and where the 'cultural objects have no other purpose than that of maintaining one in a state of integrated mass.'[198] At the same time, shifts arising in the 1980s and 1990s signalled by new museology, the rise in museum education, and the museum's autocritical tendencies, to varying extents imbibed critiques both in regard to elitism and decontextualization, as well as growing commercialisation. This growing focus on visitor experience, including through the use of contemporary art and museum-residencies, occupied a slippery position between constructions of the museum as an elitist mausoleum and as a mass spectacle, often with education as the interlocutor that could resolve these tensions. Eileen Hooper-Greenhill described this more viewer-focused approach in 1992, making explicit mention of residencies:

> Where in the past, the experience of visiting a museum was two-dimensional, an experience of a slow, controlled, surveyed walk past completed displays designed without the needs or interests of the visitor in mind, now experiences are three-dimensional. A museum visit can include theatre or 'living history' in social history collections; science centre exhibits that are only complete when the visitor/client operates or uses them; or discussions with artists that are in residence in art galleries. Many of these experiences depend on the visitor's participation to be effective: the actors offer food to the visitors; the artists are expected to talk as they work in their public studios; science demonstrators ask questions as they carry out experiments in the open gallery spaces.[199]

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[198] Jean Baudrillard, translated by Rosalind Krauss and Annette Michelson, 'The Beaubourg-Effect: Implosion and Deterrence,' *October* 20 (1982): 7 and 8.
[199] Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge,* 211.

Along similar lines, Boris Groys has argued that while traditionally the 'main occupation of art was to resist the flow of time', something achieved through the museum and collection, now museums have increasingly become 'a stage, on which the flow of time is performed.'[200] This he attributes to both the rise in the curatorial project and temporary exhibition, in which stationary artworks become 'temporalized, subject to a certain scenario.'[201] Hal Foster has written cynically of the trend towards supplementary activity around the museum's static objects, arguing that this 'activation helps to validate the museum, to overseers and onlookers alike, as relevant, vital, or simply busy, yet, more than the viewer it is the museum that the museum seeks to activate.'[202] There are certainly a plethora of museum-residencies that might fit Foster's critique, producing 'enlivening' and supplementary activities explicitly tethered to more static displays, as in the cases discussed earlier of open studio programmes. Indeed, it was interesting to see that one of the first events I attended as part of this research, the 2016 annual conference of the Contemporary Art Society (an organization dedicated to donating artworks to public institutions in the United Kingdom), titled 'Reactivate the Collection', focused on how 'museums work to engage with wider audiences and add value to their displays', and prominently featured discussions on numerous residency projects.[203] From large-scale exhibitions through to small educational interventions, everywhere residencies appeared to be involved in re-activation tethered to display. A prime example of the residency used to 'activate collections', included talks on the residency project 'Dancing Museums', a series of residencies in museums across Europe, including at the National Gallery in London,

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[200] Boris Groys, 'Entering the Flow: Museum between Archive and Gesamtkunstwerk', *e-flux*, Journal #50 - December 2013, accessed 12 June 2022, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/50/59974/entering-the-flow-museum-between-archive-and-gesamtkunstwerk/.

[201] Ibid.

[202] Hal Foster, 'In Praise of Actuality', in *Bad New Days: Art, Criticism, Emergency*, (London: Verso, 2015), 134–135.

[203] Contemporary Art Society, 'Annual Conference: Reactivate the Collection', 13 May 2016, Museum of London, conference, conference documentation available online, accessed 12 June 2021, https://www.contemporaryartsociety.org/resources/annual-conference-reactivate-collection/.

where choreographers were invited to test and develop their ideas out on the gallery floors.[204] Descriptions and images of ludic and spontaneous appearances of dancers within the National Gallery, encountering unsuspecting museum visitors during periods of experimentation, improvisation, and rehearsal, seemed to perfectly embody Foster's argument that the museum was becoming more invested in a spectacle of liveness rather than facilitating meaningful viewer engagement.[205] At the same time, residencies such as these are not only invested in 'activating collections' but allow residents some degree of autonomy over the spaces they use for the purposes of developing work.

I contend, that it would be far too reductive an interpretation of how museum-residencies operate to take these metaphors of stasis and liveness as given, rather ideas of 'activating' a static museum are part of a fantasy structure that residencies project into. Museum-residencies usually strike different registers across a programme and even within individual residencies, oftentimes between registers of quiet, intimate, contemplative research (such as through an encounter between resident and collections), as well as being part of audience engagement and educational activities. Museum-residencies even provide a possible symbolic leavening of the problems of cultural decontextualization and over-activation (in allowing artists to form more private and intimate connections to collections), while also servicing desires for supplementary interpretation, mediation, activation, and accessibility *through* the exposure of the artists' own processes. It is often not the case that more 'withdrawn' activities and more 'activated' ones are neatly separable. For example, Biswas' status as a hermit removed from the public eye was only conceptually realised through his intensive online performances and interactions. Where unscheduled research and experimentation is allowed, residents may find themselves working through both the quietest

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[204] Further details of this project can be found at Dancing Museums, 'Home', accessed 12 June 2021, https://www.dancingmuseums.com; and National Gallery, 'Dancing Museums', accessed 12 June 2021, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about-us/press-and-media/press-releases/dancing-museums.
[205] Contemporary Art Society, 'Annual Conference: Reactivate the Collection'.

and busiest times and spaces of a museum or specifically seek out particular situations for different scales of encounter.

In this, I agree with Nick Prior's arguments that, instead of enacting dichotomies such as between aesthetic contemplation and amusement, museums are 'complex, double-coded organizations in which composite tendencies are absorbed and played out', and that they 'can, and do, package themselves in different ways to different audiences.'[206] Part of the use-value of museum-residencies is that they can help to articulate this very heterogeneity, sometimes opening up different museum sites to the plural, relational, experimental, research-based, and processual quality of multiple engagements by a diverse array of residents. In this regard, it could be argued then that residencies simply slide into the wide diversity of ways that museum's programme around different sites and to engage different audiences. Crucially, however, artist-residents usually have a fair amount of autonomy over the sites and publics they might engage, and the modes of viewership, research, or engagement they might exemplify. As in the way the *Object Atlas* artists exemplified the way new spaces could become a laboratory for audiences, residencies can symbolically suggest the openness of the museum towards forms of multivalent interpretation and use. It is crucially the artist's journey exploring the museum that often becomes the central feature of residencies, and as with Biswas cajoling his online audiences to come up with more inventive justifications to retain museum objects, they can become demonstrative of creative ways to use the collection, and play out a script of both quietly accessing and activating collections.

Embodied Encounters with Museum Objects

Oftentimes, artist-in-residence programmes in museums and archives entail the resident having special access to collections, that are often out of public view. As part of changes to

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[206] Nick Prior, 'Having One's Tate and Eating It: Transformations of the Museum in a Hypermodern Era', *Art and Its Publics: Museum Studies at the Millennium,* ed. Andrew McClellan (Malden, MA.: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003), 64.

museum practice signalled by new museology came an opening up of the museum's private spaces, increasing the visibility of formerly concealed collections, and diversifying the forms and types of access to them. Increasingly from the end of the 19th Century to the early 20th Century, museums had demarcated private spaces that were nearly exclusively the domain of museum professionals.[207] In general, such boundaries have rarely been completely, or even largely, dissolved, but access to formerly private areas is conditionally extended to more people, more frequently. Museum theorist and art educator Moira G. Simpson describes museum objects held in the stores as being in a 'semi-restricted region' where they are '…less accessible but still available to members of the public who receive permission to access them, such as bona-fide researchers, students or others who are considered appropriate on cultural or academic grounds.'[208] Contemporary artists have become a group for whom access to museum archives and collections is not only routinely extended, but invited in, increasingly through residencies. Moreover, in museum-residencies, the way in which this access is extended and represented might be seen to provide a kind of symbolic or compensatory access. Unable to extend unlimited access to all, the experiences of the artist in the archive, usually documented in some way, might provide both a form of vicarious access, revealing parts of the archive that would not usually be displayed, while also highlighting the institution as a place willing to open up their collections to varied and dynamic forms of use and research.

Museum objects are both displaced from everyday time, and oftentimes are constructed as taking on a new, slower, temporality in the museum. They are perhaps moved and handled less than in lives outside of the museum, and usually only by experts exercising great care. But even this slow progress is something the museum has increasingly sought to

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[207] See Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, 163; and Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*, 200.

[208] Moira G. Simpson, 'Charting the Boundaries. Indigenous models and parallel practices in the development of the post-museum', in *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed*, eds. Simon J. Knell, Suzanne MacLeod, and Sheila Watson (London; New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2007), E-book, 245.

reveal. Many museums have some form of 'behind-the-scenes' access to formerly private areas, such as glass-fronted rooms that give visibility to working areas such as conservation labs, or through activities such as object handling sessions, as well as tours of archives and open storage areas. Even greater access to these spaces and activities is usually extended to artist-residents, who can draw inspiration from objects that exist across both the public and private spaces of the museum. Moreover, such access is often made visible. For example, descriptions of residencies at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, nearly all mention, and sometimes feature photographs of, residents' visits to the museum's archives and conservation labs.[209] The mobility of the resident to move between these spaces and learn about the lives of its objects, even perhaps to handle them, might be seen as compensatory for lack of more direct public access, the resident acting as a particularly desirable avatar for public access given they may turn their intimate encounters into responsive artworks.

In her writing on the museum shop, Sharon Macdonald argues that the commodity items sold there are part of the 'sensory economy' of the museum, providing access to objects which are indexed to the museum, but which can be picked up, moved, and even taken away.[210] While the faster, more mobile lives of shop items exist in contrast to the 'extensive temporalities' of museum objects (which usually have both long pasts and are destined for long futures), they also borrow from their aura, offering, writes Macdonald, the 'promise that the ephemeral may be made durable.'[211] Compared to the slow work of museum curators, archivists and conservators, residents often make quick work of their connection to museum objects or collections, sometimes even becoming agents of object mobility within the museum. In the first years of the residency at the V&A, residents were given a display case in

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[209] Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 'Artists-in-Residence'.

[210] Sharon MacDonald, 'The Shop: Multiple Economies of Things in Museums', in *Museum X. Zur Neuvermessung eines mehrdimensionalen Raumes*, Friedrich von Bose, Kerstin Poehls, Franka Schneider, and Annett Schulze eds. (Berlin: Panama Verlag, 2011), 52.

[211] Ibid.

their studio in which to showcase items of interest to them.[212] Instead of well researched selections for an exhibition, artists were able to more quickly mobilise items, displaying them within a space already alive with activity, that of artistic production. Objects at the beginning of their lives (in the process of being made in the studio) sat alongside those towards the end of their lifespan, a juxtaposition which arguably, like the museum shop commodities, provided a kind of symbolic exchange between them; the artist's work sits with the potential to lead a long-life in the museum one day, while the museum objects are made briefly more active.

Sometimes, the special access extended to artists-in-residence entails being able to physically interact with objects and materials, even to touch and hold them, to have the kinds of experiences and interactions that cannot be universally extended to visitors due to the museum's prerogatives for care and preservation. In recent decades, museums have increasingly acknowledged the significance of such material interactions for all visitors, and the role they can play in object-based or object-centred learning – umbrella terms for related theories that emphasise the role interactions with objects can play in constructing meaning. A leading academic in this field, Scott G. Paris, is emphatic on the range of positive benefits such interactions can elicit:

> Being in the presence of an original object can be uplifting. Talking about your own reactions to objects can be edifying. Responding to an object can deepen the experience. Authentic, unique, and first-hand experiences with objects stimulate curiosity, exploration and emotions.[213]

But while there has been increased awareness of the value of object-based learning and experiences, ability to directly access museum original objects or archives is still tightly

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[212] Victoria and Albert Museum. 'Residencies', accessed 12 June 2021, http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/a/about-residency-programme/.

[213] Scott G. Paris, 'Preface', in *Perspectives on Object-Centered Learning in Museums*, ed. Scott G. Paris (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; Taylor & Francis e-library, 2009) E-book, xvi.

controlled and limited.[214] While some museums provide access to original objects through handling sessions, oftentimes, the inclusion of multi-sensory interactions is facilitated by the environments built around displays of 'authentic' artefacts, such as tactile displays and sound installations.[215] To this end, contemporary art has had a role to play, in both art and non-art museums. Claire Robins has linked the use of contemporary artworks in certain museums, with a desire to re-invest in sensations, emotion, and affect.[216] Often installed in close proximity to objects on display in the museum, some artworks can play a role in creating the kinds of experiences and emotions that are limited when objects sit behind glass. Robins cites the curation of exhibitions in the Wellcome Collection (a museum and library exploring health and human experience) as a key example, not only of using multi-sensory contemporary artworks, but blending together art, cultural artefacts, and scientific displays.[217] The Wellcome Collection also hosts two-year long residencies for transdisciplinary research groups ('The Hib Award') who have produced a wide-diversity of outputs, including many public programmes that further activate the collections.[218]

In a residency, it is not simply in producing physical additions to the public space of the museum that can be compensatory. Residencies can also represent the experiences of the artist, accessing and interacting with archival materials and collections. Evincing a similar interest in objects produced by museological processes, for a blog post about a residency with the North West Cambridge Art Programme (in collaboration with the University of Cambridge Museums), Bedwyr Williams posted a photograph taken in the storage area of the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Science, showing a sandbox filled with upright paintbrushes

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[214] Graham Black describes ways that many museums have included more tactile interactions, but writes 'the reality remains that most museums and art galleries provide very inadequate access.' In Graham Black, *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-First Century* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 1st edition, 152.
[215] For a general discussion of these different display techniques see Ibid., 151–154.
[216] Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, 163–167.
[217] Ibid., 167–169.
[218] Wellcome Collection, 'The Hub Award', accessed 30 October 2021, https://wellcomecollection.org/pages/Wuw2MSIAACtd3Ssa.

which he describes as a 'kind of granular third hand' – to hold implements used while specimens are being examined.[219] Lucy Cash describes her research at The Foundling Museum in highly subjective and tactile terms:

> But now in the reading room, opening a large, pale cardboard box to find a small stack of letters, some of which are singed around the edges, and all tied together with a municipal ribbon, I'm affected in a completely different way. As I carefully separate them, I feel their weight, their brittle dryness, the unfamiliarity of their texture.[220]

Both these posts reference the kind of careful, tactile interactions that might be had in the archive, witnessing things usually unseen by the public.

A virulent part of the critique of museums as places that remove objects from the ordinary flow of time is that they also radically decontextualise those objects – separating them from places, people, and interactions that may have given them social and cultural meanings. Such decontextualization is all the more weighted when objects have been violently or unethically removed from cultural contexts, such as through colonial processes, an issue I will look at further later in this chapter in regard to residencies by Indigenous artists. Processes of 'enlivening' the museum's dead objects are often linked to processes of re-contextualization, of re-establishing connections with living or intangible cultural practices. Echoing Adorno's contrast between art that one is at home with, and art in the museum, Maleuvre frames the longstanding charge of the museum's inauthenticity thusly:

> the museum endangers artistic and cultural authenticity by removing artworks and artefacts from their original locations and placing them in galleries where they can only be gawked at, and never, so to speak, lived with.[221]

A residency – as suggested in its very title – might suggest a symbolic 'living with' the objects of the museum, and moreover, of bringing them into contact with forms of contemporary cultural life they are perceived to have been separated from. In some cases, such as the

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[219] North West Cambridge Art Programme, 'Bedwyr Williams – October 2014', accessed 12 June 2021, http://www.nwcambridgeart.com/artist-residencies/blog/residency-university-cambridge-museums-blog/.
[220] Lucy Cash, 'Foundling Museum Residency'.
[221] Maleuvre, *Museum Memories*, 1.

discipline-specific residencies at MAD and the V&A, discussed earlier, a connection is being drawn between contemporary makers and displays, essentially reconnecting objects to a context of artistic production. In other cases, residencies have been used to connect to a more vital and dynamic history of the museum itself. For example, a live-work residency programme at the Evergreen Museum and Library in Baltimore called *House Guests,* purports to continue a legacy of hospitality offered to artists by the museum's former patrons (and original residents), the Garret family.[222] In a very pronounced example of the domesticating potential of an artist-residency, a long-running and well-entrenched residency programme at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum has often re-enlivened the museum's former use as a residence for its founder.

Living with Isabella

Image 2.1

The Isabella Stewart Gardner residency programme, has frequently reflected on the museum as a place where artists and guests were once hosted, thus re-enlivening a time when the museum's objects were part of a more intimate and *lived with* collection. The museum opened in 1903, following three decades of prolific collecting from across Europe, Asia and the Middle East, by its founder and creator, Isabella Stewart Gardner, for whom the museum is often considered a kind of mausoleum. To keep her totalising vision for her collection intact, Gardner stipulated in her will that the permanent collection not be significantly altered, or else the property would go to Harvard College, who was to auction off the collection in Paris.[223] The artist-in-residence program began in 1993, and was conceived as an extension of Isabella

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[222] For a longer discussion on this programme see Rebekah Kirkman, 'House Guests: Evergreen Museum & Library's Residency for Contemporary Artists', *BmoreArt*, March 18, 2019, accessed 14 June 2021, https://bmoreart.com/2019/03/house-guests-evergreen-museum-librarys-residency-for-contemporary-artists.html.

[223] Detailed in Patricia Vigderman, *The Memory Palace of Isabella Stewart Gardner* (Louisville, Ky: Sarabande Books, 2007), 9.

Stewart's legacy as a patron of the arts, as well as a means to 'reinvigorate the museum through the work and presence of living artists.'[224] During her lifetime, Gardner patronised artists such as John Singer Sargent (who used the Gothic Room as his studio), Henry James, and Ruth St. Denis. Fenway Court (as the museum was called by Gardner) was also a private residence and a place where she regularly hosted artists and guests, inviting them to view and discuss her collection.

The residency programme began in 1992, under a grant from the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Foundation, and three years in the wake of a the prominently publicised theft of thirteen art works from the museum, something Anne Hawley, who became director of the museum a year earlier, describes as a 'shot of adrenaline' that in part led to a number of broad changes in the museum.[225] According to a profile on Hawley in 2009, her introduction of new programmes, including the residency, increased attendance by sixty percent.[226] Prior to this, the board of trustees had been fairly reluctant to make even small changes, and 'attendance had been in free-fall since the 1970s.'[227] By contrast, Hawley entered the museum determined not to treat it as Isabella's tomb, stating instead, 'her spirit was what we wanted to invoke.'[228] This idea of a 'spirit' of Gardner, and of the past, was expedient in allowing the museum to unshackle itself from too strict an interpretation of the former patron's wishes while still committing itself to her legacy.[229] Around this time, 'Gardner' became referred to by the museum more often as 'Isabella' – perhaps to evoke her more as the kind hostess, who

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[224] Ibid., 129. See also Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 'Contemporary Creativity'.
[225] Anne Hawley quoted in Abby Goodnough, 'A Wounded Museum Feels a Jolt of Progress,' March 13, 2009, accessed 27 April, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/15/arts/design/15good.html.
[226] Francis Storrs, 'The Lady of the House,' *Boston Magazine*, April, 2009, accessed 27 April, 2017, http://www.bostonmagazine.com/2009/03/anne-hawley-lady-of-the-house/.
[227] Storrs, 'The Lady of the House'.
[228] Anne Hawley quoted in Storrs, 'The Lady of the House'.
[229] Hawley's changes were not without controversy, the addition of a new wing designed by Renzo Piano caused members of staff to lobby against the project. According to one article, neighbourhood activists and preservationists upset by the renovations felt that 'Hawley has not properly understood Gardner's legacy.' See Geoff Edgers, 'For Anne Hawley, patience is rewarded,' *Boston Globe*, January 15, 2012, accessed 27 April, 2017, https://www.bostonglobe.com/2012/01/15/hawley/zMw3rQKZPMp4daLnEYJ0WN/story.html.

opened her collections to friends and the public, rather than as the controlling heiress who wanted her legacy exactly preserved.[230] Programmes such as the residency found a work-around for the restrictive Gardner will; a way to bring in new artists (and artworks), without needing to alter the collection, all the while tying it to Gardner's legacy as a patron of the arts. While it was not possible for the Gardner to invite the kind of large-scale artist interventions, and collection re-hangs being done by other museums around this time, the residency allowed for living artists and their time in the museum to become the focus. Curator of Contemporary Art at the Gardner, Pieranna Cavalchini, puts it thusly, 'we can't collect, but we can stimulate work that is out in the world, cross-culturally and internationally. It's the generative potential of bringing artists into contact with this very rich collection and environment that's important.'[231] At the same time, the museum has found numerous ways to make the residency present within its walls; during their one-month stay many artists have done public talks, performances or workshops, or been involved with the museum's school partnership programme. Many have returned to produce works or exhibitions in the Special Exhibitions gallery, or to produce an image for a panel on the museum's façade. Residencies have been comprehensively archived online, with videos, photographs and texts describing artist's activities, site of inspiration, and processes during their stay.

Pieranna Cavalchini writes of the programme: 'Museum residents are given the gift of time and freedom here in the hope that, by spending day after day in this unique environment, they will be inspired to bring a modern perspective to bear on the Museum's ambiance of the past.'[232] Many projects that have resulted from the residency programme have directly reflected on the museum's past, where there has been a particular fascination with Isabella Stewart's lifetime, an interest reinforced by the museum's own focus on this legacy, often

[230] Storrs, 'The Lady of the House.'
[231] Pieranna Cavalchini quoted in Joyce Cohen, 'Re/Framing the Museum: Artists at the Gardner,' *Art New England* 24, no. 3 (May 4, 2003): 19.
[232] Pieranna Cavalchini, 'The Poetics of Light and Space,' in Luisa Lambri, Pieranna Cavalchini, and Amanda Esteves-Kraus, *Portrait.* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2012), 85.

promoting this connection in publicity materials, and inviting artists to explore this history through visits to Gardner's personal archives.[233] Artist-in-residence Maurizio Cannavacciuolo has described Gardner as a kind of hostess during his stay: 'Mrs. Isabella Stewart Gardner took me by the hand and led me through her Museum, which is a kind of universe suspended in time.'[234] Melvin Moti, who has described his residency as turning into 'a conversation with the long-absent host, Mrs. Gardner herself' has spoken emphatically about her preservation through the museum:

> By preserving the museum, we're not only preserving a building and a collection, we're also preserving a person. The collector is mummified into the fabric of this museum, and every change unwraps a layer of cloth, which could eventually cause Gardner's soul to evaporate into thin air. Her will could be seen as an airtight container for this mummy, preventing it from ever being fully unwrapped.[235]

Thus artist-residents don't merely serve to 'activate' the collection through their work on-site but are often interpolated through the dramaturgy of residing in Isabella's tomb. In contrast to museum interventions, which are often thought to disrupt the museum's ordinary existence in some way, the residents at the Gardner have oftentimes seemed almost at pains not to disturb the museum's slumber, and risk upsetting the founders desire for her mausoleum. Instead, the residency exists as an addition to this legacy, a kind of top layer that does not disrupt what lies below. As Cavalchini describes it

> Gardner intuitively created a sensorial layering of building materials, paintings, decorative arts, and foliage; it is to all these elements—along with the history that has accumulated like sediment over the past hundred years—that artists respond, in turn creating their own new works. For people who know the museum well, these creations by artists- or scholars-in-residence often inspire a sense of refreshed familiarity.[236]

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[233] See Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 'Artists-in-Residence.' This is something I discussed with Shana McKenna, an archivist, and Tiffany York, the Contemporary and Public Programs manager at the ISGM, in interviews at the museum, 4 November 2014.
[234] Pieranna Cavalchini, 'Maurizio Cannavacciuolo and *TV Dinner*,' in Maurizio Cannavacciuolo, *Maurizio Cannavacciuolo: TV Dinner*, ed. Charles Gute and Diana C. Stoll (Milan: Charta, 2005), 32.
[235] Melvin Moti, 'Will Power,' in Runa Islam, Melvin Moti, and Douglas Ross, *Collector's Item*, (Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2012), 5.
[236] Cavalchini, 'The Poetics of Light and Space,' 85.

Image 2.2–Image 2.4

A number of projects have explicitly evoked a sense of 'living with' the museum's founder. Luisa Rabbia's project involved creating a microsite titled *Travels with Isabella, Travel Scrapbooks 1883/2008*, which incorporated materials from one of Gardner's travel scrapbooks, made to document a trip to China in 1883.[237] The site, which scrolls left to right, forms a kind of digital scrapbook which explores the archival source material used by Rabbia, as well as her processes of finding, connecting with and utilizing such material. In a similar fashion, Charmaine Wheatley, used different processes of seemingly 'get to know' Gardner. She featured a pair of Gardner's shoes in her exhibition, had a dress fitting for a 19th Century style dress worn in a performance at the museum and began calling one of Gardner's' correspondents, Matthew Prichard, her 19th Century boyfriend, even attending an annual memorial service for Gardner.[238] Michele Iodice's residency work, *A Pagan Feast* (2005), was a reinterpretation of the museum's annual holiday table, and paid tribute to Gardner's penchant for entertaining at the museum during her residence there.[239] Images of the spectacular feast seems to be laid out for the ghosts of the museum, an offering to their enduring presence.

The most comprehensive and enduring tribute to the Gardner legacy is Lee Mingwei's, *The Living Room*, which was developed following his residency at the museum in 1999 over a summer during which, Anne Hawley writes, he 'absorbed the Museum's intimate nature and perceived it as a lively, animated, organic whole.'[240] It was also liveliness of the past that drew Lee's interest, namely Gardner's role as a hostess. Creating a temporary living room in the Special Exhibition gallery with large potted ferns, lounge chairs, a large Persian

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[237] Rabbia created a microsite as part of *Travels with Isabella, Travel Scrapbooks 1883/2008* (2001), Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 'Travels with Isabella', accessed 27 April, 2017, http://www.gardnermuseum.org/microsites/travelswithisabella/main.html.
[238] Isabella Gardner Museum, 'Charmaine Wheatley', accessed 27 April, 2017, http://www.gardnermuseum.org/contemporary_art/artists/charmaine_wheatley.
[239] Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 'Michele Iodice', accessed 31 October 2021, https://www.gardnermuseum.org/experience/contemporary-art/artists/iodice-michele.
[240] Anne Hawley, 'Preface', in Jennifer R. Gross, Anne Hawley, Lewis Hyde, and Lee Mingwei, *Lee Mingwei: The Living Room* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner, 2000), iv.

rug and caged birds, Mingwei created a space to entertain guests in a similar fashion to Gardner. To foster what he perceived to be Gardner's particular mode of sociality, often with artworks and objects playing a central role, he first brought objects of his choosing into the space to discuss with visitors, and then later designated special hosts to play this role. As in projects such as the Hermit-in-Residence or *Object Atlas – Fieldwork in the Museum*, the artist's own experience of domesticity is partly extended towards audiences, who are enjoined to relate to collections and museum spaces in a more personal, intimate, or creative way. In Mingwei's work, in asking hosts to bring in personal objects, the project reminds us that Gardner's rather grand and static museum was also once personally owned, adored, and *lived with*.

Oftentimes, the use of contemporary artists in historical museums might be seen (simply put), as making the past more contemporary, a contemporary perspective on the past. In the case of the Gardner residencies, there is almost a desire to re-live or re-create the past as a contemporary moment. But in creating these ambiances of the past; of private spaces now gone, of hosting and conversation and liveliness largely lost once the museum was supposedly frozen in time, contemporary art is being used, not to bring the museum into the present, but to evoke a kind of contemporaraneity of the past, a presence of the past. In her work on re-enactment (both the kind performed by historical societies or the various kinds of re-enactment that have come to be used in performance art) Rebecca Schneider writes how even those who most strive for historical accuracy, are very aware of what cannot be re-created, as well as the liveness that is not present in the documentary evidence they so rely on. She writes: 'In affective engagement, many of them find re-enactment to be, if not the thing itself (the past), somehow also not *not* the thing (the past), as it passes across their bodies in again-time.'[241] Schneider writes how in re-enactment 'the past can simultaneously be past –

[241] Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2011), 8.

genuine pastness – and *on the move*, copresent, not 'left behind.'"[242] There is something of a parallel in the way the Gardner residencies entails the physical bodies of artists, in the space over time, constructed as absorbing and gaining inspiration from this place steeped in history, frozen-in-time, museum and residents enjoined to re-perform the museum's pasts.

Projects such Mingwei's sit closest to a form of re-enactment of some past ambiance of the museum in Gardner's lifetime, but similar ideas are present in the way the residency programme is constructed in broad symbolic ways – the closeness of the resident to the past, through both their physical and discursive mobility within the museum, moving between spaces, learning and connecting with the past in multiple ways, moving between archival research, the conservation studio, torchlit tours of the museum at night, and sleeping and working there, the mythos around the ghosts of Isabella and the museum as her tomb, and the construction of artist-residents as special guests experiencing a legacy of hosting.[243] This is a deft interweaving of residency programme, artist projects, and wider museum agendas to contemporise a 'static' collection *through* the mediating metaphor of artist's being hosted by the past. As Patricia Vigderman has described the Gardner residency – 'like a fragment of her biography refusing to lie in her grave with her.'[244]

2.5 Indigenising the Museum

In the examples so far discussed, I have suggested that artists generally, in their role as residents, can evoke a performative sense of 'living with' collections, thus carrying a kind of domesticating potential into the museum and its sepulchral connotations. In the case of the Gardner, the very presence of contemporary artists in the museum has been used to relate to its history as a place of hosting and supporting living artists. In many cases, the more specific

[242] Ibid.
[243] See note 207.
[244] Vigderman, *The Memory Palace*, 128.

interests or subject positions of the artist have come into play. This can be seen in some of the studio-based programmes already discussed, such as at the MAD Museum and the V&A, where resident-artists are being linked to collections as makers working with specific mediums. If, as I have argued, residencies are being used to counter-balance the decontextualizing effects of museum displays, then artists can be thought to bring specific contextual relations into the museum. In his book, *Museums and Popular Culture*, Kevin Moore explores how museums can capitalise upon having connections to 'real things, real places, real people.'[245] Moore expands on theory, largely from the interdisciplinary field of material culture studies, which has pointed to the aura of authenticity objects can have in museums, in representing connections to the past. Along similar lines, museum studies academic Susan M. Pearce writes how

> objects have lives which, though finite, can be very much longer than our own. They alone have the power, in some sense, to carry the past into the present by virtue of their real relationship to past events.[246]

Moore argues that unless these real objects have remained at their original site (such as in a historic house museum), they have lost some of their power, power that 'real places' such as historic sites or heritage tours capitalise upon.[247] Moreover, he argues, interactions with objects and/or places can also be enhanced by interactions with people, which for Moore acquire greater power when the person has a connection to the material culture being presented. He writes:

> How much more powerful would Stonehenge be if there were first-person interpreters on site using material culture? How much better would the *Coronation Street* tour be if the actors were present and you could enter the homes, which at present are merely a façade?[248]

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[245] Kevin Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture* (London; New York: Leicester University Press, 1997), Chapter 7.
[246] Susan M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections: A Cultural Study* (London; New York: Leicester University Press, 1992), 24.
[247] Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 136–142.
[248] Ibid., 147.

Moore's assessment of how museums can better enhance their claims to 'authentic' viewer experiences, bluntly points to the ways that museums can capitalise on different symbolic forms of authenticity that they either have direct access to or can provide compensatory substitutions for. Residencies might be seen to harness this 'triple power of the real' – they often involve the presence of an artist, working directly in response to real objects, and may even directly draw inspiration from the history and site of the museum itself, or, in the case of on-site studios, transform it from a place, not simply where objects are stored and displayed, but where they are also produced. In some museum-residencies artists from particular cultural backgrounds have represented as bringing specific immaterial cultural practices and knowledges, such as singing, dance, performance and ceremony, into the same space of museum-objects in order to perform acts of cultural care or to provide a fuller cultural context for objects that have been removed from their original contexts, wider meanings and uses within specific communities.

Artist-residencies in the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (SCVA) at the University of East Anglia, as part of the exhibition *Pacific Encounters: Art and Divinity 1760–1860*, sought to bring the practices of contemporary Pacific Islander artists into dialogue with the historic collections on display, often bringing a more interactive and performance-based dimension to the exhibition, including ceremonies and song. George Nuku created a polystyrene version of a Māori marae (a meeting house) in the residency studio, which other residents also added to and performed within, and Rosanna Raymond used it as a place where audiences could discuss the ways the exhibition affected them.[249] In an article on these residencies by Karen Jacobs, she emphasises that the artists-in-residence could be considered descendants of artists represented in the exhibition and that a main goal of the residency was to 'signal to the

[249] See Karen Jacobs, 'ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE: POLYNESIAN ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE PAST', *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, March 2009, No. 21, Encounters with Polynesia: Exhibiting the Past in the Present (March 2009), 112–126.

general public that Polynesian cultures are still dynamic and thriving.'[250] The exhibition, comprised of objects mainly borrowed from European museums, thus used the residency as a means to connect the displayed objects to present-day communities that have deep on-going ties to them, as well as to bring immaterial aspects of culture and contemporary practices into the same space, thus thickening the contexts, relations, and meanings made possible by the exhibition. I will now turn to a number of other examples of residencies by Indigenous artists within 'western' or colonial museums, who have addressed museum-collections both as acts of cultural regeneration and anti-colonial critique. In such cases, interlinking museum-objects with outside contexts (to communities that claim ongoing ties or forms of belonging) can be both compensatory for and critical of the current conditions under which objects are kept or that they are kept at all.

The deep entanglements between European collecting practices, museums, and colonialism have led to a host of practices concerned with addressing, deconstructing, and de-centring Eurocentric display practices, practices first framed within post-colonial approaches and more recently, as acts of decolonisation.[251] Critical approaches led by Indigenous curators, academics, museum professionals and artists, particularly from British settler-colonial contexts, have also been recently understood as efforts to 'Indigenise' collections, that is, to bring collections back into the knowledge frameworks, cultural practices, and perhaps eventually back into their communities and place of origin.[252] It should also be noted

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[250] Ibid., 113.

[251] Walter Mignolo has outlined the different historical and conceptual bases for post-colonialism and de-coloniality, arguing that the post-colonial is tethered to post-modern discourses through theorists such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi K. Bhaba, and Edward Said, while decolonialism was originally borne out of specific geopolitical struggles, namely Cold War decolonial activities in Asia and Africa. The turn towards the decolonial in critical discourse and then into museums and curating practices is however far more recent, and something which Mignolo has been instrumental in. See Walter Mignolo, 'Interview – Walter Mignolo/Part 2: Key Concepts', *E-International Relations*, January 21, 2017, accessed 27 October 2021, https://www.e-ir.info/2017/01/21/interview-walter-mignolopart-2-key-concepts/.

[252] See for example Stephen Gilchrist in conversation with Henry F. Skerritt, 'Awakening Objects and Indigenizing the Museum', *Contemporaneity: Historical Presence in Visual Culture*, Vol. 5(1), Agency in Motion: Agency and Reenactment in Visual Culture (2016): 108–121, accessed 27 October 2021, https://doi.org/10.5195/contemp.2016.183; and see generally the edited volume *Sovereign Words. Indigenous Art,*

that both recent decolonial discourse and decolonising practices in museums have been critiqued by Indigenous artists, scholars, and curators for still centring colonial frameworks.[253] Of interest in this section is the imbrication of artist-residencies in a diverse field of multiple forms of engagement between museums formed out of the crucible of extractive settler-colonial collecting practices, and Indigenous peoples, whose identities are often complexly tied to materials held in museums – this includes not only material that may have originated in communities, but also other materials which have promoted empirical views of history, or promoted racist classificatory systems. Materials that have come from particular communities oftentimes elicit protocols around access, engagement and use: materials may require forms of cultural care not currently enabled by the museum or require input from knowledge holders, be significant to cultural re-vitalisation processes such as re-learning making processes from objects, or may be ceremonial items in need of awakening.[254]

The emergence of residencies has included a diverse history of prominent residencies by Indigenous artists into museums, often as part of the museum intervention art trend, as well as artist-in-residency programmes specific to Indigenous people that are often part of access prerogatives. Katherine Higgins has written on histories of residencies by Indigenous artists from Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and New Zealand from the 1960s onwards, including many museum-based examples, and noting particularly the de Young Museum and the British Museum as having 'utilised artist residencies as a means of

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Curation and Criticism, ed. Katya García-Antón (Norway; Amsterdam: OCA / Valiz, 2018); and *Indigenous Archives. The Making and Unmaking of Aboriginal Art*, eds. Darren Jorgensen and Ian McLean (Perth, Western Australia: UWAP, 2015), 207–429. This last book makes a separation between 'Part Three: Indigenising archives' – forms of archives that have been created and managed by Indigenous communities, and 'Part Four: Decolonizing Archives' –predominantly museum intervention type projects by Indigenous artists working within colonial collections and museums.

[253] Ibid., and also see *Art, Anthropology, Contested Heritage: Ethnographies of TRACES*, Arnd Schneider ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2019); and Julie Gough, 'The Possessed Past. Museums: Infiltration and Outreach and *The Lost World (Part 2)* project', ed. Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll (London; Sydney: Third Text Publications; Discipline, 2016), 51–102.

[254] When speaking on his curatorial process, Yamatji curator Stephen Gilchrist notes how, 'Indigenous people sometimes describe it as "waking up objects," so the first point of departure is being open to these awakenings with objects.' See Gilchrist, 'Awakening Objects', 114.

promoting dialogue between museums and indigenous communities by opening collections to indigenous artists.'[255] A promising area for 'Indigenising' practices are a number of programmes within museums or universities where there is significant Indigenous leadership or staff involvement as well as Indigenous community involvement. A standout model in this regard is the Artist-in-Residence program at The Longhouse Educational and Cultural Center (s'gʷi gʷi ʔ altxʷ – House of Welcome), Evergreen State College, Washington, which have studios as part of an Indigenous arts campus, and which fosters exchanges between Indigenous artists, such as their partnership with Te Waka Toi/Creative New Zealand for artist-residencies by Māori artists at the Longhouse.[256]

In general, however, museums and programmes are focused on bringing Indigenous artists into the museum to create new work for the museum or to become part of their public programming. A residency period can be an opportunity to spend time with materials that have, in many instances been separated, sometimes violently, from a lived existence in the community that brought them into being. In this context, residencies can become a period of culturally meaningful access, in which such objects can be explored, utilised, learned from, and symbolically reconnected with. In some cases, this period of access has been described as a form of mutual learning; for instance, a description of The Native American Artist-in-Residence program at the Minnesota Historical Society explains how its collections benefit from knowledge 'shared by the artists regarding what they have learned about the construction, style and meaning of various collections items. More importantly, these historic

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[255] Katherine Higgens, 'Inspiration and Exchange: Artist Residencies in Oceania', DPhil diss., The University of Auckland, 2012, 225.

[256] s'gʷi gʷi ʔ altxʷ is 'house of welcome' in Puget Sound Salish. The Longhouse is claimed to be the first building on a public university campus in the USA to be 'based on Native American tradition.' See Evergreen, 'Longhouse Education and Cultural Center', https://www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms/longhouse-education-and-cultural-center; and 'Artists-In-Residence', https://www.evergreen.edu/longhouse/residence; both accessed 4 November 2021. Also see a paper by Tina Kuckkahn, Director of the Longhouse, 'Indian Identity in the Arts', Enduring Legacies: Native Case Studies, 2007, accessed 1 November 2021, http://nativecases.evergreen.edu/collection/cases/indian-identity-in-arts.

resources can serve as platforms upon which cultural learning and sharing takes place.'[257] As in the wider field of artist-residencies, the line between a period of access, research and development for an 'intervention' and something definitively understood as a residency programme is not always easy to draw, but a turn towards residencies and embedded research has particular significance in these contexts, where the ability to show processes of engagement, and to enact culturally meaningful and appropriate connections to materials is intimately connected to the politics, protocols and relations engendered by these engagements.

These residencies sit within a larger context of shifts in museum practices and discourses towards purportedly more collaborative practices between museums and people who are members of present-day communities, sometimes termed 'source communities'.[258] This is particularly the case in ethnographic and archaeological museums, whose collections may hold the cultural heritage of present-day communities. Robin Boast has argued that such practices can enhance the museum's ethical credentials, writing how, 'since the 1990s, museums have been promoting their now realised postcolonial status through inclusionist programs in exhibitions, shared curatorship, and use of collections.'[259] A much used concept for understanding these practices is that of the 'contact zone', first defined by Mary Louise Pratt as 'social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power.'[260] Developed in relation to museums by James Clifford in 1997, the 'contact zone' has been the subject of much debate in museum discourses. Laura Peers and Allison Brown have argued that the relationship between

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[257] See Minnesota Historical Society, 'Native American Artist-in-Residence Program', accessed 1 November 2021, http://www.mnhs.org/residencies.

[258] See *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, eds. Laura Peers and Alison Brown (London: Routledge, 2003).

[259] Robin Boast, 'NEOCOLONIAL COLLABORATION: Museum as Contact Zone Revisited,' *Museum Anthropology* 34, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 56.

[260] Mary Louise Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone', *Profession* (1991): 34.

museums and their source communities has been changing in mutually beneficial ways. In 2003 they wrote:

> In recent years, however, the nature of these relationships has shifted to become a much more two-way process, with information about historic artefacts now being returned to source communities, and with community members working with museums.[261]

In his critique of the 'contact zone', Broad reflects on the use of autoethnographic practices – practices where people create their own self-representations – as a process for making new work for inclusion in the museum, and therefore ultimately framed by this benefit. He writes:

> I had read Clifford's article, and the subsequent discussions of it, with the assumption in mind that the museum could, and should, be a dialogic space—that to give meaning and value to objects was to invite source community members *into* the museum to *add* their voices to objects. This accumulation was the whole point of significance for the museum, the object, the source communities, and the public.[262]

In regard to museums and their desire to include multicultural perspectives, Irit Rogoff makes a similar argument to Broad, noting that an 'additive model' has often served only to embellish what already exists, without destabilizing practices that have enacted and perpetuated exclusion in the first place.[263] She writes: 'I maintain that the encounter with cultural difference cannot be done by representing a loss or an absence, but needs to come about by the museum acknowledging and enacting a loss on some part of itself.'[264] There sits a tension between on the one hand, the agencies of communities who navigate museums and who are intimately aware of the risks and dilemmas involved, and the threat of asymmetrical power relations and co-options: such as becoming instrumentalised within the promotional agendas of the museum, including, potentially, to whitewash a museum's colonial legacies without deeper institutional reform.

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[261] Peers and Brown, 'Introduction', *Museums and Source Communities*, 1.
[262] Boast, 'NEOCOLONIAL COLLABORATION', 66.
[263] Irit Rogoff, 'Hit and Run—Museums and Cultural Difference', *Art Journal*, (vol. 61, no. 3, Fall, 2002): 64.
[264] Ibid.

Considering Broad and Rogoff's critique of the 'additive' model being employed by museum, it could be argued residencies represent an even greater value-add for museums, who might receive not only new artworks, but the presence of artists and the potential for direct audience engagement. Moreover, as discussed in regard to museum-residencies more broadly, the artist can act as an exemplary avatar for access thereby affirming the value of the museum in holding cultural heritage. On the other hand, Nicholas Thomas has argued in regard to collections which give communities cause to 'make claims on the museum that houses them', ideally opens up on-going engagements, including things like research trips and residencies, and further concludes that 'if, on the other hand, an object or a collection is simply and definitively given back, that's that: whatever relationships it has given rise to will come to an end.'[265] I would counter, that museum relationships to communities should ideally be uncoupled from cultural patrimony remaining there, and that repatriation marking the end of reparative and collaborative relations is part of their structural power. Rather than seeing artist-residencies as neatly falling on one side of this debate, I have chosen four short examples of the ways in which some of these dilemmas can be played out, including ways that artists have used their own embedded position within museum contexts to enliven some of the stakes raised by their own positioning and enframing within a museum context.

Learning form Ancestors – The Great Box Project

Image 2.5

An example of such an approach in practice, and a project in which Laura Peers was involved, was a delegation in 2009 of twenty-one members of the Haida Nation, Canada, to view, handle and discuss items of their cultural heritage held in The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, and the British Museum, London. One of the subsequent projects to emerge from this was a one-month residency at the Pitt Rivers Museum by two artists, Gwai and Jaalen Edenshaw,

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[265] Thomas, *The Return of Curiosity*, 34.

who were interested in learning more directly from a large Bentwood box, an object of Haiida artistic heritage that was part of the founding collection of the museum.[266] In a book on the delegation (published prior to the residency), Gwai Edenshaw is quoted saying:

> Laura, Jaalen, and I talked about going back to Oxford and copying the large bentwood box at Pitt Rivers. I think that would be the evolution of this kind of a trip: where you could go and actually use your hands while you're referencing those pieces. I can't think of anything better.[267]

Here, Gwai Edenshaw suggests the idea of a residency as an extension of the types of access usually given to communities – involving more than just an opportunity to view and discuss, but to really make direct use of an object over a longer period of time. The artists used their period of access to "The Great Box" to create a close replica, which has since been taken back to Canada for use in workshops teaching carving techniques. The museum has positioned the project as a period of learning directly from the object and therefore also from its original creator:

> While museums are very willing now to support Indigenous community access to collections, it is difficult for apprentices and emerging artists to afford the cost and time of spending time in cities far from home, museum by museum, to learn from the ancestors who carved the historic items that are now in collections.[268]

On one level, the residency represents a reclamation of agency by the residents, who utilised it directly to further their own knowledge and that of their communities. The project is also represented as a collaborative effort, with flexibility shown on both sides. An educational document (available on the Pitt Rivers website), called 'Using the Great Box for the carving project: museum dilemmas and solutions', frames the different concessions made to care and

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[266] Cara Krmpotich and Laura Peers, *This Is Our Life: Haida Material Heritage and Changing Museum Practice*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013, 222.
[267] Ibid.
[268] The Pitt Rivers Museum, 'The Great Box Project', accessed 10 January 2016, http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/pdf/TheGreatBox.pdf, 2.

preservation protocols in highly positive terms. For example, it says that during times when the box was brought into the room where the artists were carving:

> Curator Laura Peers would then sit with the box during the day, ensuring that the museum's usual policy of supervising researchers working with objects was followed. This also gave Laura the opportunity to watch and learn from the process and to bring colleagues in to assist when needed.[269]

Such a residency is very much inscribed in compensatory or reparatory efforts by the museum – the very creation of a replica, as much as it is highlighted as a process of learning, is also a substitution for the original object, which ultimately remains in an overseas collection. Peers has written on many of the challenges and dilemmas raised by the project and acknowledges that 'museums gain a great deal of ethical capital from participation in such projects.'[270] This they achieve through various forms of documentation and self-promotion, meaning that even if artists are not physically adding new objects to the collection, their presence on-site can be made use of. As Peers writes, 'while museum colleagues supported the artists' goals, they also had their own, and extracted knowledge, quotes and photographs from the artists to use in museum education programs, labels, and marketing.'[271] She also notes that while access to Indigenous heritage is framed in terms of sovereignty, there remain many limitations, and that 'there is little sovereignty or equality in sight when you're dealing with customs regulations, visa restrictions, or museum protocols about opening cases so artists can touch.'[272] In many ways though, in being made visible as processes of achieving access, residencies can play a role in visibilising many of these dilemmas, that is, if critically reflected on as Peers does, rather than only used as a vehicle for the museum to promote its access credentials. In this case, the residency was used to extend some of the limitations usually presented by access

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[269] The Pitt Rivers Museum, 'Using the Great Box for the carving project: museum dilemmas and solutions', accessed 10 January 2016, http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/pdf/UsingtheGreatBox.pdf, 1.
[270] Laura Peers, 'Boxes of possibility—and frustration', *Active History*, 6 March 2019, accessed 14 June 2021, https://activehistory.ca/2019/03/boxes-of-possibility-and-frustration/.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.

trips – allowing for greater time, closer physical contact, and the production of an object that can be used by the community – but it nevertheless remains firmly entrenched within the museums systems, even affirming it as a site that can appropriately provide access within its walls.

Repatriation – Julie Gough at the MAA, Cambridge

Image 2.6

Given the stakes involved for communities, whose cultural heritage may have been widely dispersed and oftentimes destroyed, there are high incentives to work on the terms set out by museums. Indigenous Tasmanian artist Julie Gough has written on her engagement with the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), Cambridge, working with stone tools in the museum stores, saying that:

> Effective communication is allied with being successfully cross-cultural, being able to 'work it' (in) the western system, being not overtly threatening, angry, proprietorial about the objects. There is some kind of unspoken trade-off in the transaction; to be able to find something - something else feels lost.[273]

And furthermore, that 'the artist, to achieve access to their cultural objects, becomes an accidental diplomat and uncomfortable interlocutor.' [274] Such feelings of loss and of the artists intermediary role were even allegorised in her final project, *The Lost World (Part 2)*, which involved two simultaneous exhibitions – at the MAA, Cambridge and at Contemporary Art Tasmania, Hobart.[275] The stone tools Gough worked with in the MAA collection stores were put on display in Cambridge, and relayed, via video feed to Hobart. The project also featured a video of Gough placing photographs of the tools in different locations around

[273] Gough, 'The Possessed Past', 62.
[274] Ibid., 66.
[275] I have previously written on this project in regard to notions of 'losing the archive' and artistically relating to collection objects in ways that attempt to symbolically detach from colonial enframings, see Jessyca Hutchens, 'Losing the Archive: Julie Gough at the MAA, Cambridge and Christian Thompson at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford', in *Indigenous Archives*, 297–320.

Tasmania, roughly where the original artefacts were removed from, and a live web feed of one of the 'returned' photographic objects situated in the land, seen slowly degrading. These gestures opened up a multiplicity of connections, allowing for both the collection objects to 'return' to the site of origin and for this site to be re-tethered to the objects in the museum. But in rendering these connections as temporary and contingent, the work functions both as a kind of healing gesture of returning and a meditation on on-going displacement. Sharing some similar conceptual concerns around the meaning of destruction in relation to the museum's desire to control and preserve, Ansuman Biswas' project, discussed earlier, also places the artists as a mediator of objects in the collection, something one might say is even a common role for artist-residents. But while Biswas defined his mediatory role in terms of quite wide publics, Gough's project enacted a form of symbolic return for items in relation to her own ancestral connections. She writes how

> in the museum I took my time to choose the tools to be photographed. Holding them clarified if they felt right in the hand, cold or warm, what type of stone – some were familiar. Could I have made this, did an ancestor?[276]

Residencies of more direct and specific cultural relatedness can perhaps make visible, in an even more pronounced way, the tension between the museum-residency as a site of temporary, compensatory access, and on the other-hand, can also be pushed as a site of political engagement. Such projects can index outwards to sites and communities which might call-out to claim objects, and also point towards the catastrophic destruction that is the continuing, shifting ground of ongoing colonial extraction and cultural genocide that collections are symbolically tied to. Gough's work points not only to the specific loss of the stone tools to their place of origin, but to lost worlds, wherein the marks of Indigenous habitation and cultural life have been widely erased from the landscape. Ariella Aïsha Azoulay

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[276] Ibid., 57.

explores the flawed logics of reparation, restitution and return when colonialism has enacted such destruction. She summarizes Achilles Mbembe's critique of French repatriation offers as paternalistic, writing how 'the loss, insists Mbembe, is not of the objects but of the world of which these objects were the carriers.'[277] In projects like Gough's, museum objects can be seen to be indexed not only to specific acts of removal but to entire, and often ongoing, systems that have enabled the removal and destruction of not only cultural patrimony but entire ways of life. It should also be noted however, that despite extensive, on-going colonialism, many Indigenous communities are continuous cultures, and objects held in museums may be living, belonging to worlds that transcend both museum understandings of property and ownership and colonial ontologies. Such a tension exists in Gough's work – wherein there is both an assertion of on-going generational connection and criticality towards the museum's proprietary logics and the devastating losses of the on-going colonial project.

Identity – Christian Thompson at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford

Image 2.7

This raises a further dilemma which I have already touched upon: a kind of constant flux between identity and subject-positions in museum-residencies generally, where the resident is something of an insider-outsider who exemplified curious or critical interest in sites in the museum, and where aspects of their practices or discursive interest are often aligned with collections. Kwame Anthony Appiah has reflected on the complexity of determining cultural patrimony since oftentimes the frame of the nation-state is being applied.[278] Some

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[277] Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London: Verso, 2019), E-book, 319. Azoulay references Achille Mbembe, 'À propos de la restitution des artefacts africains conservés dans les musées d'Occident', *AOC*, May 10, 2018, 9, accessed 27 October 2021, https://aoc.media/.

[278] Kwame Anthony Appiah, 'Whose Culture Is It?', *The New York Review*, February 9, 2006 issue, accessed 27 October 2021, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2006/02/09/whose-culture-is-it/.

contemporary artists have been given access to collections because of relevant, proximate, or adjacent identities (such as being Indigenous Australian), and who have wider discursive concerns around racism, representation, colonialism, and museums, yet may not belong to the particular cultural groups whose heritage the artist accesses. Such a dilemma is discussed by Badtjala academic and artist Fiona Foley when she recounts being asked to provide approval for use of imagery derived from a plaster cast of a Fraser Island man found in the 'recesses of a collection housed in the Musée des Confluences in Lyon, France', that had been uncovered by the artist Brook Andrew, who is of Wiradjuri heritage and bases much of his work around access to colonial collections.[279] Foley declined permission, citing the need for consultation with her Wondunna clan.[280]

In another context, Bidjara artist Christian Thompson, was asked to make a responsive work in relation to the Australian photographic collection at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, and chose to make the complexity of his identity-positions within the museum a part of the work.[281] While closely working with the materials, he chose a strategy of obscuring and mediating the original content of the photographs, taking a series of photographic self-portraits. As part of his process accessing and relating to the materials in the collection, Thompson performed private ceremonies in response to the sometimes confronting or racialised nature of the material but avoided questions of misappropriating material or Indigenous protocols around not showing deceased persons, by avoiding any direct reproductions of photographs in his later work.[282] Thompson has said:

[279] Fiona Foley, 'When the Circus came to Town', *Art Monthly Australia*, no. 245 (2011): 5.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Christian Thompson's work at the Pitt Rivers was initiated as part of a wider project: 'Globalization, Photography, and Race: the Circulation and Return of Aboriginal Photographs in Europe, 2011–2015', led by Dr Jane Lydon from the University of Western Australia, and involving collaborations with four European collections including The Pitt Rivers which houses a significant archive of 19th Century photographs of Australian Aboriginal people. I have previously written on this work, see Hutchens 'Losing the Archive'.
[282] See Christian Thompson, 'Artist Statement', for the exhibition *Christian Thompson: We Bury Our Own*, 26 June 2012 – 6 January 2013, Long Gallery, Pitt Rivers Museum; and Christian Thompson interviewed in 'Christian Thompson – We Bury Our Own', video recording, The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, film by Michael Walter, A Two Dogs Caged Production for Troika Editions Video, 2012, both accessed 4 November 2021, http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/christianthompson.html.

> I lamented the passing of the flowers at the meadow, I lit candles and offered blood to the ancestral beings, looked into the black sparkling sea, donned the Oxford garb, visited the water by fire light and bowed at the knees of the old father ghost gum.[283]

Moreover, in his mixing of signifiers in the images, including him donning the Oxford student's sub fusc uniform (Thompson was a student at Oxford at the time of the project), and alluding to references to both Indigenous and British cultural motifs, Thompson performatively inhabits his position as a mediator for the archive – in Gough's words, 'an uncomfortable interlocutor' – while also refuting any simple dichotomy between himself as an artist-intervenor and the colonial museum as an institution. In one work, *Invaded Dreams* (2012), Thompson holds a model ship in front of his eyes like a prop – an allusion to the British invasion of Australia, as well as longer histories (a label on the ship reveals that it is a model of a Tudor war ship, Mary Rose).

In acknowledging his mediatory role, including his status as an Oxford student, he stands as both an insider and outsider in this context – a position I have argued elsewhere makes his position inherently transcultural.[284] Appiah argues, in regard to connections to material culture in museums, that cultural imaginaries exist on different scales, arguing that rather than preferring singular ideas of connection, we should be open to different forms of it.[285] Thompson addresses an archive that has a multitude of relations to different individuals, groups, families, and communities, by performatively reflecting on his own position – refusing to directly represent material that might be both sensitive and reflect a colonial gaze, as well as acknowledging his own institutionalisation within Oxford and the museum.

Representation – Daniel Boyd at the Natural History Museum, London

[283] Christian Thompson, 'Artist Statement'.
[284] Jessyca Hutchens, 'Down Under World: Christian Thompson at the Pitt Rivers Museum', *Artlink*, Issue 37:2, (June 2017): 82–86.
[285] Appiah, 'Whose Culture Is It?'

Image 2.8

As part of a residency at the Natural History Museum, London, in 2011, Kudjla/Gangalu artist Daniel Boyd responded to the museum's First Fleet collection, which contains documents related to the establishment of the first British colony in Australia. For a long-time after the initial project, the webpage for the collection, on the Natural History Museum site, stated: 'The perspective of the people invaded was not recorded at the time but is investigated here.'[286] This investigation was to be found in documentation of Boyd's residency – links to two videos which explored his processes and their relationship to materials from the archive, the first accompanied by the description: 'Australian artist-in-residence Daniel Boyd looks at what the First Fleet collection does and doesn't tell us about the early years of colonisation and the relationship between the British settlers and the Aboriginal people.'[287] These videos, both stories of the artist's process of engagement with the museum, foreground the notion of contact and interaction with the collections, and were framed, by the museum, as a kind of corrective to archival omissions and biases.

In the first video, Boyd is shown speaking in the library in front of three images from the collection and describing his interest in them. In voice over, he states: 'What I find interesting with these images is the amount of information that can be read from an image and the amount of information that's lost through time, deliberate or indeliberate…'[288] Close-ups of images from the archive throughout the video, some objectifying representations of Aboriginal people, reinforce the concept of a missing perspective. Following a sequence in the museum, Boyd is shown walking to his studio, at Gasworks in London (a partner of the residency), shots that are subtitled: 'In creating his work, Daniel draws upon his own personal

[286] Natural History Museum, 'First Fleet collection', accessed 20 January 2016, http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/art-nature-imaging/collections/first-fleet/.
[287] Ibid.
[288] Youtube, 'First Fleet: Aboriginal Australian artist Daniel Boyd's new installation | Natural History Museum', video, produced by The Natural History Museum, Gasworks, and BBC, posted 5 April, 2012, accessed 20 January 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8AYHgJAVzo&feature=youtu.be.

family history. His ancestors came from lands linked to an earlier British expedition.'[289] Shown at work in the studio, Boyd explicates his process of using copies of images of the archive, which undergo a series of transformations, first hand-painted, and then incorporated into a matrix of dots, which Boyd describes as a 'reduction of surface information.'[290] Boyd also talks about processes of cultural genocide in Australia, making a connection between the lost information in his archival source material, and the devastating loss of people and culture that occurred following first contact and invasion. Theses links; between artist, identity, history, archive, and artistic process, seemingly come together in Boyd's final description of the work: 'In the final image, the loss of information, it empowers me, because the viewer is put in a position where they don't have information.'[291] Even three years after the project was finished, these materials remained embedded as part of online interaction with the First Fleet collection, representing Boyd's processes of archival discovery, interaction, and interpretation. An allegory of addressing the lost information of the archive becomes an addition to it. At the same time, the museum's incorporation of the residency, as a kind of compensatory addition to a colonial archive, is somewhat undermined by the perspectives offered by Boyd. Through a process of accessing the archive, and finding it irreparably inadequate, Boyd connects with it in ways that do not further explicate what the collection 'does and doesn't tell us', as the description suggested, but which obscures archival materials in order to recreate this experience for viewers. The museum may not enact a loss on itself, but in foregrounding a process of archival access, the residency also points to the more enduring forms of loss that the museum can never adequately address. As with Gough and Thompson, Boyd's project seems to signal what the museum is unable to adequately do (repatriate items, reveal compromised materials without harm, compensate for what was originally suppressed or

[289] Ibid.
[290] Ibid.
[291] Ibid.

ignored). The artist is less a mediator who extends a new interpretation of materials to an outside audience, than someone who mediates their own confrontation with loss and inadequacy in the archive.

Such a project can be situated in lineage with what Hal Foster has famously described as an 'archival turn' within contemporary art, where he describes how 'archival artists seek to make historical information often lost or displaced, physically present.'[292] In this way, many artists working with archives and collections-based research have uncovered traces of loss and misrepresentation that they have expounded upon. I have previously written on Australian Indigenous artists working in archives, arguing that while to a certain extent their works can be read as meditation on loss and dispossession, they are also attempts to insert a sense of loss, and failure, into the site of the archive as a political gesture, as well as to attempt forms of distance and turning away from colonial archival logics.[293] Art historian Adrian Rifkin and literature scholar Keguro Macharia have both written on the dilemmas faced by researchers interested in finding the accidental traces or glimpses of agency revealed by archives that have fundamentally erased or misrepresented oppressed peoples, ending up perversely uniquely tethered to them. Rifkin, writing on queer archives, writes on a strange disappointment of finding what he was looking for.[294] Keguro Macharia more emphatically points to tendencies in Black, African and post-colonial studies to engage in what he calls 'black negation', eliciting scholars to search archives for their own negation when, he argues, '*mis*representation is a structural element of the white supremacist colonial archive'.[295] Boyd's meditation on his form of non-discovery in the archive is, in one sense, a desired engagement with the collection, but the deflationary and distancing tone of the work cannot be easily reconciled as

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[292] Hal Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', *October,* no. 110, (Fall 2004): 4.
[293] Hutchens, 'Losing the Archive'.
[294] Adrian Rifkin, 'Dancing Years, or Writing as a Way Out', *Art History*, vol. 32, no. 4, (2009): 806.
[295] Keguro Macharia, 'black (beyond negation)', May 26, 2018, *The New Inquiry*, accessed 4 November 2021, https://thenewinquiry.com/blog/black-beyond-negation/.

simply 'additive' or compensatory. As artists are invited to be resident in such collections, they oftentimes refute any simply compensatory gesture of *living with* and domesticating collections, that is, of bringing additional cultural context to ward off the old charge of decontextualization and a lack of vitality. As in the cases discussed, they also find things that are uncomfortable to sit with, and unsuitable for ongoing re-interpretation and representation and forms of redress. The notes of loss in Gough's, Thompson's and Boyd's work reveal that residing in the museum may be to *live with* loss and displacement, rather than to perform forms of recovery.

3 The Residency Retreat

Above the mountains, a forest library, hill to hill

Image 3.1

> The Alpenhof is an inspiring location for a retreat and working, with opportunities for exchange and relaxation. Situated at 1,110 m.a.s.l. overlooking the Rhine Valley and Lake Constance, here landscape conjoins with lingering; the Alpstein mountains with a sea of fog; Eastern Switzerland with overseas; traditional Alpaufzug (procession of cows on mountain paths) with astronomy.[296]

This description was about the extent of my knowledge of the location where I would be spending two weeks on residency, in April 2017, as part of the Bibliothek Andreas Züst (BAZ) residency program. The library, which claims to be the largest library inside of a hotel in the world, is housed within the Alpenhof Panoramaherberge und Kulturfrachter, across three floors of one corner. Moveable pine wooden boxes contain the highly idiosyncratic collection of the late Andreas Züst, a photographer, painter, natural scientist, publisher, and collector. In the library, a cushioned seat inside of a large window, that was a third deep in snow when I arrived, sits above a vertiginous slope, giving the impression of nesting amongst the pine trees outside while reading. In the main communal space, the room that no doubt gives the 'Alpenhof Panoramaherberge' its name, large windows show an expansive valley and views of the Alpstein, Säntis and the Vorarlberg Alps. About a one-and-a-half-hour drive from Zurich (or several buses), BAZ is a picture-postcard artists' retreat, a sleek contemporary art space meets an Alpine wellness centre.

The description above is the same for the Alpenhof website, where one can rent rooms under the title 'sleep and work.'[297] Described as an artist hotel, the place was initially

[296] Bibliothek Andreas Zust, 'Residency', accessed 14 June 2021, http://bibliothekandreaszuest.net/en/residency/.
[297] Alpenhof Panoramaherberge Kulturfracher, accessed 14 June 2021, http://www.alpenhofalpenhof.ch/.

set up as a club by a group of artists looking for a space to work (it has housed writers Peter Weber and Ruth Schweikert and artist Pipilotti Rist). It now operates, in part, as a commercial hotel, but one that promotes itself as a space for creatives looking for a retreat to work. Rooms feature individualised site-specific artworks, and the Alpenhof hosts exhibitions and events, and has its own publication.

In general, the separation between commercial retreats and artists' residencies has become less easily defined. A wide range of people now undertake retreats for their creative benefits, while the 'digital nomad' trend has seen the rise of a culture of freelancers who work mobile, moving from one idyllic place to the next. Paid-for 'creative retreats' or residencies are an emergent trend. In the case of Alpenhof, the residency is clearly mainly non-commercial; it covers more costs than the majority of residencies as well as offering a generous stipend. But the hotel perhaps provides something close to a residency even for its paying guests, who can also access a rehearsal space, and can spread out across the large tables and lounge area in the panorama room. One article warned that in the off season, one might be almost alone in the large building, but such solitude might be welcome to working guests.[298]

While the residency serves as a remote artist retreat on one level, on another it is about bringing a kind of audience and activity *to* the remotely located library. The library, of 10,400 titles on an eclectic range of topics, was originally the private collection of Andreas Züst. His friend Plinio Bachmann invented a highly idiosyncratic thematic classification system for the diverse range of what are described as 'gems and trash' in order to make it somewhat comprehensible to outsiders. The system, which includes categories such as alternative Weltbilder (alternative images of the world), and Ufo allgemein (a collection on UFOs), is almost as interesting as the collection itself – serving as much to order the collection, as to disorder it, allowing strange juxtapositions and groupings. The residency is

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[298] Susann Sitzler, 'Mal reinlesen', *Zeit Online*, 18 October 2021, accessed 14 June 2021, http://www.zeit.de/2012/43/Schweiz-Alpenhof.

part of a programme of activity designed to make sure the library continues to be used and serve a public role, and which includes twice yearly workshops, school programmes, and guided tours.[299] The residencies, while predominantly self-guided, do ask recipients to create a contribution to the website blog, based around the collection, providing a kind of supplementary catalogue of individual finds and interests. But although the residency seems to serve two purposes – retreat and research (in the collection) – the quiet, intimate library (so clearly once a personal collection), is also a place with retreat like properties, perched amongst the pine trees. Perhaps as a way of breaking the hermetic bubble of this retreat, artist-in-residence Bianca Pedrina initiated a slightly tongue-in-cheek project in the collection – she began searching for problems, finding 26 results for 'problems' in the catalogue. Her interest while I was there, was in a book from the 1950s called *Photoprobleme* – an interesting foil to the idea that we seemed to be living inside a picture-perfect panorama.[300] But despite the desire to find nominal 'problems' inside the residency, Bianca spoke of being in favour of retreat residencies.[301]

Image 3.2

This encounter offers a brief cross-section of ideas and practices of retreat that are explored throughout this chapter. On the one hand a highly idiosyncratic and unique curatorial model, the Bibliothek also promotes ideas around artistic autonomy and withdrawal that resonate with a widespread recuperation of ideas of retreat. It enables this retreat through a host of practices – temporal, spatial, curatorial, and discursive. For example, the decision to allow 24/7 access to the library makes the greatest allowance for quiet and solitude but is a freedom to be navigated and managed by the artist. Retreat is also produced through institutional and

[299] Bibliothek Andreas Zust, 'Exchange', accessed 14 June 2021, http://bibliothekandreaszuest.net/en/exchange.
[300] Bibliothek Andreas Zust, 'Bianca Pedrina: Photoprobleme', accessed 14 June 2021, http://bibliothekandreaszuest.net/photoprobleme/.
[301] Interview with Bianca Pedrina, at Bibliothek Andreas Züst, Switzerland, 23 April 2017.

artistic discursivity. Bianca Pedrina's project, conceived in relation to the residencies' call for a brief instance of reflection, at once produces a new responsive work, and is part of an archive of online reflections that provide a series of glimpses into this relatively secluded retreat. Located within a hotel, the practices of residents are proximate to the flow of other guests, in this case, often other creative workers who might frequent the hotel, sharing its spaces and making some similar decisions about curating their own retreat vacations. As institution and resident withdraw, they also both engage in practices of retreat, and co-produce representations of it, intertwined within broader cultures of retreat.

Ideas and Practices of Retreat

I argue throughout this thesis, that temporal/spatial withdrawal, and the idea of a 'gift of time', acts as something of a problem-idea across residency thinking. These, and closely related ideas, are particularly enlivened within retreat-type residencies, which construct their identities around artists withdrawing to rural and remote places. In this chapter, I again rely on attempting to identify something akin to George Yúdice's notion of a 'performative force' that might course through retreat-residencies, despite their widely varying institutional formations. By 'performative force', I mean generalised tendencies that are reliant on some overarching background assumptions, created by a nexus of 'conditionings, elicitations, and pressures exerted by the multidimensional field of social and institutional relations.'[302] In the case of retreats, this background assumption is very often based on a diagnosis of contemporary life and work as accelerated, a state often understood as associated with urban centres, hyper-productive art institutions, and as a generalised contemporary condition. Retreat to rural and remote places is thereby positioned as a solution to this culture of speed and overwork. And while many retreats may elicit critical responses to, say, romantic notions

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[302] Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture*, 39.

of the rural, or engender complex approaches to ecological topics, in a very broad sense, the prevalence of small retreat-programmes, most often in places coded as beautiful, close to 'nature', and charismatic, are becoming the backdrop to wide ranging cultural production by artists depicted as precarious and in need of reprieve and withdrawal. Within this landscape of retreats, both a diagnosis of urban acceleration, and the benefits of retreat to 'beautiful' rural and remote locations, remain little interrogated assumptions, even if residencies are productive of 'critical' understandings of place, context, or site.

In this chapter, I consider different ways that ideas of artistic retreat (understood here as artists withdrawing to rural and remote places) operate across a diverse range of contemporary residency programmes. I argue that retreat is not only a type of residency but also a broad concept that shapes and informs how these programmes operate and construct their identities (3.1: A Retreat Type Residency). In this section, I consider the overall trend of retreat-type residencies, and then turn to the particular construction of history that retreat-residencies frequently rely on, arguing that the widespread evocation of the artist colony as a relevant model relates to the way contemporary retreats construct their alternative identities. I then turn to three possible sub-types of residencies that each rely on notions of retreat. In the following section, I argue that within retreat-residency discourses we are seeing the beginnings of a partial recuperation of ideas of retreat as having political potential in an era of the artist precariat, in need of support and withdrawal from normative modes of participation and production (3.2: A Politics of Retreat).

As further elucidations of ideas of retreat, I also consider intersections between ideas of retreat in residencies and broader cultural trends around retreat and withdrawal. Ideas of the rural, as a geographic imaginary relied upon by retreat-residencies, encompasses intersecting trends: the continued relevance of a rural 'idyll' as a site of escapist desires, the position of retreat-residencies within rural regeneration, gentrification and 'creative countryside' trends, as well as contemporary art practices invested in counter representations

of the rural (3.3: Geographic Imaginaries of Retreat). I argue that while some residencies may critically address romantic place-based identities, a certain fantasy of rural life as the other to urban acceleration, undergirds this landscape of small rurally located programmes. Following this, I consider another broad cultural trend also intertwined within cultures of retreat-residencies and also related to notions of rural escapism: ideas around slowing down, and the overlap between various 'slowness movements' and notions of retreat (3.4: Slowness & The Artist in Retreat). Both the lifestyle trends associated with 'slowness' and contemporary residency-retreats, share an emphasis on finding 'slow-time' in rural and remote places as forms of resistance to accelerated lives. Finally, I turn to fieldwork case studies of three small island residencies in the Åland archipelago, considering how micro-scale programmes might mediate various ideas of retreat, from artists carving out small pockets of time to develop context-specific work, to programmes constructing place-based identities around the flow of artists in retreat (3.5: Small Island Residencies).

Given that the rhetoric of retreat amongst residencies tends to centre on the 'reclaiming' of time and space by artists (and programmes on their behalf), this chapter is concerned with how 'retreat' operates as a key idea around which residencies are forming their institutional identities and shaping the artistic practices that occur through them. Ideas and practices of retreat are multivalent, perhaps best thought of as related to the way residencies try to imagine and instantiate forms of distance, removal, withdrawal, and artistic autonomy, even as they may also critically address the fantasy of retreat and their own highly permeable boundaries. While retreat may at first appear to be associated with an older myth around the lone artist genius fleeing to rural arcadia, today this idea is being updated to encompass the contemporary artist precariat seeking out supportive temporary communities, where they can develop work 'freely', while inhabiting 'idyllic' rural and remote spaces and places.

3.1 A Retreat Type Residency

As the need for reprieve from hectic modern lives is generally endorsed in contemporary culture, and as different forms of retreat are increasingly common – from spa weekends to silent meditation retreats to company retreats – the benefits are perhaps also taken as obvious. A brief online article on the history of residencies begins:

> For some lucky artists, summer is the season of the retreat, whether that's a week at a workshop or a month-long residency. It makes sense that in our busy, hyperconnected world, creative types would seek time away from everyday life in order to focus on their art. How better to escape the distractions of the modern world, after all, than some time in the fresh, Wi-Fi-free mountain air?[303]

The term retreat is generally used to denote residencies in rural or remote locations, that make few overt requirements of participants (such as specific production requirements) and so might be described, in Paschal Gielen's terms, as development-oriented.[304] For Gielen, in contrast to art institutions more focused on production (the showing and/or selling of artworks) development-oriented institutions such as residencies, adopt more investigative and reflexive approaches.[305] Gielen further divides development-oriented spaces according to the levels of networking demanded, into a domestic sphere with little networking that provides a 'safe, intimate atmosphere' to develop (or not develop) work in relative peace; and a *Gemeinschaft* space of high networking, where 'an artistic oeuvre can ripen via social interactions' and there is less privacy and isolation.[306] While often sitting somewhere along this spectrum (in terms of isolation and sociability), retreat residencies tend to align more strongly with Gielen's characterization of the domestic space, where artists 'set their own

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[303] Amy Shearn, 'The Utopian Roots of the Artists' Retreat', *Jstor Daily*, June 7 2016, accessed 14 June 2021, https://daily.jstor.org/utopian-roots-artists-retreat/.
[304] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude*, 194–195.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid., 196–198.

pace', and are not specifically demanded to share their ideas (though in reality, while rhetorically emphasizing autonomy, most residencies do elicit degrees of participation and networking).[307]

In organizational studies, Ellen Loots has described a research and development type residency, which she writes 'can be thought about as a refuge, or retreat-model of residence. Artists that aspire to concentration and reflection, seek these at a residence that is often isolated and located in a natural environment.'[308]A number of other articles also identify a retreat type, though focus more on the form of temporary community also created by the residency, drawing on the historical antecedent of artist colonies. *Exhibitist Magazine*'s guide to artist residencies defines a 'Retreat / Colony' type as providing residents with 'a truly other-worldly experience, a bubble in which to fully immerse oneself in work, without the distractions of the city, crowds, and obligations.'[309] The artist Paula Roush identifies a 'reclusive model', which she also writes is based on the artist colony idea, describing it as an 'approach to creative autonomy' with the goal 'to provide solitude and undisturbed work time in the company of fellow artists.'[310] Discussing curatorial residencies specifically, Kari Conte, Director of Programmes and Exhibitions at The International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP), describes a 'Residency as retreat' as 'time out from constant production.'[311] Madyha Leghari identifies a group of residencies that rely 'on the notion of retreat based on geographic remoteness from centers of cultural production.'[312] These last two definitions

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[307] Ibid., 198.
[308] Ellen Loots, 'An Exploration of an Organization Form: Artists' Residences,' conference paper presented at ACEI conference, 17th International Conference on Cultural Economics, Kyoto, Japan, June 2012, 19.
[309] Anna Ziglsperger and Julie Upmeyer, 'Focus On: Artist Residencies', in *Exhibist Magazine: Contemporary Art from Turkey*, Issue 8, (2016): 30.
[310] Paula Roush, 'Migratory Aesthetics', 3.
[311] Kari Conte quoted in 'On Curatorial Residencies: Panel discussion with Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy, Chris Fitzpatrick, Astrid Honold. Introduction by Kari Conte, moderated by Tobi Maier' in *Re-Tooling Residencies*, 103.
[312] Madyha Leghari, 'The Residency; as Retreat, Relational and Relief', *Art Now: Contemporary Art of Pakistan*, online magazine, 'In Focus', accessed 14 June 2021, http://www.artnowpakistan.com/the-residency-as-retreat-relational-and-relief/.

reflect an emerging conception of the artist retreat as one away from the accelerated pace of artistic production often associated with urban centres.

Rural and remote retreat type residencies appear to be a major category amongst residencies generally, although even approximate figures are difficult to obtain, as not all residencies that might fit the general model use these precise terms in their descriptions. Res Artis listed 251 programmes as being in a rural setting (as compared to 165 urban, 48 N/A, and 58 as being both urban and rural).[313] The Alliance of Artists Communities (AAC) estimates that there are over 1,500 residency programs worldwide, and that '60% are in rural areas and small towns.'[314] In terms of their popularity amongst artists, in a list of the top ten rated residencies for 2016 by the website Rate My Artist Residency, seven out of the ten were rural retreat type residencies.[315] The European Agenda for Culture Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencies (2014) notes that while there was a view, with some truth to it, that artists wanted to go to residencies in cities with major art markets, that this was only 'a small part of the decision on destination' and that 'the appetite for more unusual residencies – rural, in non-traditional spaces, thematically based etc. – is large and growing.'[316] Indeed, my argument for this chapter rests on the notion that retreats specifically adopt positions against an art world depicted as more market-driven, as part of their appeal.

A challenge in defining a retreat-type residency arises when considering less reclusive models, and the extent to which they engage with local communities or foster socially engaged art practice. While I am largely not focusing on residencies primarily oriented around social practice and community engagement, as these may desire particular outcomes rather than putatively allow for 'free time', the AAC also notes that 90% of residencies 'have public

[313] Res Artis, 'Listings', accessed 14 June 2021, https://resartis.org/listings/.
[314] Alliance of Artists Communities, 'About us', accessed 14 June 2021, http://www.artistcommunities.org/about.
[315] Rate My Artist Residency, '2016 TOP 10 RATED RMAR ARTIST RESIDENCY', accessed 14 June 2021, https://ratemyartistresidency.com/top-10-rated-on-rmar/.
[316] These findings on destination 'were made on an analysis of Dutch Culture/ TransArtists website and web statistics', see *The European Agenda for Culture Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencies* (2014), 59.

programs that engage the local community.'[317] Even some of the most isolated retreats, may have some public outcome, such as a residency blog. In a report specifically on socially engaged residencies, the AAC notes that retreat-residencies are increasingly incorporating community-based programming as well.[318] In some cases, the residency builds an ongoing relationship with a community, bringing different residents into their engagements when suitable to their practice. Retreat-residencies might be thought as those primarily oriented around providing some form of more autonomous time-out for artists, which they balance with programming that might directly include residents (such as open studio days, workshops, and talks), or be somewhat separated (such as exhibitions that don't directly include current residents). Overall, my focus is on how ideas of retreat permeate and shape residency practices, which can encompass the most hermetically separated and isolated retreats for individual focus, through to more hybrid models that might actively build social programming alongside opportunities for more private artistic development.

Histories of Retreat

There are a range of different historical artistic movements that might be considered antecedents to contemporary retreats and their emphasis on withdrawal to nature: late 19th and early 20th century artist and writers colonies, alternative art schools and summer schools in rural locations, and art communes and retreats of the 1960s and '70s as part of the 'back to the land' movement. While most residency historical timelines focus on the colony model, some mention proximity to this latter era – former Director of the AAC, Caitlin Strokosch, describes the 60s and 70s wave of rural programmes as recalling the 'same Utopian vision' as the colonies, while a TransArtists timeline on residencies also links this era to creating 'utopia

[317] Alliance of Artists Communities, 'About us'.
[318] Alliance of Artists Communities, 'Social-Practice Residencies', accessed 14 June 2021, http://www.artistcommunities.org/socialpractice.

in seclusion' as well as to the social and political upheaval of the era.[319] Nina Möntmann has referred to contemporary 'collective retreats' as 'experimental think tanks for temporary communities' that refers to 1970s ideas of retreating together in nature.[320] In some cases, the social experiments and intentional living models of the era overlap or transition into more retreat-based models. For example, The Roswell Artist-in-Residence programme, which began with the purchase of a rural property in 1967 in New Mexico by founder Don Anderson, was initially conceived as a way to expand his museum's collection, the Roswell Museum and Art Center.[321] The project was initially called 'Hippy Corners' due to local perceptions that it was a commune, yet its language of quiet retreat and individuated reflection reflects more the colony patron models.[322]

There is a strong thread throughout the largely programme-produced histories of residency retreats, of more informal artist communities eventually becoming established programmes or being linked to histories of retreat, although these narratives often tend to overemphasise the role of 'authentic' artist communities seamlessly becoming residencies, over their development and formalisation through government and private body grants and the participation of other stakeholders.[323] Oftentimes the histories of rural retreats involve patrons, artist collectives, or government bodies (often local or regional), managing to acquire rural properties, sometimes with historic buildings, then converted for use as a residency. Marnie Badham has called this the 'artist house' or cultural heritage residency genre' that is

[319] Caitlin Strokosch, 'A Century of Research and Developments: Artists' Residencies in the U.S.', Green Paper, Alliance of Artists Communities, 1; and TransArtists, 'Artist-in-Residence History', accessed 1 Novemeber 2021. https://www.transartists.org/en/artist-residence-history.
[320] Quoted in Irmeli Kokko, 'Residencies as Programmatic Spaces for Communality. An Interview with Nina Möntmann', in *Contemporary Artist Residencies,* 109.
[321] Ann McGarrell and Sally Anderson, *The Roswell Artist-in-Residence Program: An Anecdotal History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 6.
[322] Ibid., 4.
[323] Andrea Glauser makes a similar argument about residencies more broadly see Glauser, 'The Artist-in-Residence Caught Between Globalisation and Localisation', 43.

'well known across the world.'[324] Although she makes passing reference to this model being connected to early patronage models, where properties were donated to public institutions, this model primarily proliferated in the 1990s alongside the general rise in residency programmes.

In a more generalised sense, there is a tension between positions that seem to draw a neat line from historic practices to present-day ones, and positions which seem to relegate retreat models to the past, even though they remain a persistent staple of the rural and remote residency landscape. In the preface to one of the few published books on the residency phenomena, *Re-tooling Residencies,* Anna Ptak writes, 'The basic goals of residency programmes used to be individual artistic development and the pursuit of experimentation' and proclaims an 'end to discourses based on one-way traffic.'[325] The tendency for some rural residencies to define themselves against the idea of retreat, often rests on this being a more traditional model which new forms and models have overtaken, while other newer models seem to reclaim the potential of retreat, based on longer historical trajectories, and the general tendency for artists to have always practised forms of seeking isolation (whether alone or together). As artist Yeb Wiersma writes in the same volume, 'Artists have always travelled* to the farthest corners of the world, in search of isolation and inspiration', and in a footnote, that 'Inspiration and isolation are just two of the numerous reasons why artists today sign up for a residency programme.'[326]

Though there are few works which comprehensively historicise residencies, a consistent reference is to artist colonies. The link between these colonies and present-day programmes is present in nearly all of the typological definitions discussed earlier, and several

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[324] Marnie Badham, 'The Social Life of Artist Residencies: working with people and places not your own - part 2', *Seismopolite* 19, accessed 15 June 2021, https://www.seismopolite.com/the-social-life-of-artist-residencies-working-with-people-and-places-not-your-own-part-2.

[325] Anna Ptak, 'Preface', *Re-Tooling Residencies*, 10.

[326] Yeb Wiersma, 'Accidental Pleasures', *Re-Tooling Residencies*, 93 and 99. The asterix points to the line '*By the way, don't forget to pack loneliness.'

articles state that colonies were the first residencies.[327] The artists colonies, to which residencies most refer, generally reference both the European and USA phenomenon of artists' movement, predominantly painters, to rural villages and locations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as to more formal institutions of artistic patronage, emerging in the USA in the early 20th Century. That in the USA, a number of these still exist and are now often categorised as residency programmes, in part accounts for the idea that colonies were the first residencies. That this periodisation is often made without really distinguishing these very different types, is also reflective of a general lack of attention given to residencies' institutional status or their relationships to wealthy patrons, foundations, and public bodies.

The earliest of these includes Yaddo, established by the poet and playwright Katrina Trask and her husband Spencer Trask, a financier, who bequeathed their 400-acre rural estate in Saratoga Springs, New York, to writers, musicians, and artists, opening its doors in 1926, after the Trasks had died.[328] In sociologist Micki McGee's introduction to an edited volume exploring the history of Yaddo, *Yaddo: Making American Culture* (2008), the Trasks' gift is described in terms more familiar to contemporary discourse on the creative economy, 'as a place of respite for creative workers whose labors were not likely to be supported by the mechanisms of an expanding market economy.'[329] While McGee also contextualises Yaddo within a 19th Century American culture of cultural elites beginning to see the need to patronise forms of high culture that weren't supported by the market, Yaddo would come to support "a divergent array of cultural products."[330]

A similar institution, The MacDowell Colony, was set up in 1907, by the pianist Marian MacDowell, and her husband, the composer Edward MacDowell, shortly before he

[327] Ziglsperger and Upmeyer, 'Focus On: Artist Residencies', 30; Transartists, 'Artist-in-Residence History'; and Strokosch, 'A Century of Research and Developments.'
[328] Yaddo, 'About', accessed 15 June 2021, https://www.yaddo.org/about/history/.
[329] Micki MacGee and New York Public Library, *Yaddo: Making American Culture* (New York; NY: The New York Public Library; Columbia University Press, 2008), 1.
[330] Ibid.

died, on their farm in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Marian MacDowell actively promoted the couple's vision for nurturing creative development in small, idyllic rural places, as the 'Peterborough Idea', travelling across the country to attract funding, and writing in 1932 that 'the lost and harassed artist may eventually learn that opportunities for the development of his own art are to be found in some other place than the overcrowded centers like New York.'[331] Today, MacDowell identifies as a 'leading contemporary arts organization', and as 'bringing together diverse, multidisciplinary talent to exchange ideas and pursue creative work.'[332] Both Yaddo and MacDowell assert consistent missions across their diverse histories, with Yaddo in particular claiming this in contemporary political terms, linking their programme to support artists at political risk with historical values of 'aesthetic daring, social egalitarianism, and internationalism.'[333] Recent discourse on colonies has often sought to defend them against charges of elitism, while noting their relevance to contemporary conditions for artists. Caitlin Strokosch, when Director of the AAC, argued that these 'Utopian enclaves' were 'not about retreat from the industry and fierceness of the city, but rather about advancing a different way of life. These first visionaries believed the right mix of solitude and solidarity could ignite the flames of creativity.'[334] And elsewhere, that beginning with the utopianism of colonies, artist residencies are 'as much about advancing as retreating, about being drawn to something even more than what the artists are drawn from.'[335] A paper by Jocelyn Trigg, in a comparison of US artist colony models, draws a direct line to artist residencies, ending with the speculation that the ever-growing quantity of similar models' might be linked both to busier lives and the need to find alternative spaces for communities with shared values.[336]

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[331] See generally MacDowell Colony, 'About', accessed 15 June 2021, https://www.macdowellcolony.org/about; and Marian MacDowell, 'MacDowell's "Peterborough Idea"' *The Music Quarterly,* Vol. 18, No. 1 (January 1932): 38.
[332] MacDowell Colony, 'Media Center', accessed 15 June 2021, https://www.macdowell.org/media-center.
[333] Yaddo, 'About'.
[334] Strokosch, 'A Century of Research and Developments', 1.
[335] Caitlin Strokosch, in *Arrowmont school of arts and crafts: 20 years of the Artist-in-Residence Program* (Gatlinburg, TN: Arrowmont school of arts and crafts, 2012), 7.
[336] Joycelyn Trigg, 'U.S. Artist Colonies: Creation Stories', *World Futures*, 73:1, (2017): 57.

In Europe, though, the history of artist colonies did not produce institutions that would transform into contemporary residencies, although some claim proximity. The Künstlerhäuser Worpswede, which claims to be the oldest residency in Germany, dating from 1971, is in the same village as a famous 19th Century artist colony, while the more recent Nida Art Colony, founded in 2011 as a subdivision of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, features quite an extensive history of the 19th century Nida colony on its website.[337] This reflects, in some ways, a broader tendency to make symbolic associations between long histories of retreat, that are tied to the location of the residency. In an article on possible historical models for residencies, Jean Baptist Joly draws an almost poetic series of associations between the Akademie Schloss Solitude, where he is Director, and which has hosted a residency programme since 1990, and earlier ideas of retreat:

> Located at the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau, Barbizon is a typical example of "Villégiature" (roughly: deprived of the city); it represents the rural and the idyllic, the "Arcadian model" for present-day artists' residences. Worpswede can be understood as a sequel to Barbizon, as can the Academy Schloss Solitude: The Baroque castle which houses the academy was built in 1763 by the Duke of Wuerttemberg on the edge of the Leonberg Forest as a retreat.[338]

These tentative, symbolic links reflect a broader tendency, across the history sections of many residency websites and profile pages, where references to proximate geographic, if not temporal, practices of artists retreating, linked to the local area or the histories of buildings, are mentioned, though they might have less bearing on the more immediate context of how and why the residency was founded, and can be better understood as part of the place-based identities that residencies construct. But this is also often a complex process rather than only a

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[337] Künstlerhäuser Worpswede, 'Homepage', accessed 15 June 2021, https://www.kh-worpswede.de/; and Nida Art Colony, 'The History of Nida Artists' Colony', accessed 15 June 2021, http://nidacolony.lt/en/colony/history.

[338] Jean-Baptise Joly, 'About the necessity of residential centers in the contemporary context of art', paper presented at the Res Artis, General Meeting, 1996, Dublin, accessed 1 August 2017, http://www.resartis.org/en/activities__projects/meetings/general_meetings/1996_-_dublin/jean-baptiste_joly/.

purely associative, symbolic alignment of values. The former histories, purposes and values associated with disused building also often suggest and inform their later uses, something I explore more in the case studies in at the end of this chapter, on three islands in the Åland archipelago. It is a significant trend in itself that so many retreat residencies emerge in places with associations to analogous practices, inhabiting places with resonant histories, and contributing to locational identities that make use of layers of retreat.[339]

The uptake of the symbolism of the colony, may be due to the fact that there is at least some literature that takes a comparative approach to the study of artist colonies, while formal comparative academic histories of the contemporary residency phenomena are missing.[340] Laura Windhagger and Lisa Mazza argue that the vocabulary associated with the artist colony permeates residency discourse:

> There still exists a set of utopian and idealistic key words that might stem from the escapism and ideologies of the 19th century artist communities. These designations are still valid and used to speak about residencies, and mainly circulate around notions of solitude and freedom, and the establishment of transnational communities.[341]

While I agree with Windhagger and Mazza in the sense that such adjectives are widely used, seemingly resonating in broad symbolic terms with fairly uncritical historical myths and narratives about colonies, a more recent turn to referencing artist colonies also cites art historian Nina Lübbren's comparative and theoretical examination of the phenomenon, in *Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe, 1870-1910*, published in 2011. Lübbren herself writes that previous literature on colonies was 'fragmented, monographic and, for the most part,

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[339] For example, The Ragdale Residency in Lake Forest, Illinois, founded by the poet Alice Judson Hayes in 1976, links to its history as a summer retreat for Judson Hayes' family, originally built by her grandfather, the Arts and Crafts architect Howard Van Doren Shaw in 1897, which was used to host artist peers, and had its own outdoor theatre. This isn't a disingenuous link, given the idea for the residency emerged in part from this historical use of the building, but this is emphasised rather than the growing emergence of artist residencies in the USA in the 1970s. See Alice Ryerson Hayes and Susan Moon, *Ragdale: A History and Guide* (Berkeley, Calif.; Lake Forest, Ill.: Open Books; Ragdale Foundation, 1990).

[340] For example Michael Jacobs, *The Good and Simple Life: Artist Colonies in Europe and America* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1985); and Nina Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe, 1870-1910* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

[341] Windhager and Mazza, 'Neither Working nor Unworking'.

uncritical.'[342] Though attempts to historicise residencies are extremely few, a number of articles as well as doctoral theses on residencies cite Lübbren's work, and Lübbren was a keynote speaker at an international symposium in 2015, *Residencies Reflected*, Helsinki, that set out to 'reflect on residencies as spaces for artistic development on cultural thresholds that have been opened up by accelerated globalization.'[343] Lübbren's work is appealing both as a more theoretically and critically nuanced account of artist colonies than most previous works, but also because it is methodologically innovative, taking an interdisciplinary approach that links to theories of tourism, as well as approaches from geography and sociology. Lübbren considers intersections between artists' representational practices and 'place-myths', where artists negotiated between 'the realities of a place, the ideal image of what that place should be like, and the possibilities opened or foreclosed by the conventions of pictorial tradition.'[344] She considers the forms of sociality that these artist communities instantiated, and intersects their movements with other tourist practices, routes, and mobilities of the time.[345] The problem with the general association, however, is that, while more critically nuanced in regards to the artist's relationship to mobility, tourism and local residents, and even hoteliers, this story still centres on the idea of artists creating their own rural communities (albeit ones with very porous boundaries, with much travel between colonies). The association is very much a desirable one, both in terms of aligning with broad discursive interests in topics such as mobility and tourism, as well as centring the story on artist-created communities rather than on the role of programmes or institutions in shaping artistic practice. Most retreat-residencies – even small artist-run programmes – entail a relationship between a hosting organisation and

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[342] Lübbren*, Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe, 1870-1910*, 8.
[343] Lübbren, Nina, 'European art-colonies of the 19th Century', opening lecture, Uniarts Helsinki, *Residencies Reflected*, symposium. Lübbren has been cited by Badham, 'The Social Life of Artist Residencies', Elving and Kokko, 'Introduction', 16; and Rita Vargas de Freitas Matias, 'International Artists-in-Residence 1990–2010. Mobility, Technology and Identity in Everyday Art Practices', (PhD diss., University of Jyväskylä, 2016).
[344] Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe*, 115.
[345] Ibid., Part IV.

successive individuals or groups of residents, rather than somewhat continuous, albeit temporal and porous, artist communities. Andrea Glauser, while not writing specifically on histories of retreat, is explicit in a critique of the way residencies have used historical analogues in their self-promotion, writing how 'historical forms', such as the Prix de Rome established in 1663, 'provide a stylistic inventory', acting as 'key points of reference for a quasi-traditionalist legitimisation of current cultural promotion', and enabling residencies to 'align institutional activities with quasi-headstrong artistic activities.'[346]

The prevalence of the colony as a model for contemporary retreat also reflects a wider tendency to re-frame retreat against constructions of it that relate it to the myth of the lone artist genius (a figure of Romanticism) or the hopelessly ideologically enchanted artist fleeing the city to rural Arcadia (associated with the artist colonies). Lübbren is emphatic in regard to re-examining previous approaches to artist colonies, she writes, 'I want to insist that art historians must find a way of talking about the artists who worked in communal rural contexts and their works that neither devalues them as retrogressive and unreflective nor forces them into a subversive alternative that they themselves never wanted to be a part of.'[347] Some authors have applied particularly contemporary framings over colonies, as they link them to the residency phenomenon. Badham, Hill, Purves, Cockrell, and Spiers link residencies to the western history of artist retreats and colonies, which they explore as 'early examples of cultural mobility and alternate social economy'.[348] Kochache describes the first artist-run residencies and colonies as about 'collective production, the creation of a bohemian community and the avant-garde.'[349] Rather than drawing direct historical lineages, such

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[346] Glauser, 'The Artist-in-Residence Caught Between Globalisation and Localisation', 43.
[347] Ibid., 10–11.
[348] Marnie Badham, Kate Hill, Ted Purves, Susanne Cockrell, and Amy Spiers, 'Forms for Encounter and Exchange: Field School as Social Form at Laughing Waters Artist Residency', *Unlikely*, Issue 2, accessed 16 June 2021, https://www.unlikely.net.au/issue-2/forms-for-encounter-and-exchange.
[349] Moukhtar Kocache, 'Setting the Record Straight: Towards a More Nuanced Conversation on Residencies and Capital', *ArteEast*: *Artezine*, Winter 2012, accessed 16 June 2021, http://arteeast.org/quarterly/setting-the-record-straight-towards-a-more-nuanced-conversation-on-residencies-and-capital/?issues_season=winter&issues_year=2012.

connections tend to be based more around some shared values between historic colonies and contemporary programmes. This use is best summed up by Taru Elving and Ermeli Kokko in their 'brief history of residencies' in their introduction to *Contemporary Artists Residencies: Reclaiming Time and Space*. Summarising a view that the rise in residencies was linked to increased interest in site-bound approaches in art practice, they write:

> the tradition of mobility and international artists' communities, based on historical continuity, provided a readymade operating model in the nineties for the contemporary art conventions which required artists to travel and create art on site.[350]

But while there are historical trajectories that carry older forms of retreat directly into the era of contemporary artist residencies, there has also been a widespread re-inhabiting and re-working of the colony legacy and other proximate stories and trajectories of artists forming temporary communities together in rural places.

A major implication of residencies' claiming of a 'gift of time' is that this connotes and instantiates a particular relationship to providing artistic autonomy. Both the continuation and revival of colony models is implicated in this. As Nina Lübbren has argued, rather than a figure of alienation from society (as in the avant-garde artist), artist colonists showed 'a reconciliation of the burden of artistic autonomy with acceptance by society. The relatively small and cohesive group of an artists' colony provided the leaven for such a reconciliation.'[351] There is a good fit between Lübbren's understanding of autonomy and heteronomy within artist colonies, and contemporary discourses on artistic autonomy and artistic labour, where there has been a focus, which I will go onto discuss later in this chapter, on artists finding supportive peer-to-peer structures, to allow artists reprieve from contemporary conditions of overwork. It could be argued that the artist colony, as a model for artists working relatively autonomously, away from urban centres, but with the support of

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[350] Elving and Kokko, 'Introduction', 13.
[351] Lübbren *Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe*, 35.

an artist community, is also a desirable analogue for programmes wishing to assert identities that are often counter- or quasi- institutional. I will go onto discuss this further in regard to an emerging notion of retreat as a form of politicised resistance towards conditions for artistic labour under contemporary capitalism (3.2: A Politics of Retreat). Now I will turn to an analysis of three sub-types of retreat-residencies that are prevalent in the field and instantiate slightly different versions of the retreat idea.

The Colony Model: A Gift of Time

One contemporary model can be said to be a continuation of, or borrow much of its symbolic value from, the USA colony / patron model just discussed. These are the residencies that most often use the phrase a 'gift of time' that runs as a thread throughout this thesis, and purport to provide relatively free, undisturbed time for artistic development, within a beautiful, secluded setting, embedded within a community of peers. The Roswell artist-in-residence program in New Mexico gives artists live and work spaces amidst the 'tranquillity of the high plains', providing them 'with a 'Gift of Time' to focus on their work with an absolute minimum of distraction.'[352] Caldera in Oregon's monthlong residencies have been described as 'the gift of time and space at our beautiful Arts Center in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains.'[353] The Ucross Foundation residency, on a 20,000-acre ranch in the 'wide open spaces of northeastern Wyoming', is described as a 'gift of time and space' and as 'freeing artists from the pressures and distractions of daily life.'[354] While still largely a USA phenomenon, where there has been a long history of patron/colony foundations, versions of this model can be seen to emerge in different times in different places, based on artists,

[352] The Roswell Artist-in-Residence Program, 'About'.
[353] Cranbrook Academy of Art Library, 'Artist Residencies in North America', accessed 16 June 2021, https://cranbrookart.edu/caalibrary/research/residencies.htm.
[354] Ucross Foundation, 'The Ucross Story', accessed 16 June 2021, https://www.ucrossfoundation.org/ucross-story.html; and TransArtists, 'Ucross Foundation Residency Program', accessed 16 June 2021, https://www.transartists.org/air/ucross-foundation-residency-program.

wealthy patrons, and foundations, setting up residencies, often on historic rural estates. Examples include The Tyron Guthrie Centre in Ireland, founded in 1984 to fulfil the wishes of Sir Willian Tyrone Guthrie, who bequeathed his family home to the state for use by artists; or the more recently formed Saari Residence, founded in 2008 in Southwest Finland, maintained by the Kone Foundation on an old rural manor house estate. Moreover, small, often artist-run programmes can use a similar language of providing free time and space in an idyllic setting, but are often paid-for situations, sometimes even embedded within hotels or bed-and-breakfasts.[355] In general, these programmes are primarily oriented around providing artists with retreat, and other public or display related activities tend to flow from this, such as small exhibitions of former residents, or allowing some limited visitation by tourists. These are the programmes that primarily construct, online and in other publicity materials, an image of the artist in secluded retreat.

Contemporary Art Centres in Peripheral Locations

A number of retreat programmes have been at the forefront of discursive production about residencies, and residency related topics for some time, and examples are drawn from them throughout this chapter. Each, I would suggest, orients around forms of artistic retreat and autonomy in regard to their residency programmes (which are the lynchpin of their activities and institutional identities), while also being centres of contemporary art, with a diverse range of public, educational and exhibition programming. These include Nida Art Colony, Lithuania; Akademie Schloss Solitude, Germany; Helsinki International Artist Programme (HIAP), Finland; Wysing Arts Centre, United Kingdom; and Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Canada. In these programmes, artists-in-residence are given relative autonomy, but

[355] Some such programmes subsidise or even offer stipends to artist-residents, but others sit close to simply being simply paid-for retreats / hotel stays. Res Artis allows for listings of 'Hotel or guest house' organisations, see Res Artis, 'Listings.' 'Examples of hotel programmes include Villla Lena, Tuscany, Italy, 'Residencies', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.villa-lena.org/artist-residency-programme; and ANIMA Casa Rural, San Isidro, Mexico, 'Arts Residencies', accessed 1 November 2021, https://animacasarural.com/#.

discursive activities, public programming, and active participation in residency networks also direct their activities outwards to local publics, online audiences, within residency networks, and the wider contemporary art world. This is most clearly articulated in Akademie Schloss Solitude's identity as a 'retreat and "free zone"' for art and life, but it also has a public face as an 'exhibition venue, innovative laboratory and arena for discourse.'[356] Rasa Antanavičiūtė, Executive Director at Nida Art Colony, summarised a year of activities in terms of vertical time – fast, discursive, overlapping, external collaborations, such as hosting a Res Artis meeting, and being involved in the Lithuanian National Pavilion at the Venice Biennale – and the horizontal time of 'habitual, but self-renewing and never reiterating occurrences; involving residents, and students, and social time together, and where the residency acted as 'a safe harbour', a comfort zone.'[357]

While they create forms of separation between their programmes, the activities of these residencies are still often based around residents, current and former, who might be invited for or opt-into different kinds of participation. They also each offer different types of residencies: for example, Wysing's 'Retreats' are short themed artistic retreats 'to develop strong networks and think about developments in art practice', and one- to four-month long residencies that have become increasingly geared towards collaboration between a few artists.[358] Moreover, several of these programmes emphasise their isolation as well as proximity to other places (Suomenlinna island to Helsinki in the case of HIAP, or Wysing Arts Centre's closeness to Cambridge and London). They each have strong pedagogical orientations, and in some cases, these institutions are a hybrid between a residency and an educational or research-based institution. Nida Art Colony is a subdivision of the Vilnius Academy of Arts and they run a Nida Doctoral School; Banff was originally founded by the

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[356] Akademie Schloss Solitude, 'About us', accessed 16 June 2021, https://www.akademie-solitude.de/en/academy/ueber-uns/.
[357] Rasa Antanavičiūtė, 'Vertical and Horizontal Time', *Nida Art Colony Log*, 'On Time', The Seventh, June 2014–September 2015, ed. Vytautas Michelkevičius (Nida: Nida Art Colony, Vilnius Academy of Arts, 2015), 9.
[358] Wysing Arts Centre, 'Overview', accessed 16 June 2021, http://www.wysingartscentre.org/about/overview.

University of Alberta in 1933 and they host numerous kinds of training and workshops alongside residencies; the Akademie Schloss Solitude has a strong focus on publishing and regularly posts residency research online; and Wysing Arts Centre has numerous programmes to work with schools and colleges. All programme a wide variety of educational activities: conferences, symposia, workshops, talks, and publishing activities and they have addressed topics related to the residency field through these activities. Importantly though, despite the vast range of other activities these programmes elicit, they are still invested in providing artists with relatively autonomous time in retreat.

Micro-Residency-Retreats and Experimental Models

The proliferations of small, often artist-run programmes, in rural areas, many of which might be described as micro-residencies, often take project and research-based approaches to the curation of these residencies. The Micro-residence network describes a micro-residency as: 'small scale (both in the size of facilities and budget), artist–run, independent, grass roots and flexible, while placing importance upon responding flexibly to artists' needs and valuing human relationships.'[359] They offer forms of 'time and space' but equally suggest intensive social and geographical conditions based on innovative models. The Alliance of Artists' Communities describes some residencies as 'alternative outposts', such as PLAND (Practice Liberating Art through Necessary Dislocation), 'that invites artists to their beyond-the-grid site in the New Mexico desert to experiment together with collective living and making.' [360] These programmes might be thought of as radical retreats, emphasising new experimentation and extremity. Instead of the classic colony model, or art centre, that instantiate predominantly more peaceful conditions for quiet retreat, these suggest a more intentional

[359] Microresidence Network, 'Publications'.
[360] Alliance of Artists Communities, 'From Surviving to Thriving: Sustaining Artist Residencies', Report, May 2012, 6.

and experimental embrace of the residency-retreat. These small programmes often adopt some of the long-standing practices of retreat-residencies generally, as more reflexive, pedagogical method (such as long walks and living together), or are conceived as learning experiences with resident-participants.[361]

Many of these residencies experiment with the social or relational forms created by the residency itself. Rather than residencies more oriented around social practice, that may engage with a particular institution or community, these residencies experiment with the social intensities created by the community of residents instantiated by the programme, using remote locations as something of a social intensifier or incubator. The Caribic residencies describe themselves as 'a force that enables new ways of engaging with artists and non-artists after the institution. Our format is friendship.'[362] In one version, two participants walk together from one location to another over two days. The residency was designed to intensify relationships, their description reads, 'Caribic are two people, exponentially in love', and 'during two days, a concise residency period of heightened intensity, we share lived experience and encounter, radically trusting in our collectively generated knowledge.'[363] Such programmes take some of the social elements of older models that have been considered peripheral but important to residency experiences and centres these relations.

Some programmes overlap with other forms of retreat – from Cabin-Time's summer camp style programmes which purport to create 'opportunity for creative experimentation, adventures in landscape, and forever friendships' to the survivalist register of PLAND as a 'project of self-reliance, creative problem-solving, and collaboration', that is off-grid and '30 miles from gas, medical facilities, or other services', and where residents are mostly left

[361] For example the Field School as Social Form at Laughing Waters Artist Residency, described in Badham, Hill, Purves, Cockrell, and Spiers. 'Forms for Encounter and Exchange'.
[362] Art & Education, Announcement, April 4 2014, 'Caribic MATTER Residency', accessed 16 June 2021, https://www.artandeducation.net/announcements/107689/caribic-matter-residency.
[363] Ibid.

completely alone.[364] Both share a political stance in regards to sustainable living, and produce extreme solitude and intense friendship as artistic experiences, there for individual development, but also as continuous projects, in PLAND's case, as 'an ongoing experiment of how to create a sustainable way of life.'[365] This is part of a trend where artists have experimented with the retreat-form, either inhabiting the residency themselves, or allowing the experience of other invited artist-residents to become part of their wider research or project. Artist Andrea Zittel has hosted residencies as part of her expansive artwork, *A-Z West* project, a series of architectural structures, objects, and working studios, across over seventy acres in California near Joshua Tree National Park, a project she has described as 'an evolving testing grounds for living.'[366] Residents have stayed in modular sleeping pods as part of her 'Wagon Station Encampments'. One resident, in 2016, Katie Moore, described the project as entailing questions around 'complex relationships between our needs for freedom, security, autonomy, authority, and control, observing how structure and limitations often have the capacity to generate feelings of freedom beyond open-ended choices.'[367] These programmes also often bare overlap with the summer school type model used by programmes such as Nida, Banff, and Wysing, in their desire to create intensive, collective, 'learning experiences' for artists.[368] In this they align to what Nina Möntmann has described as a recent turn towards 'collective retreats' which she describes as having 'the potential to reflect how people can organize as a collective to potentially transform an interest group into a collective production or political project.'[369] This investment in politically imagining the potential of retreats, is what I will turn to now.

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[364] Cabin-Time, 'About', accessed 16 June 2021, http://www.cabin-time.org/about/; and PLAND, 'Faq', accessed 16 June 2021, https://itspland.wordpress.com/about-2/faq/.
[365] Ibid.
[366] Andrea Zittel, 'A-Z West'.
[367] Katie Moore, 'Residency at A-Z West', October 12 2016, accessed 16 June 2021, https://www.katiemoorevisualartist.com/residency-at-a-z-west/.
[368] Serino and FARE, 'Introduction', 8.
[369] Möntmann quoted in Kokko, 'Residencies as Programmatic Spaces for Communality', 109.

3.2 A Politics of Retreat

Over the last decade, retreat has re-emerged as a more politicised idea, a trend evident in the widespread way that many contemporary residency programmes frame their own values, missions, and histories. An array of small rural programme in particular are often positioning their role and activities in terms of instantiating forms of collective withdrawal from contemporary modes of artistic production. While it would be an over-statement to suggest that retreat has emerged as a fully-fledged theoretical idea within residency discourses, I would argue that ideas and practices of retreat increasingly converge with other political discourses prominent in the contemporary art world, namely, labour discourses which have re-invested in ideas of artistic autonomy and forms of withdrawal and retreat from a more hyper-productive 'art world', political theories of 'agonistic pluralism' and 'the commons' in relation to artistic practice and activism, as well as ecological discourses that promote values of slowness and different scales of relating.[370]

Converging several of these strands, Taru Elving has long developed an idea of residencies and retreat, through her writing and curatorial practice. In 'Cosmopolitics for Retreats', Elving explores the potentials and dilemmas that might arise from thinking the residency as a form of retreat, weighing up the complex and oftentimes contradictory status of residencies as they negotiate forms of withdrawal as well as intensified mobilities.[371] Considering the multiple meanings of the word retreat, Elving writes:

> Retreat is defined as – an act of withdrawing from what is difficult, dangerous or disagreeable; a process of receding from a position or state attained; a place of privacy or safety; and a period of group withdrawal for prayer, meditation or study. Retreat refers thus to a place and a time but also to an act. It may be considered as a state of

[370] On art and agonism, see Chantal Mouffe, 'Artistic Activism and Agonistic Politics', *Atlas of Transformation*, accessed 2 November 2021, http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/p/political-environment/artistic-activism-and-agonistic-politics-chantal-mouffe.html; and on art and 'the commons' see *Commonism. A New Aesthetics of the Real*, eds. Nico Dockx and Paschal Gielen (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2018).
[371] Taru Elving, 'Cosmopolitics for Retreats', in *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, 221–234.

> being, a movement, or a particular moment inhabited. In similar terms residencies can be understood to be often intense experiences of isolation and self-reflection, yet all kinds of critical encounters also take place in residencies as retreats.[372]

Elving argues for rethinking the way residencies have positioned themselves as cosmopolitan 'global citizens', by addressing the 'troubling colonial legacy and anthropocentrism' of such ideals.[373] She furthers makes the case that residencies might address some of their political dilemmas through a frame of ecological awareness and 'cosmopolitical practice', influenced by theorists within ecological discourses such as Isabelle Stengers and Donna Haraway.[374] Elving makes clear that despite retreat's association with forms of inaction, it has political potential as a means to effect change, guided by Haraway's notion of response-ability (a capacity to respond that Haraway defines as occurring through 'cultivating collective knowing and doing', a mode Elving suggests can be realised in residencies).[375] Elsewhere, Elving has given greater attention to contrasting residencies against the careerism, networking, and market-driven imperatives of the wider art world, defining the residency understood as retreat, as 'a particular space-time "stolen" out of the regular flows and frames of professional practice, where introverted reflection merges with openness to novel inputs and unexpected encounters.'[376] Elving's work is exemplary and leading of wider tendencies in residency discourse, to associate residency practices, particularly retreats, as both strategic retreat *from*

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[372] Ibid., 226–227.
[373] Ibid., 229.
[374] Ibid. Elving refers to Isabelle Stengers idea of cosmopolitics and her call for 'the invention of modes of gathering that complicate politics by introducing hesitation', in *Another Science is Possible: A Manifesto for Slow Science* (Cambridge, MA: Wiley, 2018), 151. Stengers has reworked the idea of 'cosmopolitinism' to argue that it should include both the 'cosmos' and politics – as in, that politics needs to be thought at larger scales of relating than the global and constitute a kind of political ecology of everything. See Isabelle Stengers, trans. Robert Bononno, *Cosmopolitics I* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).
[375] Elving 'Cosmopolitics for Retreats', 223. While not the quotation Elving uses, Haraway's definition of 'response-ability' can be found in Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the* Cththulucene (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2016), 34.
[376] Taru Elving, 'Residency as Retreat, or Refuge?', *You Are Here – Rethinking Residencies*, publication from a seminar at the Factory of Art and Design, Copenhagen, June 7, 2013 (Copenhagen: the Factory of Art and Design; Random Gardens, 2013), accessed 10 September 2021, http://randomgardens.dk/youarehere/taruelfving.html.

and potential political resistance *towards* processes associated with contemporary global capitalism, particularly both ecological crisis and accelerated, time-pressured lives.

Academic and curator Vytuatas Michelkevičius' writing and publication activity throughout his directorship of Nida Art Colony (2010-2019), has also explored ideas of retreat and remoteness, particularly in his essay, 'Rooted and Slow Institutions Reside in Remote Places'.[377] Similar to Elving, while weighing up many of the dilemmas of residencies as imbricated in other trends, Michelkevičius concludes that institutional practices of care and slowness, as well as the slower temporalities and physical barriers of remote places, are ultimately beneficial in helping artists detach from 'the hectic tempo of production' in urban studios, as well as 'from market and professional competitiveness' and were 'able to provide a safe and comfortable space for artists to experiment and try out new ideas.'[378]

The emergence of more politicised understandings of 'retreat' also came through dOCUMENTA (13), and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's curation of a satellite section of programming at a retreat in the Canadian Rocky Mountains, at the Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada. This was one of four 'positions' (essentially four broad concepts that were attached to the four locations where dOCUMENTA (13) was taking place) curated by Christov-Bakargiev to correspond to a 'position of the artist in the world', with each also said to relate 'to time in a specific way.'[379] In contrast to the compressed time of the theme 'under siege', or the 'continuous present' of 'on stage', Christov-Bakargiev describes retreat as being about suspending time.[380] This 'position' was realised through the curation of an intensive summer school called 'The Retreat', hosted through the Banff Research in Culture (BRiC) residency programme, a programme for researchers on cultural topics, and taught by visiting faculty

[377] Michelkevičius,'Rooted and Slow Institutions Reside in Remote Places'.
[378] Ibid., 161–162.
[379] Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, 'The dance was very frenetic, lively, rattling, clanging, rolling, contorted, and lasted for a long time', (press release), in *dOCUMENTA (13) Catalog 1/3: The Book of Books*, ed. Katrin Sauerlander (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012), 7.
[380] Ibid.

such as Franco Berardi and Pierre Huyghe. A publication emerging from the project was published in 2014 in the journal *PUBLIC Art Culture Ideas* – a journal that largely centres on issues of art and the public, notably dedicating its 50th anniversary edition to ideas of withdrawing from public life in order to gain critical distance.[381] The contributions are broadly reflective of the trend to consider retreat as neither escapism nor passivity, but as being responsive to political urgency and as a state or space or practice where, in Bruno Bosteels' argument, certain modes of retreat might provide conditions where 'the political is born, enabled, and sustained?'[382] Heather Anderson and Carrie Smith-Prei both associate retreat with ideas of refusal; Anderson discussing artists drawing on autonomist Marxist strategies of work refusal, and Smith-Prei in a more general sense of refusing the status quo.[383] Across these positions, artists' wishes to make work that engages with contemporary social and political issues is practically taken as a given. Instead, ideas of retreat are often instantiations of the idea that artistic autonomy is, or should be, primarily concerned not with separation from social life and politics, but from the institutional, social and economic pressures most associated with contemporary capitalism, and as a way to carve out temporary autonomy in order to reflect and respond to these pressures.

Anderson's work in particular is illuminating on the potential convergences of political thought that appear to come together under ideas of retreat, and which can be related to artist-residencies. Anderson brings together practices by artists, curators, and small institutions since the 2000s, as experimenting with forms of retreat and withdrawal both within and *from* art institutions, creating artworks and institutional structures that 'creatively refuse over-work and re-envision their activities and ways of working.'[384] Generally speaking, a lynchpin of

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[381] *PUBLIC Art Culture Ideas*, 50: The Retreat, Fall (2014).
[382] Bruno Bosteels, 'In Praise of Discrepancy? Art and Ideology Revisited' in *PUBLIC Art Culture Ideas*, 50: The Retreat, 94.
[383] Heather Anderson, 'Retreating in/from Art Institutions'; and Carrie Smith-Prei, 'A Figure of Ambivalent Retreat: The Case of Gisela Elsner', in *PUBLIC Art Culture Ideas*, 50: The Retreat.
[384] Anderson, 'Retreating in/from Art Institutions', 67.

these different strategies and of particular relevance to retreat-residencies, is a general stance of resisting artworld norms associated with high demands for production and display. Anderson describes these strategies as 'strategic retreat from normative audience-exhibition structures in order to prioritise working collaboratively with artists and other cultural producers, processes of research and experimentation, and a sustained engagement with ideas.'[385] Residencies are well placed to position themselves as uncoupled from exhibitions and uniquely focused on providing time for research, experimentation, and development. Following Anderson's framings, they might be seen as the ultimate form of retreat.

A major example of 'strategic retreat' used by Anderson, is the re-structuring of the Baltic Art Centre (BAC), which eliminated much of their public programming, exhibition space, and residency studios, but retained a Production-in-Residence programme. Quoting former Director Lisa Rosendahl, Anderson argues that this programming enabled a re-thinking of production within residencies as something to be exported for display elsewhere, and enabled projects which looked at concepts of 'anonymity, withdrawal, secrecy, erasure or deferral.'[386] A danger hinted at (with Anderson's acknowledgement that BAC's experiments failed to produce a sustainable model) lies in accepting the more minimal material conditions generally required to produce endless process and deferral. If residencies are prioritised over more finalised forms of production, such as exhibitions, will forms of opacity be unduly preferred over forms of display and audience engagement? What pressures and elicitations also emerge from the institutional performance and representation of processes over exhibitions?

One of the projects emerging from BAC which directly addressed ideas of opacity and withdrawal was the SITE Residency. A project that was almost a play on the dialectics of the

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[385] Ibid., 72. Anderson references wider ideas of refusal that were part of Operaismo. I discuss strategies of 'refusal' and 'withdrawal' in more detail in Chapter Four.
[386] Ibid., 69.

retreat, as private withdrawal, and the residency as a narrated site, was 'The Site Residency' (TSR) curated by Simon Cicocki, and programmed by the BAC – Baltic Art Center, a contemporary artist residency program on the island of Gotland, Sweden. TSR involved three two-week residencies at different locations, said to be 'oriented toward the "secret world of doing nothing" and its consequences.'[387] Artists were asked to specifically refrain from production in regard to their own new projects, yet the project was specifically designed to produce site-related works, by having the artists-in-residence collaborate with a ghost-writer, who would not stay at the residency, but who would 'translate the residency experience into literary fiction.'[388] The proposal for the project specified that residency sites would be selected 'on their special features: oddness, remoteness, "exoticism," seclusion, harshness, unique architectural values, wilderness, etc.'[389] As a form almost of institutional auto-critique, the project speaks to the field of small residencies and their production of difference (suggested places included 'shelters, barns, abandoned factories, private chateaus, etc.'), while the outsourced 'writing up' of the residency, while more abstracted from the way residency experiences are usually told, suggests the primacy of the retreat as an overdetermined situation experienced by residents, that oscillates between enacting the artist's temporary withdrawal from production (the TSR is said to be 'conceptually grounded in theories and practices of withdrawal, evanescence/ephemerality–invisibility, even') and yet which also becomes itself a kind of holistic situation or residency-as-project, enfolding the artist's activities into a curatorial framework and theme.[390] In out-sourcing the labour of narration, the project both ensures one form of opacity (freeing the artist from ongoing self-representation), but also inscribes them into a new representational system designed for the project (the artist-writer

[387] Simon Cichocki and Lívia Páldi, 'Proposal', *The Site Residency*, ed. Lívia Páldi (Berlin: Sternberg Press, Visby: BAC, Baltic Art Center, 2017), 8.
[388] Ibid., 12.
[389] Ibid., 10.
[390] Ibid., 11.

collaboration). The SITE residency thus both enables more extreme forms of 'retreat' from processes of production and participation than many residencies, but also enfolds the resident into a critical meta-project that performatively reflects on relationships between residency, exotic remote sites, and ideas of retreat.

In the second residency in 2014, by artist Susanne Kriemann, who stayed in Northeastern Gotland, Valleviken, and worked predominantly at sites associated with limestone mining, the ghost-writer Maria Barnas produced a poem, described as a 'walk in words' based on Kriemann's description of a 'walk through a tunnel in the winter', and presented in the TSR catalogue in a visual arrangement alongside Kriemann's photographs of the mine-site.[391] Despite the initial remit for non-production, Kriemann also used the residency to progress a project in more typical manner to site-oriented residency research; she is described as having 'used her time for fieldtrips and research on the history of the limestone industry and the current cement production on the island.'[392] A subsequent trip to Gotland, in 2015, eventually led to an artist book project, *Duskdust*, which saw another writer, Kirsty Bell, also attempt to convey parts of Kriemann's residency experience. Bell undertook an actual visit to Gotland two years later, to 'research her research' as a kind of art-historical fieldwork, 'based on the template of her Gotland trajectory, following the traces plotted out by the basic vocabulary she had furnished me with: wood, mountain, tunnel, furnace.'[393] In Bell's text, the residency as facilitating process largely shifts out of view, subordinated to visiting Kriemann's primary sites of research and representation. By contrast, the residency unsurprisingly occupies centrality in the introductory text to *Duskdust* by Lívia Páldi, then Director of BAC, who elucidates how the 'non-working' frame of the TSR, without a studio or internet, led to the more immersive, on-site, observations in relation to a series of site-visits and explorations

[391] Susanne Kriemann, 'Dust' and Maria Barnas 'And So She Walked' in *The Site Residency*, 45–78.
[392] BAC, 'Susanne Kriemann 2017', accessed 1 November 2021, http://www.balticartcenter.com/events/duskdust-book-presentation/.
[393] Kirsty Bell, 'Rock, Furnace, Rubble, Tunnel' in *Duskdust* (Berlin: Steinberg Press, 2016).

related to the limestone industry.[394] Here, 'non-work' is a kind of performative disappearance of the artist into the residency situation, not producing in the traditional sense of making objects for display but also limited in terms of processual representations that often accompany residencies: there is no studio for the artist to work in and be encountered in; they are denied internet access and a 'virtual presence', while the role of narration is not only outsourced but deliberately detached from site (say in contrast to on-site interviews) and often partly fictionalised. Interestingly though, the residency also disappears to a certain extent, into the remit of a background condition from which Kriemann is depicted as engaging in extensive self-initiated, roving fieldwork. The project is said to connect 'the figure of the artist (in residence) as a wanderer, sightseer, idler, and non-doer, as well as to the residency as a specific (foreign) site.'[395] But, I would argue, there is some semantic slippage between what the residency site is. Artists like Kriemann tended to use the residency period as an opportunity to find their own sites of interest, investigation or intervention, rather than reflect on the residency as encompassing a particular site or situation in itself.

The subsequent development of a project by Kriemann might mark the transition of the residency as a site/situation which is being directly addressed, performatively so, within the curatorial framing of TSR, to one where the residency occupies its more conventional status as the institutional arrangement which facilitates the artist's more autonomous site-oriented work, the place from which they discover and explore sites of interest. Both might be overplayed slightly. The TSR's design to 'motivate a new artistic approach toward the place/work system' did not produce radically new methodologies, but ones very much in the vein of situated contemporary working. Likewise, the heroics of fieldwork seem slightly overcapitalised in Bell's journey to visit Kriemann's sites, and as well with the epic poem about the tunnel walk (that said, all projects seem slightly ludic in their mythologising of the

[394] Lívia Páldi, 'A Landscape Camera', in *Duskdust*.
[395] Cichocki and Páldi, 'Proposal', 14.

artist-site relation).[396] Nevertheless, this heroic figure of the artist wanderer or independent field researcher slips away from the facilitating, framing, supporting aspects of the residency, which, as suggested in the TSR's very play with residency tropes, is an increasingly routine arrangement for artists to access unique locations. Residency retreats oscillate between being experimental frameworks in exotic places for residents to self-reflexively inhabit as a research process, enablers of symbolic removal which inculcate the resident, should they wish, from public performances of process, and the home-base and facilitating agency for self-directed fieldwork that may even leave the symbolic boundaries of the residency situation entirely.

Maria Lind has written on strategies used by artists and curators to create forms 'underlining negation, withdrawal and the importance of opacity.'[397] Opacity, as Lind describes in regard to Nina Möntmann's project *Opacity. Current Considerations on Art Institutions and the Economy of Desire*, was realised in the project through 'a lack of transparency rather than its abundance', as the project supported artistic research practices while making them relatively inaccessible to the public.[398] Projects such as SITE demonstrate the broader balancing act at play in retreat-residencies: how to authenticate and represent the artistic development and processes that occur through them by making them in some way visible to outsiders, while also allowing for meaningful forms of opacity that might allow artists to truly retreat and withdraw from cycles of promotion, publicity, participation, and production? In many ways, though, the opacity that really occurred, in regard to projects like Kriemann's, was more in regard to the format of the residency itself, as it slipped away in favour of a rather heroic image of the artist as a lone field-site researcher. Indeed, it became a crucial part of the symbolic apparatus around Kriemann's project that here processes were not kept entirely opaque but revealed to some degree to show the lengths and depths of her research and

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[396] Ibid., 8.
[397] Maria Lind, 'The Future is Here', European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policy, accessed 10 September 2021, http://eipcp.net/policies/cci/lind/en.html.
[398] Ibid., 5.

engagement with a variety of sites. In other words, some forms of representation, visibility, or narration over processes are usually desired by artists to make their site-based projects legible. What tends to 'retreat' is the residency as a facilitator of such engagements.

The 'Behind-the-scenes' of the artworld

There are a few interrelated positions from commentors that relate to the way retreat residencies assert alternative identities while being nevertheless intertwined with the wider art world. In general, while acknowledging that development-oriented residencies are a vast infrastructure that plays a supportive role in terms of contemporary art production, these positions diverge slightly over how much of an alternative residencies really provide to wider norms, such as whether they primarily provide artists with development-time that serves the wider artworld, whether they incubate alternative modes of working, or even whether they can even provide alternative pathways away from exhibition circuits. One position is that the demand for site-specific and socially engaged work both drove the proliferation of residencies and continues to shape their relationship to other art institutions.[399] This argument is exemplified by Francisco Guevera, who has also been vocally critical of some of the colonial engagements with place engendered by residencies in regard to the demand for place-based engagements. Guevera writes:

> It is no coincidence that artist residencies have become central to the art world; although small, the dynamic, multidisciplinary, and socially engaging nature of these spaces has become an answer to the scarcity of resources around the globe. Additionally, they optimize production costs, add the symbolic value of "authenticity" to an artwork, and add validity to the artist. Therefore, larger art institutions such as museums, galleries, and universities are now relying on local infrastructure around the world for art production, putting artist-in-residence programs at the center of the tensions between global forces and local realities.[400]

[399] See Elving and Kokko, 'Introduction', 13.

[400] Francisco Guevara, 'Artist Residencies: Art Making and the Renegotiation of Global Tensions with Local Realities', *Station to Station* #2, All that Art, February 2017, accessed 17 June 2021, https://www.transartists.org/sites/default/files/station2station/2/.

Guevera's own approach in Arquetopia (a Foundation with residency sites in Mexico, Peru, and Italy) has been to try to simultaneously provide pathways for local artists to maintain sustainable careers and to take a critical approach to visiting artists' approaches to site.[401] While Arquetopia has a more explicit social focus, rural programmes generally, even those more focused on quiet retreat, still produce a vast array of site-specific engagements and materials: from remote fieldwork, to work on ecological and environmental themes, to expansive and iterative research projects that incorporate site-related materials and so on. There is certainly much truth to the idea that a global infrastructure of small to medium, often cheaply run rural and remote programmes, provide vast forms of support for artistic production that largely accrues its larger-scale effects of display elsewhere. At the same time, with an increasing number of artists working in more continuous, research-based and iterative ways, often enfolding multiple sites into ongoing projects, as well as the fact that many artists' practices have a large online component, means that it is too simplistic to see residencies as simply 'behind-the-scenes' locations for city-based artists to develop work that is presented elsewhere. Indeed, as explored in the three case studies that end this chapter, many small programmes are also being accessed by regionally based artists and can be part of multi-sited projects. Nevertheless, this demonstrates the complex ways that residencies are entangled within contemporary art ecosystems, supporting local, regional and globalised flows of development, production, as well as part of the way artists today often perform their own processual encounters with places in an ongoing way.

A variation on this position is that, rather than directly providing what the art world most valorises in terms of distilling rural and remote 'authenticity' for display elsewhere, residencies have greater agency in engendering forms of practice that are less well compensated for, developed, or appreciated in the wider art world: particularly experimental,

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[401] Ibid.

research-based, or collective forms of practice. This position is particularly exemplified by Wysing Art Centre, and other art centre models, that emphasise discursive production and public programming, and foster strong relationships to academic institutions and have a strong interdisciplinary research-based focus. The former Director of Wysing, Donna Lynas described artists as coming to Wysing to pursue 'open-ended research, without defined outcomes' and as having particularly sought since 2014, in reaction to global politics, 'to engage with artists who are active outside the art mainstream.'[402] Taru Elving has written of Wysing, that it is 'clear in its commitment to transdisciplinary and performative practices that are not so well supported in the largely market-driven art scene in London.'[403] Residencies such as Wysing, HIAP, Akademie Schloss Solitude, and Nida have built identities that draw on associations between alternative, experimental, interdisciplinary, and research-based practice, as well as on supporting work that often tackles contemporary political urgencies. Moreover, they connect their discursive activities (talks, workshops, conferences, publications) to themes that often reflect on key issues related to residencies.

A third position, although often entangled with these others, is that residencies should try to be more permanent pathways away from mainstream art production, a position more common to artist-run programmes. In a rare example of a more in-depth case study of residencies in regard to their role in a broader global arts ecosystem, art historian Carlos Garrido Castellano considers two artist-run spaces in the Caribbean that began in the 2000s, BetaLocal in Puerto Rico and L'Artoscarpe in Guadeloupe, comparing how both spaces compensate for deficiencies elsewhere in the public sphere, as well as respond to 'cultural dependence toward metropolitan territories.'[404] The comparison shows various ways that the programmes were able to address some of the material conditions of artistic production in

[402] Donna Lynas, 'Yours, in Solidarity' in *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, 180.
[403] Taru Elving, 'Residencies and future cosmopolitics', *Flanders Arts Institute*, 26 May 2020, accessed 17 June 2021, https://www.kunsten.be/en/now-in-the-arts/residencies-and-future-cosmopolitics/.
[404] Carlos Garrido Castellano, 'Artistic autonomy in non-autonomous contexts: reframing collective agency and insurgence from Caribbean artist-managed spaces', *Social Identities*, 24:1 (2018): 66–86, 67.

different ways, but also notes how 'some of their activities ultimately converge toward the same system they seek to challenge.'[405] For example, L'Artoscarpe's union-like structure, and its international residency program, has created alternative networks away from dependency on the artworld in France, but Castellano notes how new channels that the programme then opened up (such as participation in biennials) might reflect similar linking of 'artistic advancement and international participation' under similar values.[406] Castellano nevertheless argues that within theses residencies there is still the benefit of the relations they engender, writing how 'projects create and consolidate alternative social bonds and platforms for action', giving them value beyond however they might be entangled within the wider art world's demands and uneven 'spatial imagination'.[407]

This position is also suggested in Terry Smith's writing on activist curating, where he mentions residencies as being key to the networking needed for actors who are 'like chameleons' in their building of alternative infrastructures.[408] This alternative, slippery, networked, infrastructure building of which residencies are a part, works to provide alternative situations against and through what Smith calls, following Tony Bennett's terminology, a 'visual arts exhibitionary complex', comprised of metropolitan museums, galleries, auction houses and art fairs, the whole of which relies, for its '*creative* and *artistic* vitality on quasi-institutional, alternative spaces of all kinds.'[409]

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[405] Ibid., 83.
[406] Ibid.
[407] Ibid.
[408] Smith writes how 'Arts infrastructure-builders are envisioning different forms of community'; and that 'Residencies for artists, curators, writers, and administrators have become a key medium for such networking', in Terry Smith 'Infrastructural Activism', October 17 2016, NAVA: National Association for the Visual Arts, accessed 19 June 2021, https://visualarts.net.au/news-opinion/2016/infrastructural-activism/. This is something he also raises in *Thinking Contemporary Curating*, writing on activist curating and the role of residencies to build networks: Terry Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating*, (New York: Independent Curators International, 2013), 234.
[409] Terry Smith 'Infrastructural Activism', see footnote 1. See Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), particularly chapter 2, 59–88. Bennett defines the 'exhibitionary complex' as a 'complex of disciplinary and power relations' created by institutions of exhibition, 59. Also see Tony Bennett, 'The Exhibitionary Complex', in *Thinking About Exhibitions*, eds. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), 81–112.

Paschal Gielen also acknowledges that free spaces, such as 'spaces for development in which ideas can grow (and also fail)' are both useful to capitalism and also carry 'the 'risk' of a non-capitalizable surplus'.[410] In Gielen's writing on artist autonomy, he develops the concept of 'mobile autonomy.'[411] Gielen argues that each of the social spaces that traditionally combined to provide the autonomous artist with support (because the performance of autonomy has ever relied on heteronomies, often the very spaces that artists have resisted through institutional critique, such as the museum), have become increasingly financially eroded or subject to market logics (such as the museum, art school or even the studio in a gentrified creative district).[412] For Gielen, a possible way out in 'a hybrid, liquid world, where the public and the private intertwine', is to establish new mobile systems of support, co-operatives that 'create an oasis of 'private time' and enterprise within a madly spinning world.'[413] He writes:

> Only by committing to a heterogeneous group of activists, economists, ecologists, political scientists, sociologists and other 'do-it-yourselfers', well away from the professional art world and well-trodden biennale circuit, can artists carve their own road.[414]

Retreat-residencies, often small and non-profit, and oriented primarily around providing development time for artists intertwined with opportunities for temporary collectives to form around support and discursivity, can look close to Gielen's vision for co-operative's to create their own oasis of 'private time' for transnationally mobile artists.[415] The recent edited volume, *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, co-edited by Gielen, while not repeating the concept of 'mobile autonomy', is broadly invested in imagining residencies in this way. While each of

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[410] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude*, 203.
[411] Gielen, 'A Caravan of Freedom', in *Mobile Autonomy: Exercises in Artists' Self-Organization*, ed. Nico Dockx and Pascal Gielen (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015), 63–88.
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid., 77 and 79.
[414] Ibid., 78.
[415] Ibid., 79.

these positions constructs slightly different ways that the residency can conceive of its relationship to the flows and tendencies within wider contemporary art production, each reflects a stance of *alternativity*, an assertion of some degree of autonomy away from wider demands, pressures, and elicitations.

3.3 Geographical Imaginaries of Retreat

> Lukkeskåra/Rådlausjuvet (L/R for short) is a residency set on a remote farm in Suldal, in the southwestern part of Norway. The farm has no road leading to it and visitors must hike up the mountainside to reach it. Artists and others working in creative fields are invited to spend some weeks on the farm and use the opportunity to focus on their work and explore new methods of working, in a different setting.[416]
>
> *Image 3.3*
>
> Secluded in the foothills of the French Pyrenees, at the end of an ancient stone track, Bordeneuve is a rustic, woodland retreat for artists, musicians and writers. A place as intriguing as it is inspiring, as natural as it is nurturing, Bordeneuve offers a unique and exceptional residency for creative spirits who seek to advance their projects while reconnecting with nature and simplicity.[417]
>
> *Image 3.4*
>
> The Joya: residency is based at Los Gázquez, five beautifully restored farmhouses made into one off-grid sustainably minded destination within a place of outstanding natural beauty, the Parque Natural Sierra María - Los Vélez, Andalucía, Spain.[418]
>
> *Image 3.5*
>
> Built out of the ruins of a 1790s pre-famine village atop a cliff face overlooking the Atlantic, Cill Rialaig offers artists, writers and other creative professionals an opportunity to get away from everyday career pressures and the demands of 21st century life in order to focus entirely on their artistic practice. Its cottages are living-work spaces that provide for residents' essential work and living needs, without television, telephones or internet.[419]

[416] Tales from the Woods, 'L/R', accessed 19 June 2021, http://www.talesfromthewoods.eu/?page_id=861.
[417] Bordeneuve Retreat, 'Home', accessed 19 June 2021, http://bordeneuveretreat.com/.
[418] Joya: AiR, 'Our Mission', accessed 19 June 2021, https://joya-air.org/our-mission.
[419] TransArtists, 'Cill Rialaig Project', accessed 19 June 2021, http://www.transartists.org/air/cill-rialaig-project.

Image 3.5

Terry Gifford's work on the literary genre of the pastoral (as a Western literary tradition beginning with early classical Roman and Greek poetry, from which the term 'idyll' also derives) has argued that as a literary device 'some form of retreat and return' is 'the fundamental pastoral movement, either within the text, or in the sense that the pastoral retreat 'returned' some insights relevant to the urban audience.'[420] While seemingly an archaic mode of representation, tropes associated with the rural idyll and the pastoral (the latter of which Gifford notes is often used pejoratively to denote an idealised vision of life in the country when judged against social realities) are frequently present within residency discourses, particularly and unsurprisingly within promotional language. Following Gifford's framing, artists may well 'return' complex visions of rurality (and as I will discuss later, many programmes engender critical engagements with rural life particularly around environmental issues), but programmes frequently rely on a more generalised evocation of an escapist vision of the rural as a site that awaits the vision of artists to imbue them with meaningful reflection and exploration.[421] Gifford further argues that, despite the emergence of critical, complex or 'post-pastoral' literature such as ecocriticism, we should favour a literature that would no longer reify dichotomies between nature and civilisation, rural and urban, but would continue to engage with a continued cultural impulse towards 'retreat, renewal, and return.'[422] I raise this for its analogous implications to what might at first seem a strange recourse to tropes of the 'rural idyll' by contemporary residency programmes despite the prevalence of critical approaches and understandings of rural places within contemporary art. Across the wide field of contemporary programmes in rural areas, there is frequently an interplay between idyllic

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[420] Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2020), Second Edition, 1–2.
[421] Ibid., 2.
[422] Ibid., 174.

representations and critical reflections. Crucially, while artists and curators might produce complex visions of the rural through residencies, the rural often remains the site of temporary escape and reflection. In the residency landscape at large, ideas of artists escaping to rural places in an evocation of the pastoral 'retreat, renewal, and return' trope, has become a dominant trend.

Programmes frequently rely on tropes of the pastoral or the rural idyll, such as promoting the specificity of localities as idylls, while at the same time, presenting places that are somehow emptied out of their current political, economic, and social difficulties, oftentimes making some form of connection to a mythic rural past. Note in the quotations above, the appeal to a pre-industrial landscape that has either been left intact (such as in the absence of a direct road) or re-created (such as in restored farmhouses intentionally left off-grid). In the most overt connection between the rural and a mythic pre-industrial past, Cill Rialig offers residents a chance to escape from 'the demands of 21st century life.' As the quotes and images above show: beautiful natural landscapes largely free of people, surround quaint abodes, made for private work and retreat. These are unique and exceptional places, made for individual focus, yet also comfortable and reliable archetypes of country escape. There is still an oscillation between this discursive attention and forms of emptying out, or *retreating* that anticipates the approach of guests, stone pathways to empty cottages, wooden walkways to forest treehouses.

While residency programmes tend to heavily capitalise on their specificities as a place in the world – telling a story of local history, the environment, the architecture of the studios – they also withdraw as sites, becoming places of creative freedom, a lack of imposition, a blank canvas for artists to experiment. In this, they evoke modernist conceptions of the artist

studio or the gallery 'white cube' as neutral backdrops for artistic creation.[423] Vytautas Michelkevičius, former Director of Nida Art Colony (Lithuania), has developed a concept for artistic-research and working called the 'green cube' to refer to the way certain green spaces in remote areas have been preserved in National Parks and used as sites of ongoing inspiration and intervention for visiting artists.[424] The analogy can be understood as a satirical, knowing, take on the kind of short-lived environmental fieldwork and other artistic engagement with 'natural' sites that might occur through residencies. Rather than set apart from the modernist legacy of the 'white cube', ecological engagements through residencies can also engender projections of artistic works (here projects) into a place that is symbolically receding and awaiting artistic engagement – a situation which Michelkevičius embraces.

Many of the tropes adopted by residencies overlap with wider cultural imaginaries of the rural, from a return to small scale agriculture (Art Farm), inhabiting heritage buildings linked to pre-industrial lifestyles (Cill Rialaig) or struggling on a 'remote frontier' (Cabin-Time). While there is a diverse array of rural constructions employed, they very often rely on one of the most sweeping imaginaries of rural place: as an other to urban life, and a site for projected desires for escape. This next section of the chapter, considers the way that geographic imaginaries of the rural are constructed by residencies, as well as their broader participation in rural trends, such as the 'creative countryside' trend, rural tourism, and a resurgence of critical engagements with the rural within contemporary art. Cloke, one of the forerunners of a cultural turn in rural geography, writes:

> The rural stands both as a significant imaginative space, connected with all kinds of cultural meanings ranging from the idyllic to the oppressive, and as a material object

[423] Brian O'Doherty famously wrote, in a three-part series for *Artforum* in 1976, on the 'white cube' gallery space as a construction of modernism, and moreover that 'the history of modernism is intimately framed by that space.' Brian O'Doherty, 'Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space, Part 1', *Artforum*, March 1976, Vol. 14, No. 7, available online, accessed 2 November 2021, https://www.artforum.com/print/197603/inside-the-white-cube-notes-on-the-gallery-space-part-i-38508.
[424] Michelkevičius, 'Rooted and Slow Institutions Reside in Remote Places', 155–157; and Michelkevičius, Vytuatas, 'Artistic Research in the Green Tube', in *Tourists Like Us*, 111–126.

> of lifestyle desire for some people – a place to move to, farm in, visit for a vacation, encounter different forms of nature, and generally practise alternatives to the city.[425]

Retreat residencies are precisely temporary *practiced alternatives*. While an escapist rurality, free of the problems and distractions of the city, seems an antiquated and romantic idea, many academics have written on the continued pervasiveness of a rural and urban divide in contemporary society and media, such that Andre Jansson argues they form 'the two main competing moral geographies of modern society.'[426] The two sides of this dichotomy are no doubt familiar; in contrast to the fast-paced city, the countryside stands for stability, tradition, authenticity, and closeness to nature. Jansson argues the distinction is co-constituted, as two opposing ways of living:

> What establishes the distinction between the city and the country is not only a matter of landscape, but also, and probably more significantly, a matter of way of life. The dominant understanding of the city as a place of complex organizations of flows, (trans)actions, and progress, feeds from the general awareness that there is also another way of life, marked by entirely different qualities, such as rootedness, community, and tradition.[427]

One might say the backdrop to the retreat residencies 'gift of time' is very often an idyllic one, that relies on and contributes to geographic imaginaries of rural and remote place. As in the panoramic alpine views that opened this chapter, residencies are frequently constructed as located in romantic rural and remote locations, and often promote themselves in terms similar to those used by rural tourism. The benefits of the rural and remote are still couched as a kind of counter space to the urban areas where many artists work, and in this way, they emulate the broader appeal of the rural that persists in contemporary culture. The wide-ranging negative issues affecting rural areas are largely absent from the discourses and representations

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[425] Paul Cloke, 'Conceptualizing rurality', in *Handbook of Rural Studies*, eds. Patrick H Mooney, Terry Marsden, and Paul J Cloke (London; Thousand Oaks; Calif.: SAGE, 2013), E-book, 18.

[426] André Jansson, 'The Hegemony of the Urban/ Rural Divide: Cultural Transformations and Mediatized Moral Geographies in Sweden', *Space and Culture* 16(1), (2013): 89, accessed 10 September 2021, https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331212452816.

[427] Ibid., 90.

produced by these programmes: including ongoing colonialism in settler-colonial contexts, encroaching industrialisation, and economic decline, although a few programmes which I will go onto discuss, have directly challenged idyllic rural tropes in their programming. For the most part, however, these programmes inhabit locales that are broadly coded and represented as idyllic, considering them ideal places for artist retreat.

Creative Countryside

In the pervasiveness of the rural-urban divide, a nostalgic and out-dated rural fantasy has not really been disturbed by new urban movement to the countryside – sometimes termed 'rural gentrification' or counter-urbanisation – but rather appropriated and reinforced. Writing on rural tourism, Kneafsey argues that the 'countryside is increasingly viewed as both a commodity in itself and as a set of commodifiable signs and symbols' and is represented as a

> place with spiritual resonances, with connotations of romantic simplicity and golden traditionality. In many cases, the countryside is portrayed as a container of traditional cultures, national identities, and "authentic" lifestyles.[428]

Such a countryside is marketed to the 'relatively affluent, upwardly mobile, and wealthy consumer' whose yearning for a rural idyll is largely satisfied through re-created pre-industrial landscapes and commodities (such as renovated vernacular buildings, and heritage food and crafts).[429] Some residencies even promote direct overlap with local craft and heritage industries, while the common use of heritage buildings often draws on associations with traditional lifestyles and practices.[430] While the rural is perceived as 'containing' traditional life and culture (some of which has been re-created to satisfy contemporary consumers), it is also

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[428] Moya Kneafsey, 'Rural Cultural Economy Tourism and Social Relations', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 2001: 762–763.

[429] Ibid., 769; and on 'pre-industrial' landscapes see Clare J.A. Mitchell, 'Entrepreneurialism, Commodification and Creative Destruction: A Model of Post-modern Community Development' *Journal of Rural Studies* 14 (2008): 273–286.

[430] See the case studies that close this chapter, Chapter 3.5: Small Island Residencies.

considered a space for one to fashion an 'ideal' lifestyle – often one that retains many aspects of contemporary urban life (something made easier by technologies such as the internet), combined with readily consumable rural places, products and experiences.

While reliance on a kind of nostalgia for pre-industrial life seems far away from a residency fostering contemporary art, it also becomes a kind of background against which new constructions of the rural emerge, ones that may combine more romantic views with new understandings. Jansson argues that rural gentrifiers (often from the creative classes) can often enter a prosperous stage of rural gentrification, and then may creatively re-imagine the countryside, opening up potential 'for more differentiated or radical modes of envisioning, representing, and producing the rural.'[431] He further argues, however that this contributes to 'more phantasmagorical, and no less hegemonic, depictions of the countryside (that is, certain countrysides) as a consuming idyll.'[432] In Jansson's terms, while possibly creating more imaginative and complex visions of the rural, the overall trend towards locations already coded as idyllic is still largely leaving out 'those spaces and places that have no distinct coordinates within the dominant moral geographies.'[433]

Geographer James McCarthy interlinks new constructions of the rural with an intensified and increasingly globalised market for 'specific rural landscapes', where paradoxically the countryside is still superficially constructed as the other to the urban, yet increasingly relies on familiar global branding.[434] He writes 'consumers can go to rural retreats and have precisely the same interiors they would expect in the top hotels in global cities.'[435] Retreat-residencies are often located in places with already established touristic cultures of retreat and often their aesthetics and promotional language overlaps. Moreover, there are

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[431] Jansson, ''The Hegemony of the Urban/ Rural Divide', 100.
[432] Ibid.
[433] Ibid.
[434] James McCarthy, 'Rural geography: Globalizing the countryside', *Progress in human geography*, 32 (2008): 129-130.
[435] Ibid., 129.

rising numbers of 'creative retreats' which overlap with artist-residencies – some are completely paid for arrangements open to anyone, others are self-funded arrangements with some form of application, some 'creative retreats' have both paid for guests and subsidised artists-in-residence, and some more established artist-residencies offer tourist stays as an income stream to support the residency.[436] Broadly speaking retreat-residencies can be seen as part of a growing and far wider culture of contemporary retreats promoted on the basis of allowing guest/tourist/residents having creative time-out in 'beautiful' rural locations.

Rural towns and regions are increasingly promoting creative industries as part of economic and cultural re-generation policies. According to Marián Hamada and Jana Jarábková, rural tourism is 'an instrument to improve the quality of places (municipalities) as well as to attract creative class and creative industries to rural places.'[437] This trend has been dubbed the 'creative countryside' by David Bell and Mark Jayne – an adaptation of Richard Florida's 'creative cities' concept but applied to rural areas and based on the idea that supporting creative industries will have economic and broader social benefits.[438] This has led to creative planning that aims to increase creative industries and attract both creative migrants

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[436] There are a growing number of articles in popular magazines which collate creative retreats, often collapsing any difference between residencies and paid for creative retreats, which also speaks to the grey areas between these models. The article 'Creative retreats: 9 havens for artists, writers and musicians', has the tagline 'We'd like to book in for a residency at these ten creative retreats…'. Though several of the programmes are application-based, such articles are part of a trend to include residencies and retreats as part of style, design, or tourism magazines or features. Emma Tucker, 'Creative retreats', *The Spaces*, accessed 1 November 2021, https://thespaces.com/creative-retreats-havens-artists-writers-musicians/. See also Rachel Dixon, '10 of the best creative retreats in the UK and Europe', *The Guardian*, 12 January 2019, accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2019/jan/12/10-best-creative-retreats-holidays-in-uk-and-europe-paint-dance; and Jenn Parker, 'The Coolest Bohemian Creative Retreats Around the World That You Need To Attend', *culture trip*, 27 January 2018, accessed 2 November 2021, https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/articles/coolest-bohemian-creative-retreats-around-world-need-attend/.

[437] Marián Hamada and Jana Jarábková, 'Creativity and rural tourism', *Creative and Knowledge Society*, 2(2) (2012): 5.

[438] David Bell and Mark Jayne, 'The creative countryside: Policy and practice in the UK rural cultural economy', *Journal of Rural Studies* 26 (2010): 209; and see Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class, and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). For further discussions on intersections between creative industries, tourism, and the rural, see Paul Cloke, 'Creativity and tourism in rural environments', in *Tourism, Creativity and Development*, ed. Greg Richards and Julie Wilson (London; New York: Routledge; Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2007), E-book, 37–47; and Kevin Stolarick, Mark Denstedt, Betsy Donald, and Gregory M. Spencer, 'Creativity, Tourism and Economic Development in a Rural Context: the case of Prince Edward County', *Journal of Rural and Community Development* 5, 1/2 (2010): 238–254, accessed 10 September 2021, https://journals.brandonu.ca/jrcd/article/view/353.

(who will contribute to or even start-up such industries), and then attract creative tourism, with visitors drawn to buy locally produced items, or attend rural festivals and other arts events. Writing on the situation in the UK in 2010, Bell and Jayne noted that while there continued to be a pervasive focus in theory and policy making on creative industries in cities, there had been a shift towards greater consideration of the rural creative economy, although problems persisted in applying urban-based frameworks to rural contexts.[439] Greg Richards and Julie Wilson, arguing that 'the 'rural' has become a creative space to rival that of the 'urban'', even draw a lineage to historic colony models, writing how 'the rural has long been a location for creative clusters (witness the development of rural artists' colonies and the creation of new rural museums and crafts centres).'[440]

In some cases, the use of a residency to promote the local economy is explicit, as in the case of Mecklenburg Inspiriert (a cultural association in Kühlungsborn, Germany that promotes tourism), which set up and runs its own residency programme, based on its mission that 'culture, the arts and creativity facilitate also innovation and have the power to initiate processes of economic growth i.e. by attracting more quality tourism'.[441] Cultural management scholar Kim Lehman has also linked together the drive to promote cities as creative destinations, the 'consumer demand for creative experiences', and the recognition of residencies as 'a vital component of any strategy to encourage the growth of a creative community of region.'[442] Thus while residencies possibly don't have the immediate tourist pull of, say, a public festival or gallery, there are various models, including the 'heritage house' models mentioned earlier, that are part of rural regeneration efforts. One paper on the impact of artist residencies, explored the potential role they could have in 're-activating local

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[439] Bell and Jayne, 'The creative countryside', 217–218.
[440] Greg Richards and Julie Wilson, 'Tourism development trajectories: from culture to creativity?' in *Tourism, Creativity and Development*, 27.
[441] Mecklenburg Inspiriert, 'Programs', accessed 14 March 2018, http://www.mecklenburg-inspiriert.com/en/programs.
[442] Kim Lehman, 'Conceptualising the value of artist residencies: a research agenda', in *Cultural Management - Science and Education*, Volume 1, Number 1 (2017): 13.

creativity'; 'promoting social cohesion'; and 'encouraging the commitment towards built heritage custody and regeneration.'[443] In the context of the project, *Creative Europe 2018, Artists in Architecture, Re-activating modern European houses*, which hosted short-term artist residencies in iconic houses across Europe, the paper found that the residencies had contributed to cultural regeneration, renewing interest in local heritage and stimulating local entrepreneurship.[444]

The Radical Rural

In recent years, there has been a growing focus on the rural as a site of interest and intervention for contemporary art projects, a trend that has been particularly marked by collective, long-term research practices and quasi-institutional arrangements, including experimental artist residencies. These intersections were most recently foregrounded in the Whitechapel Gallery's 'Documents of Contemporary Art' edition on the *THE RURAL*, edited by the artist collective Myvillages (founded by artists Kathrin Böhm, Wapke Feenstra, and Antje Schiffers to 'advocate for a new understanding of the rural as a place of and for cultural production'), and a conference series that preceded it, The Rural Assembly: Contemporary Art and Spaces of Connection. (2019), that included Wysing Art Centre as a partner. Many of these practices have been explicitly concerned both with rural regeneration initiatives and picturing the rural in ways that dismantle rural/urban binaries and often reveal the tensions, exploitations, and invisibilities of globalisation. In *The One and the Many*, writing on Senegalese collective Huit Facettes' workshops and art centre, Les ateliers d'Hamdallaye (located 500km south of Dakar), Grant Kester argues emphatically in favour of new engagements with the countryside that register the effects of globalization, arguing the

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[443] Maria Rita Pinto, Serena Viola, Anna Onesti, and Francesca Ciampa, 'Artists Residencies, Challenges and Opportunities for Communities' Empowerment and Heritage Regeneration,' *Sustainability* 12 (22), 9651 (January 2020): 4, accessed 1 September 2021, doi:10.3390/su12229651.

[444] Ibid.

> shift of emphasis (from the urban to the rural) should not be underestimated in an art world that continues to privilege the city as the only relevant site of art practice and dissemination (evident in the tendency to identify major biennial exhibitions with particular cities, and in the ongoing relationship between new museum construction and the process of urban redevelopment).[445]

In an essay framing what he terms, 'art and agriculture' and 'new rural arts', Ian Hunter outlines the development of a growing interest by artists and other creative workers with the 'rural and agriculture as a challenging new site for contemporary art practice and curatorship.'[446] Hunter attributes a number of factors to this growing interest in rural sites as an intertwined set of factors:

> (i) the evolution of the Land Art movement, through its later ecological art and environmental art manifestations towards a new understanding of the rural as a complex sphere (social, political, and cultural) for contemporary art practice; (ii) a recognition by some leading cultural theorists, academics, and thinkers of the rural and agriculture as new arenas for aesthetic, ethical and philosophical reflection and debate; (iii) the influence of (urban) socially engaged art and critical art practice which has encouraged a new interest and critical insights about rural social, environmental, and economic policy; (iv) a growing recognition by rural leaders of the need for a cultural voice and cultural strategy by which to articulate their values and aspirations as part of the wider national discourse; (v) the importance of overarching global environmental issues and related policy initiatives for climate change and environmental sustainability.[447]

Hunter implicitly points to the relevance of residencies to this growing interest in rural contexts. In a list of 'recent pioneering art and agriculture curatorial projects', three out of his four examples involve residency programmes: *The Land Foundation*, Thailand (founded by two artists who acquired two working rice fields in the village of Sanpatong, just outside of Chiang Mai); *SPACED: art out of place* (a roving residency that facilitates residencies in regional Western Australia and is primarily focused on social engagement); and the platform *INLAND* (a Spanish-based 'arts collective, dedicated to agricultural, social and cultural production, and a

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[445] Grant H Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham; London: Duke University, 2011), 99.
[446] Ian Hunter, 'Rethinking the Rural: The Wilder Shores of Contemporary Art', *A Decade of Country Hits: Art on the Rural Frontier*, eds. Margo Handwerker and Richard Saxton (Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2014), 73.
[447] Ibid., 74.

collaborative agency', that runs residency programmes).[448] Another example that takes a critical approach to rural issues is a programme run by Berwick Visual Arts in collaboration with the Centre for Rural Economy at Newcastle University, which focuses on social practice and aims to provide 'new perspectives on rural social research', and which even adopted 'Beyond the Rural Idyll' as a thematic in 2014.[449] While such programmes offer up more complex entanglements between visiting artists and rural places, often through the frame of social practice, the majority of rural programmes are still largely centred around individuated retreat and idyllic surrounds. That said, sometimes the programme itself may become an ongoing vehicle for social change within a rural community, while catering for visiting artists to experience temporary retreat.

The degree to which residency-retreats become enmeshed within rural regeneration efforts varies. In some cases, the degree to which a programme is part of rural community is entangled with their identity as either retreats or more oriented towards social practice. But this is by no means an easy distinction to make. The Ballinglen Arts Foundation, in Ballycastle, was founded in the late 1980s by American art dealers who once holidayed in the small Northern Irish town and decided to move there, creating a residency programme tied to local economic regeneration, and eventually securing funding from private and government sources for a fully-funded fellowship.[450] While promoting very similar features and values to self-defined retreats – a non-proscribed programme, inspiring landscape – opportunities to bring family and an emphasis on being part of a rural community (although nor proscribing community engagement) are the cited reasons for the programme being 'not a retreat residency for the lone artist.'[451] But many small programmes embed in rural places and are

[448] Ibid., 76.
[449] Berwick Visual Arts, 'Residency Programme', accessed 21 June 2021, http://www.berwickvisualarts.co.uk/residency.
[450] Manchán Magan, 'How modern art changed a Mayo town', *The Irish Times*, August 22 2016, accessed 21 June 2021, https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/how-modern-art-changed-a-mayo-town-1.2764299.
[451] Ballinglen Arts Foundation, 'BAF Fellowship Programme', accessed 21 June 2021, http://ballinglenartsfoundation.org/fellowship/.

entangled within local regeneration prerogatives, which they also rely on to remain viable. Indeed, it is a central tenet of many small retreat programmes, to manage local embeddedness (often including social, economic and political involvements), alongside and co-constituted with the provision of more autonomous time to artists, who often elicit different degrees of engagement with local residents. In an article on ecological residencies, artist Molly Rideout explores the delicate balancing act of maintaining ongoing community relationships, noting 'A residency's community relationships can be set back years by one polarizing artist taking it upon themselves to lecture a local businessman on the ethics of their land practices.'[452]

There can be a great deal of complexity in how individual programmes conceive of retreat. As an arts organization that has led renewed interest in rural art spaces and production, Grizedale Arts has had a shifting relationship to residency models. Following a turbulent period and financial difficulties, Grizedale Arts (known for notable involvements with site-specific sculpture and social practice over a varied thirty-five-year history), now emphatically positions themselves as not a retreat, and having moved away from a traditional residency model (defined as 'you give up everything for a while to secrete yourself away from life, with us').[453] Under the Directorship of Adam Sutherland, they have shifted into a project-based model, aligning theoretical, discursive interest in rural themes, experimental research-based artistic practices, farming and local regeneration activities, and consulting and social projects for other programmes. Paul O'Neill has framed Grizedale's activities in terms of an embedded long-term approach to facilitating projects, operating as a 'processual programme of interconnected projects' through a 'cumulative residential model.'[454] But as part of their diverse programming, Grizedale also facilitate the use of a nearby off-grid 16th century

[452] Molly Rideout, 'Where We Save The Earth', in *Mapping Residencies Magazine*, Issue No. 02, Networks, 2015, 25.
[453] Open College of the Arts, 'Speaking Soil', accessed 21 June 2021, https://www.oca.ac.uk/weareoca/creative-arts/speaking-soil/?cn-reloaded=1. For more of the early history of Grizedale see *The Grizedale Experience: Sculpture, Arts & Theatre in a Lakeland Forest*, ed. Bill Grant and Paul Harris (Edinburgh: Canongate Press, 1991).
[454] Paul O'Neill, 'Creative Egremont. A Public Art Strategy for Egremont', in *Locating the Producers*, ed. Paul O'Neill and Claire Doherty (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2010), 82 and 84.

farmhouse, managed by local farmers, for those 'seeking the traditional facilities of the idealised artist retreat – tranquillity and seclusion.'[455] This is explicitly a retreat facility in comparison to their curated residency programming at Lawson Park and through multiple other ongoing, interweaving projects. While strongly concerned with the social role of the artist, Grizedale shares with other kinds of residency-retreats, a commitment to open-ended, development-oriented time for artists, arguably even realising this to a high degree, through long-term collaborative relationships with artists, something O'Neill writes has called a 'rolling community of people.'[456] Grizedale can also be seen as part of an emerging array of rural residencies that are deeply enmeshed in local agricultural and arts production, but which instantiate different levels of focus on social practice, and usually also allow for forms of retreat, such as Art Farm, Nebraska, and The Wassiac Project, in upstate New York.[457]

This ecological trend also goes much further than these programmes and has recently become a major topic in residency discourses.[458] Some programmes have more of a science and art collaboration and are on a continuum with embedded situations or placements, using registers of scientific expedition or fieldwork, such as the Rabbit Island residency for artists and scientists on Rabbit Island, which is a 91-acre forested island in Lake Superior Michigan, and the USA National Science Foundation's Antarctic Artists and Writers Program.[459] There has also been a wider turn across residencies generally to consider their 'carbon footprint' and their complicity within increased global mobility, with residency network Res Artis promoting

[455] Grizedale Arts, 'Projects / Parkamoor', accessed 21 June 2021, https://www.grizedale.org/projects/park.a.moor.
[456] O'Neill, 'A Public Art Strategy for Egremont', 85.
[457] Art Farm, 'Home', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.artfarmnebraska.org/; and The Wassiac Project, 'About', accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.wassaicproject.org/about.
[458] Articles on environmentally reflexive residencies and approaches include Rideout, 'Where We Save the Earth'; Jenni Nurmenniemi, 'Going Post-fossil in a Neoliberal Climate' in *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, 197–206; and 'From one organism to the next: artist residencies dedicated to the ecological entanglement', 15 February 2017, *AQNB*, accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.aqnb.com/2017/02/15/from-one-organism-to-the-next-artist-residencies-dedicated-to-the-ecological-entanglement/.
[459] Rabbit Island, 'About', accessed 21 June 2021, https://rabbitisland.org/about; and National Science Foundation, Antarctic Artists & Writers Program, accessed 21 June 2021, https://www.nsf.gov/geo/opp/aawr.jsp.

resources such as the Green Mobility Guide, and focusing on environmental concerns at their June 2018 meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland.[460] This is a friction weighed up by artist Laura Ķeniņš in her discussion of a symposium on the theme 'Critical tourism, site-specificity and post-Romantic condition', at Nida Art Colony, where two of the other participants, artists Markus Soukup and Sam Skinner, opted only to attend the residency via a Skype presentation titled 'Postcard to Nida', projecting the contradictions of the intensified mobility elicited by attending a short conference by plane.[461] Ķeniņš also reflects on another contradiction of the residency and environmental issues, noting that it primarily acted as a retreat detached from local concerns:

> artists' concerns are usually on their own work, and the consumption of the landscape. Other issues that concern locals and preservationists, like the erosion of Nida's sand dunes, concerns about littering and conservation, aren't really of interest to visiting artists: they don't stay long enough to see the sand dunes erode, and concern of the impact of materials on the local environment can be less important than the production of new work.[462]

Finally, Ķeniņš notes the controversy that was stirred when Klaipėda University professor Ramūnas Povilanskas suggested resident artists could engage locals by becoming involved in the local spa retreat industry, offering services such as art therapy.[463] Within each of these examples, there is a tension between the fact that the conference was discursively addressing issues of intensified mobility, but this topic raised in uncomfortable ways the residency-retreat's generally more separatist and escapist positioning.

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[460] See Res Artis, 'Reports and Research', accessed 21 June 2021, https://resartis.org/reports-research/; and Res Artis Meeting Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland, 'Exploring Sustainability Under the Midnight Sun', 18–20 June 2018. I attended this conference, and environmental sustainability was a theme in several presentations and a topic for group discussions by conference participants, where residency programmes discussed between them how to make their programmes more environmentally sustainable. See Res Artis, 'Lapland 2018', accessed 21 June 2021, https://resartis.org/res-artis-conferences/past-conferences/lapland-2018/. Also see 'The Green Mobility Guide: A guide to environmentally sustainable mobility for performing arts', produced by Julie's Bicycle for On the Move, 2011, accessed 1 November 2021, https://on-the-move.org/files/Green-Mobility-Guide.pdf.

[461] Laura Ķeniņš, 'How To Be A Critical Artist-Tourist,' 3 June 2013, *Arterritory – Baltic, Russian and Scandinavian Art Territory*, accessed January 19, 2015, http://www.arterritory.com/en/texts/reviews/2353-how_to_be_a_critical_artist-tourist/.

[462] Ibid.

[463] Ibid.

What is of particular interest within ecologically focused residencies is the way that retreat in a more traditional sense, as withdrawal to more remote nature to seek inspiration, is not anathema to many of these programmes and their sense of critical urgency around climate change. Molly Rideout attributes the rise in 'ecological' residencies to the fact that many traditional residencies are 'located in a natural landscape' and 'connect an artist to a place.'[464] Ecological politics can guide these programmes towards a kind of total project around sustainability, that residents who share similar values and interests pass though, seeking their own forms of retreat and time for critical reflection. Irmeli Kokko links together these different uses of the rural environment, which can combine lifestyle elements, desires for less market-oriented sociality, and discursive concerns:

> there are new initiatives to create rural residencies that can provide better living conditions and also to create facilities that are not available in cities. Mustarinda, a residency in Finland is such an example. Ecological thread, weariness towards living in societies based on economical and consumption values, the commercialisation of art markets and the search for different lifestyles are some of the motives of the new 21st-century residencies.[465]

Mustarinda residency in Finland is well-known for ecologically-focused residencies and practices, and they consciously work 'towards a post-fossil culture by combining scientific and artistic knowledge and experiential activity.'[466] While providing a multiplicity of critical reflections on nature and ecological issues, within their own representational practices, these rural and remote retreats are still entangled within rural imaginaries, often projecting rural space as ideal for practicing alternative lifestyles that emphasise sustainability. Such programmes often overlap with trends long associated with rural escapism, such as small-scale agriculture, craft production, and re-purposing old farmsteads and heritage buildings. For many artists, the lifestyle possibilities of the rural, open space, closeness to nature, and

[464] Rideout, 'Where We Save The Earth', 21.
[465] Angela Serino and Irmeli Kokko, 'A Conversation with Irmeli Kokko (Helsinki)', 18 March 2015, ON Residencies, accessed 21 June 2021, http://onresidencies.tumblr.com/post/115595199955/a-conversation-with-irmeli-kokko-helsinki.
[466] Mustarinda, 'Residency', accessed 21 June 2021, https://mustarinda.fi/residency.

discursive concerns, combine. Many of these retreat residencies take the rural as a peripheral site (from the art world, from urban centres) to enact counter representations and practices, and as such, ideas of retreat, geographic imaginaries, and critical ecological representational practices are entangled. In a survey of ecological residencies by the Alliance of Artists Communities, a series of quotes from respondents similarly reflect this balance, as in the following quotation from Caroline Brooks from the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology, in Sitka, Alaska:

> "Place" provides a foundation for our residency program and the area's ecological significance and sheer beauty encourages our residents to connect with these surroundings in a significant and profound manner. Residents have commented that being here removes life's distractions and provides a clarity that helps them redefine their perspective on their work[467]

TJ Demos has argued for the potential of the contemporary art to be deeply critical of the interpenetration of capitalism, colonialism, and climate change – arguing that 'nature' (as construct) can be decolonized through activist and creative practices that approach environmental issues from an idea of political ecology (approaches that acknowledge the socio-political-economic bases of environmental crisis).[468] But oftentimes such intricacies are occluded by the rural-residencies' focus on individuated reflection. Notably, the AAC survey, and the report, make no mention of Indigenous peoples, or colonialism, despite being located in various settler-colonial contexts where there are on-going Indigenous struggles related to neocolonialism, extractive industries, and environmental issues.[469] Predominantly, the

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[467] Randall Koch, '2014 Summary of the Survey of Eco-Residencies within the Alliance of Artists Communities', Presented to the 2014 Alliance of Artists Communities Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, available on the AAC website, accessed 21 June 2021, https://artistcommunities.org/sites/default/files/shared/2014_Eco_Residency_Practices_Survey_Summary.pdf

[468] TJ Demos, 7–13.

[469] Indigenous artists, curators and cultural workers are leading more critical and decolonial approaches to place and constructions of the rural through a colonial lens. Indigenous-led residencies and intersections with colonialism and tourism were a prominent theme at the Res Artis Meeting Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland. This included the panel discussion, 'Ethical Tourism and Indigenous Cultures' moderated by Mario A. Caro (lecturer at MIT, and former President and Honorary Board Member of Res Artis, USA), and a panel consisting of Áile Aikio (Curator, Sámi Museum Siida, Finland); Soile Veijola (Professor of Cultural Studies of Tourism, University of Lapland); Rangi Kipa (Māori artist, New Zealand); Marques Hanalei Marzan (artist and Cultural Advisor at

landscape of rural-retreats, particularly those in European and North American contexts, largely still focus on nature as offering opportunities for quiet and secluded retreat, even if artists may then decide to approach place critically. This means, as in the quote above, 'place' is still largely coded as awaiting the discursive attention of the artist, and as emptied out of many of the most urgent and localised political issues affecting rural places.

A more conceptual interest in retreat and climate change was at the centre of a collaborative, multi-residency project called *Frontiers in Retreat*, which predominantly worked with rural and remote residencies with proximity to sites of ecological precarity as places to best make visible the effects of global warming. In its title and conceptual basis, *Frontiers of Retreat* plays with the notions of a frontier, suggesting a forward momentum towards a new edge, while retreat suggests a withdrawal, usually backwards into a known place. Instead, the implication is that as places for retreat become weakened and threatened (if we consider them to be those places less affected by human habitation), a 'frontier' in these contexts might be seen as a refusal to withdraw into these places, but to face them in a new light – critically and as being under threat, rather than as placid places to escape into. As the description for *Frontiers of Retreat* attests:

> Most of the Frontiers sites are located far away from urban centres within fragile ecosystems such as glaciers, ancient old-growth forests, archipelagos, high altitude mountain villages or small, mostly depopulated rural communities. All these sites can be somehow recognised as frontiers, where the complex interlacing of human activities and the materialities and processes of particular natural environments becomes tangible in an intensified, crystallised way.[470]

This project seeks in part to picture the complex planetary problem of climate change through its 'edge effects' (in ecological terms, effects that can be seen at boundaries between habitats,

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Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Hawaii); Lee-Ann Tjunypa Buckskin (Deputy Chair, Australia Council Board); and Nadia Myre, (contemporary visual artist of Algonquin, Canada); 18 June, 2018, at Korundi, Rovaniemi. Banff have an Indigenous Arts division, under the Directorship of Reneltta Arluk, which runs various residency programmes for Indigenous creatives and has fostered a more decolonial approach, see Banff Centre, 'Indigenous Arts', accessed 2 November 2021, https://www.banffcentre.ca/indigenous-arts.

[470] Frontiers in Retreat, 'About', 21 June 2021, http://www.frontiersinretreat.org/about.

often showing greater biodiversity, and a major conceptual frame for the project). Nonetheless, it predominantly relies on sites coded as final frontiers against industrialisation, addressed through the projects focus on political and environmental ecologies and nature-cultures.

This points to a wider issue across residency-retreats. While they may indeed be fostering artist projects focused on complex ecological issues, they tend to do so from places that are heavily coded as idyllic and 'natural'. What might it mean, broadly speaking, in terms of a widespread culture of representing environmental concerns, that so many of these projects occur through places that are associated with natural beauty, and how might this reinforce a dichotomy between the urban and the rural and remote? To what degree are these places functioning as symbolic 'green cubes' that essentially invite individual artists to experience the pastoral 'retreat, renewal, and return'?[471] To scroll through the images of residency-retreats is to see a plethora of representations of the 'rural idyll', far removed from other rural realities such as large-scale agriculture, economic decline, mining, land rights struggles, and deforestation. Even when focused on ecological issues, such places have almost utopic connotations and ambitions, carving out small pockets of alternative and more sustainable living and production. The rural is thus ever being intertwined with notions of retreat – of artists seeking to flee certain practices and modes associated with contemporary life in the city.

3.4 Slowness & The Artist in Retreat

> Most of society today live in a very fast and modern city life and there are various types of artist residencies available around the world. LPC is an artist community retreat project to help artists today to experience what it means to "slow down" … It

[471] Michelkevičius,'Rooted and Slow Institutions Reside in Remote Places', 155–157; and Gifford, *Pastoral*, 174.

> is important to treat yourself to a slow lifestyle and naturally, art direction becomes clearer and more authentic. LPC is located in a remote traditional village in Beijing.[472]
>
> – Little Poems Community
>
> We live in a world of constant motion: individual and collective relocation and dislocation, changing political movements, and the acceleration of information and data in a digital age. In this residency, participants will engage across disciplines on what this increased speed of life means for practicing artists and what value we can gain in slowing down. Step away from the pace of everyday life and discover what insights may be gained from being grounded firmly in physical location and rooted in the present moment.[473]
>
> – 'The Art of Stillness Residency' (Banff Centre)
>
> Located in a secluded hilltop village, this historical property dating back to 1822 offers Artists of all disciplines a dedicated space to retreat, create, and experience life at a slower, more authentic pace.[474]
>
> – Palazzo Rinaldi Residencies
>
> During the residency a leading international artist will be able to spend a month here, undertaking their own research in harmony with the rural nature of this land which was so dear to the poet Pasolini. They will be able to enjoy the slow and reflective pace of life, far removed from the frenetic pace of the modern world.[475]
>
> – RAVE East Village Artist Residency
>
> It's important, however, to have the option of slowing down. For many people, not just artists, this is terrifying. The world seems to be becoming more spastic [sic] by the moment. I would like GAR to be fighting against this tendency.[476]
>
> – Eric Shnell, Director, Galveston Artist Residency

An even broader cultural trend, one that provides a background to both artist-residencies and tourist-retreats, is that of a cultural turn towards slowness as a remedy to a perceived culture of speed. The language of 'slowness' infuses many descriptions of retreat-residencies, and a

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[472] Res Artis, 'Little Poems Community', accessed 15 June 2017, http://www.resartis.org/en/residencies/list_of_residencies/?id_content=7281.
[473] Calgary Arts Development, 'Classified Ads', accessed 21 June 2021, https://calgaryartsdevelopment.com/classifieds/the-art-of-stillness/.
[474] Beaumaris Art Group, 'Palazzo Rinaldi Artists', accessed 21 June 2021, http://www.resartis.org/en/news/upcoming_deadlines/?id_content=1522.
[475] TransArtists, 'RAVE East Village Artist Residency', accessed 21 June 2021, http://www.transartists.org/air/rave.
[476] Quotation from Eric Shnell in an interview with Max Fields, in *Island Time: Galveston Artist Residency–The First Four Years*, interview booklet, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 2015, 4.

number take a more holistic approach to engendering 'slow living' in residence, particularly those I have just discussed that are oriented towards ecological sustainability. Arguably the prime example of a cross-over between 'slowness' culture and artist residencies was the thematic 'The Art of Stillness' residency, hosted by travel writer and essayist Pico Iyer at the Banff Centre in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Pico Iyer's *The Art of Stillness: The Art of Going Nowhere* has become a staple of 'slowness' literature, along with his various op-eds, and a TED talk on the topic which has been viewed by over two million people.[477] The residency purported to explore Iyer's themes in relation to artistic practice. Beginning from the notion that 'we live in a world of constant motion' the residency invited participants to 'engage across disciplines on what this increased speed of life means for practicing artists and what value we can gain in slowing down.'[478] A weekend version of the programme offered participants a rather tight schedule of slowness activities: yoga sessions, a tea ceremony, mindfulness, listening sessions, slow suppers, and bonfire stories.[479] In Iyer's book, and in his own life, the experience of stillness is clearly linked, in part, to spatial and place-based retreat from modern life – Iyer lives in a small town outside of Kyoto without much access to technology (such as cars and internet), and part of the book is dedicated to Leonard Cohen's monastic lifestyle at Mt. Baldy Zen Centre in California. Iyer writes:

> It's only by taking myself away from clutter and distraction that I can begin to hear something out of earshot and recall that listening is much more invigorating than giving voice to all the thoughts and prejudices that anyway keep me company twenty-four hours a day.[480]

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[477] Pico Iyer, 'The Joy of Quiet', 29 December 2011, *The New York Times*, accessed 21 June 2021, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/01/opinion/sunday/the-joy-of-quiet.html; Alexander Bisley, 'Pico Iyer: we are living at a post-human pace', 26 November 2014, *The Guardian*, accessed 21 June 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2014/nov/26/pico-iyer-we-are-living-at-a-post-human-pace; and TED, Pico Iyer, 'The art of stillness', TEDSalon, New York, August 2014, accessed 21 June 2021, https://www.ted.com/talks/pico_iyer_the_art_of_stillness.

[478] Banff Centre, 'The Art of Stillness Residency', accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.banffcentre.ca/programs/art-stillness-residency.

[479] Banff Centre, 'Articles', accessed 14 March 2018, https://www.banffcentre.ca/articles/weekend-passholder-schedule.

[480] Pico Iyer, *The Art of Stillness: Adventures in Going Nowhere*, (London: TED Books, 2014), 62.

It is not difficult to see the overlap between such lifestyle philosophies (which have become vastly popular) and the residency trend. Iyer himself worked on a book at Banff, and in his opening talk for the residency he positioned it as partial solution to the acceleration problem: 'if you're living in Banff, you've decided to surround yourself with clarity and peace, so you've already found somewhat of a solution to this.'[481] Ironically, Iyer's frequent use of the phrase 'going nowhere' (borrowed from Leonard Cohen), seems often to rely on a going *somewhere*, to places associated with stillness, peacefulness, and retreat. Even Iyer suggests that the phrase does not mean a complete cessation in mobility and travel. He writes:

> Going nowhere, as Leonard Cohen would later emphasize for me, isn't about turning your back on the world; it's about stepping away now and then so that you can see the world more clearly and love it more deeply.[482]

Although residencies might equally be seen as a form of upheaval, even dislocation, in emphasising slowness and stillness, they can suggest the opposite – an authentic grounding in place. As the call-out for Iyer's Banff program advertised: 'Step away from the pace of everyday life and discover what insights may be gained from being grounded firmly in physical location and rooted in the present moment.'[483] But this 'being present in the moment' advocated by Iyer and Banff, his 'going nowhere', relies heavily on a physical 'stepping away', whether to the Rocky Mountains or a small rural town.

As well as sitting within the trend of contemporary forms of 'retreat', a broader cultural movement might be linked to the experience of time in residencies, or more, to the promotion of certain temporal practices. The notion of 'slowness' or the 'slow movement' has come to stand for a number of related practices, as well as been ascribed to an entire lifestyle

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[481] Pico Iyer, 'Stillness Residency: Pico Iyer in Conversation', Banff Centre, 2018, at minute 5:40:00, Soundcloud, Banff Centre Podcasts, accessed 23 June 2021, https://soundcloud.com/banff-centre-radio/20161003_picoiyer.
[482] Iyer, *The Art of Stillness*', 24.
[483] Banff Centre, 'The Art of Stillness Residency'.

ideology.[484] While few residencies might adopt the trend overtly, many promote the benefits of 'slowing down' – the language used, as in the quotes above, sets up a binary often used by other promotions of 'slowness', citing it as a necessary response to the accelerated pace of modern life. Imbricated within, and overlapping with, 'slowness' practices are also a number of related theories to do with creativity. While slowness is often linked to general well-being, and for its more ideological promotors, can also be an ethical and political position, various parts of 'slowness' culture, are also being linked to increasing productivity, including in the workplace, particularly to harness creative thinking. 'Slowness' is a complex of practices and theories deployed in various overlapping contexts – but at their core, cultural theorist Sarah Sharma argues, slowness is less about disturbing current temporalities, as much as creating spaces of escape and reprieve.[485]

'Slowness' is linked not only to personal benefit and well-being but very often proclaimed to have social and political benefit, as well as being closely associated with ecological sustainability. Broadly speaking 'slowness' is a remedy to an accelerated global capitalism that leaves people atomised, isolated, constantly busy, and constantly consuming, while in contrast, 'slowness' culture asserts that a slower pace in all areas allows people time to think, consider, socialise, participate in political life, and rely on processes of production that are slower but less exploitative and wasteful, for example, The Long Now Foundation's promotion of 'deep time' through a 10,000 year clock is designed to 'provide a counterpoint to today's accelerating culture' and 'foster responsibility.'[486]

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[484] The slowness movement is manifested in the variety of lifestyle trends dedicated to it, from 'slow food' and 'slow cooking', to societies such as the environmentally focused The Sloth Club in Japan (formed in Tokyo in 1999), to the unending stream of op-eds and articles proclaiming the benefits of slowing down and taking time out, literature I draw upon throughout this section. There are strong connections to art and creativity across the slowness movement, for example there is a 'Slow Art Day', which encourages 'people all over the world visit local museums and galleries to look at art *slowly*', and which has led to over 1400 Slow Day events since it began in 2010, see Slow Art Day, 'About', accessed 4 November 2021, https://www.slowartday.com/about/.

[485] Sharma writes 'within the popular imaginary, the turn to slowness is fast becoming the new mark of the moment', *In the Meantime*, 109.

[486] Medium, The Long Now Foundation, 'About', accessed 23 June 2021, https://medium.com/the-long-now-foundation/about. See generally Lutz P. Koepnick, *On Slowness: Toward an Aesthetic of the Contemporary*. New York, NY: Columbia Univ. Press, 2014.

Places of Slow-time

Sharma challenges aspects of this thinking, arguing that it can lead to a fairly undifferentiated picture of global acceleration. Sharma calls a vast literature focused on a culture of speed and acceleration, 'speed theory' – which encompasses a variety of positions across different disciplines, from Paul Virilio's depiction of a sped-up globe life under late capitalism and 'fast and slow' classes, to Zygmunt Bauman's 'liquid times', to Jonathan Crary's notion of 24/7 capitalism.[487] Sharma argues that while 'speed theory' does acknowledge different temporal classes, these are imagined as 'two temporal poles of chronopolitical life', with a lack of interrogation of how subjects interact.[488] By contrast, Sharma argues for an understanding of the various power-chronographies which shape the social fabric and people's lived temporalities, and which are differentiated, relational, and ever-shifting.[489]

For the purposes of this discussion, there is particular relevance in Sharma's contention that as a broad cultural reaction to the diagnosis and experience of acceleration, cultural practices have emerged which designate particular spaces as being 'outside the normalizing temporal order.'[490] Such spaces are implicated in what Sharma terms recalibrations (for example, the reorientation of the time of workers to suit the need of

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[487] A summary of Sharma's critique of 'speed theory' can be found in *In the Meantime* at 6–7. See also Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (London: Blackwell, 2000); Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Paul Virilio, *Politics of the Very Worst* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1999); Paul Virilio, trans. Mark Polizzotti, *Speed and Politics* (Cambridge, MA, USA: Semiotext(e), 2006), New Edition; and Jonathan Crary, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*, New York; London: Verso, 2014.

[488] Sharma, *In the Meantime*, 6.

[489] Sharma bases her idea of 'power-chronographies' on Doreen Massey's notion of power-geometry see *In the Meantime*, 10–11. As Sharma acknowledges, Massey was also interested in temporal problems through this concept. In *Space, Place, and Gender* Massey refers to the 'power-geometry' of 'time-space compression' where she writes that the issue is not only 'who moves and who doesn't' but the 'power in relation to the flows and the movement', and that different social groups have 'differentiated mobility', with some being able to shape how others move (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 149.

[490] Ibid., 111.

businesspeople), but don't ossify into readily neat distinctions between fast and slow classes.[491] Sharma writes:

> I discover not a polarity between fast and slow classes, or a political choice between going fast or slow, but an uneven multiplicity of temporalities that is complicated by the labour arrangements, cultural practices, technological environments, and social spaces that respond to this so-called globalized, speedy world.[492]

Sharma further questions the binary that this diagnosis sets up with its counterpart in slowness. For Sharma, slowness is suspect precisely because it often purports to be an alternative *space* to accelerated global life and yet is also never really 'outside the normalizing temporal order.'[493]

The key aspect of 'slowness' relevant to retreat residencies, and as critiqued by Sharma, is that though it purports to be a new experience of temporality it relies heavily on spatial configurations that allow for escape, withdrawal, or separateness. For Sharma slowness is positioned as adhering in places and spaces: in so-called 'slow cities' (of populations under 55,000 and requiring accreditation), at the tables of slow restaurants, in seasonal camping trips, or in artist retreats – places where the temporal complexity and temporal politics and uneven distribution of time are partly occluded and escaped from. After all, only those who have time and resources available to them can generally embrace 'slow living' or travel to slow spaces. Sharma summarises the problem with this reliance on 'spaces of withdrawal' as the lynchpin of so-called slowness:

> The culturally driven forms of slowness that I've described are spatially, not temporally, organized. They assert spatial solutions to the problem of time. These spatial solutions do not actually address the temporal dimensions of power that have been described throughout this book. Having distance is a spatial relationship. Moreover, slowness appears to be about getting away, maintaining distance from the temporal and the complex multiplicity of time.[494]

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[491] Sharma defines her use of 'recalibration' as accounting for 'the multiple ways in which individuals and social groups synchronize their body clocks, their senses of the future or the present, to an exterior relation—be it another person, pace, technology, chronometer, institution, or ideology.' Ibid., 18.
[492] Ibid., 9.
[493] Ibid., 111.
[494] Ibid.

Thus, we might say, the residencies' own claims to 'slowness' is that it provides something of a temporary reprieve from the general pace of artistic labour, which is today greatly associated with constructions of accelerated contemporary capitalism. Residencies are often constructed as idyllic locales with ideal studio spaces, often promoting a temporal lifestyle shift – they geographically, spatially, architecturally, and symbolically, create distance from the pace of 'ordinary life.' A profile for Cove Park, a residency set across 50 acres of rural property in Scotland's West Coast, showcases the unique architecture of their residency 'pods', artists at work in the studio, and idyllic unpeopled vistas of lakes and fields.[495] The ideal studio space is a typical image for residency websites and online profiles (such as on Res Artis), where oftentimes peaceful and inviting spaces await new guests and hold the promise of the ideal conditions for relaxed, autonomous working, and the promise of 'time, space, freedom.'[496]

Statements like this abound (by programmes and participants) that link retreat residencies to an ability to 'slow down'– a quality that seems to be linked directly to ideas about rural and remote temporality discussed earlier in reference to the 'rural idyll', as well as the residencies separateness from the accelerated pace of urban life, or life immersed in the hyper-productive flows on the contemporary art-world. A problem with this, though, is that it promotes a notion that an ideal time exists in special *places* – and places create problems of access. Instead of an impetus to create slower temporalities and better working conditions at home, a place-based and spatial escape, might in a sense, defer the problem of a lack of time to an *elsewhere* that is temporarily inhabited. Artist Laura Ķeniņš has written how in Canada, travel grants are seemingly easier to secure than production grants.[497] She writes, 'given the option to receive funding to work at home, in their own studios, many artists might eventually

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[495] TransArtists, 'Cove Park', accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.transartists.org/air/cove-park.
[496] Ibid.
[497] Laura Ķeniņš, 'Escapists and Jet-Setters: Residencies and Sustainability', *C: International Contemporary Art*, no. 119 (September 2013), accessed 23 June 2021, https://cmagazine.com/issues/119/escapists-and-jet-setters-residencies-and-sustainability.

choose this option instead.'[498] And as practices of retreat, from the wellness retreat, to the corporate retreat to the residency-retreat, become ubiquitous, these spatial escapes can look less like a way of addressing temporal-problems, including the issue of overwork, than a normative part of the rhythms of contemporary labour. Many artists are even self-funding their trips to retreat-residencies where they can work in relative isolation, suggesting that they are being used as a means for artists to carve out time and self-manage periods of development.

Slowness and Contemporary Art

There has also been a trend towards slowness in art practice, where debates around slowness and speed have also played out. In recent descriptions of slow time and slowness in contemporary art, such practices are frequently positioned as reaction, counterpoint, or intervention, in the accelerated temporalities associated with globalisation and late capitalism. In his round-up of a variety of Slow Art practices, Marcus Verhagen makes such a link, but also distinguishes between two types of practices. On the one hand, he sees some works as replicating a central flaw of slowness movements generally, that is, offering only 'simple, private solutions', and ignoring political and economic structures, a position he sees in dreamy escapist pieces like the work of Kimsooja (for instance in films such as *A Needle Woman* and *A Laundry Woman*, where the artist is immobile and idle).[499] Verhagen prefers pieces, such as those by Allora and Calzadilla, whose slow film of six turtles floating on a log down the Pearl River Delta in China, *Amphibious (Login-Logout)*, both tracks their slow progress and insinuates them within an accelerated industrialised landscape.[500] Their film is thus more an image of

[498] Ibid.
[499] Verhagen, 'Globalisation and Slow Art', in *Globalisation in Contemporary* Art, 123.
[500] Ibid., 127–129.

intertwined temporalities, than a pure valorisation of slowness, and for Verhagen, such practices tackle time 'as a poltically resonant issue.'[501] In his book *On Slowness*, Lutz Koepnick similarly positions slowness practices as investigations of 'temporal compression' but without providing redemptive meanings or nostalgia for the past.[502] Ideas and ethics of slowness have also crept into curatorial and institutional practices, with some curators promoting the value of employing longer-term processes and thinking, particularly in regard to community engagement work.[503] Slowness in the art world, as with broader slowness movements, is increasingly being thought as a more holistic approach to artistic practice and everyday life.

As a prime example of such a set of approaches, in a 2017 residency in Borrhaman, Victoria, Australia, organised by Residency Projects, Abbra Kotlarczyk describes how the programme founders along with the two artists-in-residence – artists Chaco Kato and Dylan Martorell who helm the Slow Art Collective (who often engage in long processes of making) – embedded a sense of slowness across multiple levels of the project:

> Across the fullness of these creative and professional dynamics, there is a keen attention on this operative word, *slow*. Not only does it relate to systems of value that are anti-capitalist and, in many cases, anti- or quasi-utilitarian, but it forms a congealing thread that speaks to what all four individuals have contributed to the experience in Boorhaman. Slow speaks to the four years of conversation and negotiation prior to the program's implementation; it speaks to the meditative tasks of repeated weaving and digital post-production involved in the composites of the works and it encapsulates the shifts in body and mind that occur in the time taken to exit the city and enter rural time.[504]

Here, *slow* becomes the synecdoche for an ethics of practice applied across the totality of the residency project and is understood as a gathering idea for institutional, discursive, and artistic

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[501] Ibid., 129.
[502] Koepnick, *On Slowness*, 15.
[503] See Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, 'For Slow Institutions', *e-flux*, Issue #85, October 2017, accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/85/155520/for-slow-institutions/; Megan Johnston, 'Slow Curating: Re-thinking and Extending Socially Engaged Art in the Context of Northern Ireland', *ON Curating*, Issue 21, accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.on-curating.org/issue-24-reader/Slow_Curating_Rethinking_and_Extending_Socially_Engaged_Art_in_the_Context_of_Northern_Ireland.html#.YYPA171ByEs; and *Locating the Producers: Durational Approaches to Public Art*.
[504] Abbra Kotlarczyk, 'Residency Projects: Boorhaman, Victoria', Art and Australia Online, accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.artandaustralia.com/online/disquisitions/residency-projects-boorhaman-victoria.

practices. In regard to retreat-residencies, though, perhaps more than a holistic approach to employing long-term processes, slowness tends to pervade the smaller practices that coalesce in residencies: long walks in nature, time spent in conversation, time for thinking and making, as well as in the deference of residencies to allowing people to have freer time by not placing many pressures on production. Such practices orient around the idea of stemming the flow of production and decreasing distractions, so that thinking and work can be done at a less frenetic pace. Predominantly though, residencies are primarily a relatively short-term, spatial escape that might entail some practiced forms of slowing down. While residency discourses rarely engage in a more radical interrogation of the temporalities and recalibrations set in motion by contemporary artistic work in retreat and the residency trend.

A number of residency publications have touched upon issues of temporality and global mobility, such as the Nida Art Colony catalogue themed 'On Time'; Tracey Warr's 'A Study Room Guide to Remoteness'; the residency book *AWAY*; the residency themed issue of Dutch Culture's *Station to Station* online magazine; and an *arts everywhere* online roundtable on 'Artist Residencies: A Question of Time'.[505] While such accounts consider temporal issues as political, there is a tendency to centre discussions around the artist's time-problems and time-management practices within residencies, or sometimes their proximity to other analogous flows, such as the residencies' imbrication within tourism practices.[506] There has been recent discursive attention given to the issue of residencies and access, including disruptions or lack of accommodations made for families, as well as focus on global inequalities in the residency landscape.[507] But in general, further analysis on the more specific

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[505] *Nida Art Colony Log*, 'On Time'; Tracey Warr, *A Study Room Guide to Remoteness* (London: Live Art Development Agency, 2014); *AWAY: The Book about Residencies*; *Station to Station* #2, 'All that Art'; and Arquitectura Expandida, Andrew Nicholls, Travis Kelleher, Isin Onol, Francisco Guevera, Pakui Hardware, Tobi Maier, Alia Swastika, Petros Touloudis, and Iaroslav Volovod. 'Artist Residencies: A Question of Time', online roundtable discussion. *Arts everywhere*. Accessed 25 May 2021, https://artseverywhere.ca/residency-unlimited-3/.

[506] See also *Tourists Like Us*.

[507] I discuss issues related to gender and families accessing residencies in Chapter 4.1: Residency for Artists on Hiatus.

power-chronographies and recalibrations that residencies might be said to elicit or set-in-motion are missing. For example, how are residency staff, local service-providers, local artists and community members, elicited to recalibrate to the needs of temporary artist-residents? How do residency-retreats interact within the wider picture of creative labour – not only in regards to the issue of artists-in-residence managing overwork through residencies – but the nature of residencies as a globalised institutional infrastructure through which contemporary artists constantly flow and are elicited to manage time across a variegated and heterogenous array of situations for working.[508]

A Return to the Self: The Artist in Retreat

The extent to which slowness movements might be described as highly individuated can also be seen in the way they often romanticise solitude. Indeed, many of the practices associated with slowness (from meditation to knitting) are positioned as solitary pursuits, and as a form of relationship to the self. Hannah Arendt has defined solitude as different from loneliness, the former being conducive to thought: 'thinking, existentially speaking, is a solitary but not a lonely business: solitude is that human situation in which I keep myself company.'[509] There is an abundance of examples to draw upon of artists and writers engaging in deliberate forms of solitude, often through periods of retreat, to the extent that the artist in solitude is a well-worn archetype. Tracey Warr, writing as part of a residency project in the Scottish Highlands, summarises this history of creative retreat:

> There is a tradition of artists' and thinkers' huts, shacks and bothys, places for withdrawal and generation: Goethe's Gartenhaus in Weimar, Henry Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond, Ludwig Wittgenstein's cabin at Skojlden in Norway, Dylan Thomas' writing shack in Laugharne… London Fieldworks' Outlandia, an off-grid treehouse studio in Glen Nevis in the Scottish Highlands, was the

[508] Some of these questions are addressed in recent publications such as *Contemporary Artist Residencies*, but as argued in the introduction to this thesis, the essays collected in this volume are still largely invested in positioning residencies as alternative time-spaces of retreat within the arts ecosystem.
[509] Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind: One/Thinking, Two/Willing* (San Diego; New York; London: Harcourt, 1978), One-volume edition, 185.

> prompt for this Study Room Guide, and is in this tradition of retreat…[510]

Recent popular literature on solitude has reinvigorated the longstanding associations between solitude and creativity through the ethics of slowness. In Anthony Storr's book *Solitude: A Return to the Self,* he sees artists as exemplars for the beneficial practice of spending time in solitude, writing in the introduction that 'perhaps the need of the creative person for solitude, and his [*sic*] preoccupation with internal processes of integration, can reveal something about the needs of the less gifted.'[511] Philp Koch, in *Solitude: A Philosophical Encounter,* lists creativity as one of the 'perennial gifts of solitude', and also uses artists as a major example, such as Georgia O'Keeffe's significant time spent at a desert retreat in New Mexico, where she spent many summers alone working.[512] Many residencies tap into this link between creativity and solitude – some offer more extreme forms of isolation, but most allow some degree of solitude. The Montello Foundation retreat, on 80 acres in a relatively undeveloped and remote valley near Montello, Nevada, offers 'a place that provides a shield from distractions in the solitude of the desert.'[513] In her experience of Montello, a 2017 artist-in residence, Sara Morawetz, writes:

> In my walks, I discovered an emptiness and an amplitude – hidden pathways and an internal pace that required me to remain at once observing and observant of the natural realm. My solitude illuminated the world around and a world within - infusing each action with stillness, silence, surface and sky.[514]

Tanya Harrod writes about the residency anecdote that 'there are arcadian encounters with nature and periods of despair and loneliness.'[515] But such themes are equally part of historic accounts; Harrod begins her chapter on the 'artists in residence' with an anecdote about poet

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[510] Warr, *A Study Room Guide to Remoteness*, 4.
[511] Anthony Storr, *Solitude: A Return to the Self* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), xv.
[512] Ibid., 233.
[513] Montello Foundation, 'About' accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.montellofoundation.org/pages/montello_about.htm.
[514] Montello Foundation, 'Competition', accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.montellofoundation.org/competition.htm.
[515] Tanya Harrod, *The Real Thing: Essays on Making in the Modern World* (London: Hyphen, 2015), 142.

Elizabeth Bishops' loneliness and unhappiness at Yaddo in 1949.[516] Historically, narratives of retreat, like Thoreau's Walden (which details his life 'close to nature' in a small cabin near Waldon Pond, Massachusetts) intertwine struggle, loneliness, and transcendence. As discussed earlier in regard to some of the new forms of residencies, off-grid living, intentional seclusion, and often extreme forms of isolation are positioned as the most extreme form of contemporary solitude, of a kind beneficial to artistic processes. Madyha Leghari forcefully projects this contradiction, and its performative quality:

> The temporary resident in retreat today is similarly expected to take this solitary confinement seriously and to churn out, if not objects then thought and the earnest articulation of it. They are expected to be present, alert and observant, drawing into their own reflection the ready availability of a site that is perceived to be awaiting the arrival of the resident as if in refrigeration. The impulse to tell the tale to an audience located beyond this remoteness is what validates the existence of such a facility.[517]

A major staple of the slowness movement, which foments links between some of these intertwined concepts, is Carl Honoré's *In Praise of Slowness* – a 21st Century lifestyle guide borrowing its name from Bertrand Russel's 'In Praise of Idleness.' Unlike Russel's essay, Honoré's book and others like it, seem to have long given up the dream of achieving significantly fewer working hours or changes to working conditions. Instead, they extol the benefits of personal dedication to the pursuits that might invite in slowness, idleness, and increase a sense of autonomy over one's time against the onslaught of work – everything from knitting clubs to meditation retreats. Honoré also centres the artist in his book, depicted at the historical forefront of fleeing the encroaching pace of modernity; from the 'Romantic movement of artists, writers and musicians that swept across Europe after 1770' in search of a lost idyll, to the Transcendentalists in the United States who 'exalted the gentle simplicity of a life rooted in nature' to the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain, which 'turned away from

[516] Ibid., 138.
[517] Leghari, 'The Residency; as Retreat, Relational and Relief'.

mass production to embrace the slow, meticulous handwork of the artisan.'[518] Many of Honoré's contemporary examples are from artistic fields as well, but more than this, he sees art as having, overall, a particular link to slowness, going as far as to say that 'any act of artistic creation, has a special relationship with slowness.'[519] Linking slowness and creativity in a kind of idealised ethical framework of course excludes the wide-variety of ways, and speeds, at which artists work.

The rise in residency situations that rend to valorise slowness could be said to promote certain forms of speeding-up: from utilising air travel, to working light, quick and mobile to adapt to new situations and field-sites. Thus, slowness is often linked to a rather romanticised view of creative working that is connected to the past, over-and-above the heterochronic realities of contemporary work on-the-move, as enabled by technologies and cultures of time-space compression and globalised mobility. What is also elucidating in Honoré's text is the tendency it shares with the current historicisation of residencies, in placing contemporary concerns with accelerated labour patterns in lineage with a longer history of artist movements and practices of retreating from urban life. Contemporary problems with time and their solutions in slowness are thus tethered to a long, radical, and one might say charismatic, history of artists taking counter-cultural political stances against the effects of industrialisation, even though most practices related to today's slowness movements are often highly individualised ones.

Honoré's book is ultimately a call, not for broad structural changes to work, but for individuals to better self-manage their time, reaching the conclusion that the key concept is the notion of balance: 'Be fast when it makes sense to be fast and be slow when slowness is called for. Seek to live at what musicians call the tempo giusto—the right speed.'[520] Finding

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[518] Carl Honoré, *In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed* (Pymble, NSW; New York, NY: HarperCollins ebooks, 2009), 52–53, E-book.
[519] Ibid., 238.
[520] Ibid., 15.

this balance is presented, largely, as a set of personal preferences and choices that will 'add up' to cultural change; he writes that what matters is 'that a growing minority is choosing slowness over speed. Every act of deceleration gives another push to the Slow movement.'[521] Slow culture is thus presented as a set of possible personal workarounds, a series of strategic retreats.

As this literature reveals, there are clear parallels and overlaps between the retreat-residency trend and a broad cultural trend that valorises a kind of artistic subjectivity that embraces practices of slowness and retreat, conceived at times as a personal political gesture. Residencies, particularly residency-retreats, are thus entangled within a broader culture that currently utilises the ideal of the *artist in retreat*. We are experiencing a cultural moment where silicon-valley entrepreneurs promote having time 'off-grid' and even setting up their own remote artist residencies, as in the case of Vimeo founder, Zach Klein's artist residency - retreat Beaver Brook, in Sullivan County, New York.[522] Strategic *retreating* – finding time to re-focus, to idle away the hours waiting for inspiration to strike, having rest, repose and recuperation, to be in a community of peers – has becomes a widespread cultural trend. The *artist in retreat* has become a kind of model figure for coping with erosions of life and leisure time under contemporary capitalism. Ironically, the figure of the artist as a model labourer under capitalism has long been seen as at the forefront of a broader blurring of life and leisure, due to modelling their passionate commitment to art as a way of living, something that has carried over into a wide variety of industries, where passion and commitment to one's vocation are valorised.[523] As retreat is recuperated for its political potential as resistance to many of the conditions of contemporary capitalism, it comes to exist in tension with its simultaneous valorisation within contemporary culture – not just as an archaic form of

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[521] Ibid., 17
[522] See Penelope Green, 'Where Tiny Houses and Big Dreams Grow', 5 October 2015, *New York Times*, accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/24/fashion/the-cabin-porn-commune.html.
[523] Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*

withdrawal from social life, but also conceived as a means of coping with and even resisting capitalist imperatives, though in far less politicised terms.

But this cultural narrative of the artist as at a kind of vanguard of either more ethical, continual practices of engaging in life or of being the protagonist in the collapse of life and leisure, can overlook the textures of small-scale retreat practices and their widespread valency. The mundane dexterity of self-management and semi-ironic acceptance of retreats as places suitable for narrativising, unravelling, and working within, fits neither narrative. Instead of there being clear distinctions between residencies as instantiating more individuated self-management, or instantiating resistant 'reclaiming' operations, the 'different' time that residencies often claim to provide might be thought of as desired and deliberate recalibration for artists – potentially greater autonomy to manage one's time differently within a supportive structure that is often quite attentive to the dilemmas of this. Not so much a pure 'gift of time', as a sort of attentiveness to one's time that can be valuable to artistic practice.

Outlandia's Creative Fantasies and Fancies

Image 3.7

Outlandia, created by the artists London Fieldworks (Bruce Gilchrist and Jo Joelson) and designed by the Malcolm Fraser Architects, situated in Glen Nevis, Scotland, is a picture perfect, and rather whimsical, artist's retreat, described by its makers as 'inspired by childhood dens, wildlife hides and bothies, by forest outlaws and Japanese poetry platforms.'[524] In its very name, the residency suggests a utopian place that is outside of normal routines and life. It

[524] London Fieldworks, 'Outlandia', accessed 1 November 2021, https://londonfieldworks.com/Project-87-Outlandia. Also see the edited volume on the project edited by Gilchrist, Joelson and Tracey Warr, *Remote Performances in Nature and Architecture* (Abingdon, Oxon., New York, NY: Routledge, 2018).

has proved the perfect fodder for lifestyle and design lists where it features heavily.[525] In an era of 'Tiny Houses' and 'Cabin Porn', these well-designed retreats, simple yet stylish, perched in picturesque landscapes, are a contemporary obsession, the ultimate return to nature, simplicity, and authenticity. Such images proliferate online, expressing a lifestyle positioned as antithetical to the accelerated platforms on which they circulate. Outlandia also conforms to another major lifestyle trend – the 'blackhole resort' – where guests are forced to go offline and sometimes off-grid, in order to completely 'switch-off.'[526] A list of '11 of the World's Most Unusual Artist Residencies' features Outlandia, describing it as:

> a tiny, idyllic tree house, just three meters wide, realized by artists London Fieldworks and designed by Malcolm Fraser Architects. The isolated structure (over two miles from the nearest town, Fort William), ensconced in Norwegian Spruce in the Scottish Highlands, is located at the foot of Ben Nevis, the U.K.'s highest mountain. The program provides the opportunity for artists to unplug and tap into the natural surroundings for inspiration and artmaking.[527]

The residency's 'off-the-grid' remote location in fact makes it a rather active and temporary pursuit, as far as residencies go. It takes forty-five minutes to hike to the residency location where residents are allowed just two-weeks of working time and cannot stay overnight there. Instead, the treehouse studio is a rather arduous daily trek. Moreover, despite its remote location, the treehouse sits on a well-worn tourist path, and many residents have written about having frequent visitors knocking on their door. The residency is even promoted as a tourist destination, and partly sponsored by a local tourism board. Artist Shona McCombes writes how the imaginary desire of Outlandia, didn't meet the busy reality:

> A place like Outlandia enters the imagination as something wild and remote, something closer to a natural state than everyday urban life, but really, it's embedded

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[525] For example see *In Habitat*, 'Outlandia Treehouse Art Studio Set in the Lush Scottish Highlands', accessed 1 November 2021, https://inhabitat.com/outlandia-artist-studio-treehouse-in-the-lush-scottish-highlands/; and Catherine Warmann, 'Outlandia by Malcolm Fraser Architects', *dezeen*,10 February 2011, accessed 1 November 2021, https://www.dezeen.com/2011/02/10/outlandia-by-malcolm-fraser-architects/. An

[526] See Jonathan Brown, ''Black-hole' resorts: Turn up, tune out, log off', *The Independent*, 15 February 2012, accessed 2 November 2021, https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/black-hole-resorts-turn-tune-out-log-6917364.html.

[527] Casey Lesser, '11 of the World's Most Unusual Artist Residencies', 23 may 2016, *Artsy*, accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-11-of-the-world-s-most-unusual-artist-residencies.

> in one of the most well-trodden landscapes in the country, a central node in a national network of nature tourism. Each day a steady trickle of walkers find themselves at the end of the boardwalk – camping families and local dog-walkers, munro-baggers and mountain-bikers, organised tours and lone travellers, of scattered origin and varying levels of curiosity about this space they have stumbled into.[528]

Kat Tough, a resident in 2017, notes how the residency demands a different routine: 'to a degree, one doesn't have a choice; the practicalities of accessing Outlandia, and working in an off-grid space, required a different work rhythm.'[529] In a way this might sound like a more demanding rhythm than expected for an isolated retreat. One artist, who needed to also work online, made the daily hike, just for a morning in the space. Featured as one of the prime examples of the 'remote' retreat in various articles, Outlandia in fact sits at the intersection of various flows. In a gesture that seemed to critically reflect upon the practice of working in isolation by the residency, artist Dave Evans set up his own Wi-Fi network:

> Obviously the forest and mountain did not have Wi-Fi, which I am sure is one of the main attractions for people, for people to look beyond their screens at the landscape and get away. That said, I'm interested in how these devices and networks we use came to be such a bind. Why not have Wi-Fi? Why not have access to a network? I decided to set one up, a local Wi-Fi network that just broadcast to the immediate area. To do this I needed two things, a mast and an 'Internet'. I made the mast from stuff in the forest, rope, string, logs and sticks. The Internet, made from a battery powered raspberry pi, consisted of one webpage showing a short film I made during the week called Tribute.[530]

A pervasive binary between speed and slowness tends to position certain places, technologies, objects and situations as either fast or slow, a reductive binary that Evans questions in this work. The time-space compression of the internet is predominantly associated with speed culture, and yet it has led to increasingly sedentary and slow lifestyles, stuck in front of screens. Moreover, the fetish for going 'off-grid' as a remedy, often only entails a temporary

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[528] Outlandia, 'Shona McCombes AIR 2017', 13 August 2017, accessed 23 June 2021, http://www.outlandia.com/2017/08/shona-mccombes-air-2017.html.
[529] Outlandia, 'Kate Tough AIR 2017', 1 October 2017, accessed 23 June 2021, http://www.outlandia.com/2017/10/kate-tough-air-2017_1.html.
[530] Outlandia, 'Dave Evans AIR 2017', 20 August 2017, accessed 23 June 2021, http://www.outlandia.com/2017/08/dave-evans-air-2017.html.

reprieve from online lifestyles. Evans envisages a different use of the same technology to achieve an hermetic end – rather than an increase in connectivity or utility, the network becomes a closed loop, available only to an exclusive audience.

Tracey Warr, a writer and art critic I quoted earlier for her thoughts on ideas of remoteness and retreat, was a writer-in-residence at Outlandia. Her writing also suggests, rather than pure remoteness and solitude, a flux between fantasy and reality, remoteness and connection, that exists in such places. While she extols the benefits of remoteness for 'focus and reflection, to generate ideas', and sees residencies like Outlandia as 'remote creative cradles and nests', Warr also acknowledges the role of projected desire operative in such places. She writes:

> *Outlandia* is as much an imaginary, fictive place as it is a real one. It continues suspended in the mind's eye as a visual longing when you are absent from it. Place is always part reality, part imaginary. Outlandia, Goodiepal remarked, is an urban dream: a romantic, magical treehouse, architect-designed, hanging in the trees with a view of mountains, visually expressing a hankering for a return to childhood, escape from social convention and rules, immersion in Another Green Place. It is a microcosmic expression of a world and a life we would like to make and have that is so very different from the world we have made and move within.[531]

Reviewing the works from *Outlandia* is to be seduced by the fantasy as it is also discursively unravelled and re-woven – the impurities, imperfections, and instabilities of any pure or rarefied notion of escapist utopia are also points of interest. Such projects are not exactly a counterpoint to the programmes own description, but arguably a participation in its playful self-imagining as a fantastical retreat. Yet these layers of more embedded descriptions of multiple flows and artistic interpretation of place, don't disrupt the centrality of the claim to provide inspiration from isolated time in nature. Within this archive, trajectories of retreating nonetheless thread through, creating, feeding, dispelling myths of the artist in retreat, while also playfully inhabiting this very fantasy.

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[531] Warr, *A Study Room Guide to Remoteness*, 46.

In the art-writing practice of Tracey Warr, for example, various 'remote' residency stays as part of involvement in two curated residency projects (*Frontiers in Retreat* and *Remote Performances*) have produced a range of outputs, which draw together fictive, speculative, reflexive, symbolic, and theoretical elements strongly tethered to embedded experiences within residencies, and largely centred on discourses around art and ecology.[532] In an introduction to a 'Study Room Guide' produced for the Live Development Agency as a supplement and reflection on the *Remote Performances* project, Warr begins with the notion of 'Solitude', writing that 'numerous artists' residencies in remote places attest to its effectiveness for focus and reflection, and for inspiration from nature.'[533] But this more standardised formulation is also unpacked ('Is remoteness simply an urban dream?'), and the piece ends with the idea of the 'Contemporary Remote' developed by the artists London Fieldworks (who co-created the Outlandia residency), a concept that seems to entail both the relational and fantastical elements of the human construction of remote nature, while nevertheless seeing it as still a productive other to the city, particularly as a site for de-anthropocentric thinking and practice. Warr concludes:

> A nexus of issues confronts us: the tensions in dense urban populations, global economic shifts and inequities, conflicts fuelled by identity, religion, resources, and their refugees, and climate change. Contemporary Remoteness has a new role to play in helping artists, curators and writers contemplate, represent and mitigate those issues.[534]

This is emblematic of the way that contemporary remote and rural residencies seem to simultaneously produce idyllic places from lingering and persistent romantic tropes, but also bind practices of retreat, both historic and contemporary, to ethical positions. Such positions differ from those in the discourses around residencies that more directly focus on social and

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[532] See Tracey Warr 'There's a monster in the nest-box', in *Remote Performances*; Tracey Warr, *The Water Age & Other Fictions* (Meanda Books, 2011); and Tracey Warr, *The Midden* (Helsinki: Garret Publications, 2018)
[533] Warr, *A Study Room Guide to Remoteness*, 4.
[534] Ibid., 8.

community engaged practice. Instead, retreat and withdrawal to rural and remote places is positioned as instantiating practices, communities, discourses, and narratives that are counter to, for the most part, an image of accelerated and unsustainable production linked to contemporary conditions.

3.5 Small Island Residencies

> Mainlands are ordinary, the measure of reality for which islands in their eccentricity practice caprice. Islands are extraordinary and therefore likely to be enchanted, both utopias and prisons, sea-changed bodies into something rich and strange. None of Prospero's magic did him much good on the mainland.[535]
>
> – Michael Taussig

> One starts research beforehand. One dreams, fantasizes, gets the facts. Zoom in on the island on Google Earth, look at sea maps, geological maps, and depth maps. An island has such natural borders; it offers a sufficiently large study object. An island allows itself to be captured in a presentation. Having been on the island, one can gather one's experiences, knowledge, memories, notes, drawings, and pictures for a future exhibition, a slide show or a book.[536]
>
> – Christian Pleijel

> The observation is often made that contemporary art parallels the paths of globalization, and artist residencies, like the one on Fogo Island that Taylor participated in, have a special role to play in this dynamic. Artists who participate in residencies are like explorers in a particularly contemporary form of de-contextualisation. Taken away from their friends and family, they are set down in new contexts with the expectations that they will adapt to their circumstances and flourish…Why are these members of the creative class thought suitable to perform this function? One answer is that an art practice, if properly developed, brings its own context, one that will respond well to the stimuli of new locations.[537]
>
> – Rosemary Heather and Nicolaus Schafhausen

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[535] Michael Taussig, *My Cocaine Museum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 286.
[536] Christian Pleijel, trans. Rose Marie Rachal and Adam Gordon, *How To Read An Island*, (Åland: April Kommunikation, 2015), 63.
[537] Rosemary Heather and Nicolaus Schafhausen, 'Preface', *Zin Taylor: Lichen Voices/Stripes and Dots*, Rosemary Heather and Nicolaus Schafhausen eds., (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014), 6.

This case study progresses through a comparative analysis of four small residency programmes in the Åland and Finnish archipelagos that I visited during a one-month residency at one of the four (Ëckero Post and Customs House). Envisaged as short encounters with each programme – including semi-structed interviews with staff and current residents and drawing in wider published material – this case study seeks to give further texture to the retreat-residencies' cultural mediation of ideas around artistic withdrawal to places and spaces coded as idyllic and relatively remote. In particular, it aims to perform a form of art-historical fieldwork that considers artists in-situ as well as places former artist-residents have visited, as a means to give greater nuance to the relationship between the place-making of retreat-residencies and the kinds of artistic practices and processes that occur through them.

In comparison to my example of artworks made through residencies such as the Isabella Stewart Gardner museum residency programme (Chapter Two), which grappled with the symbolic links between finalised projects and programme's claims of non-expectation, ultimately arguing that there are strong symbolic and conceptual relations between final artworks and ideas of residing in the museum, residency-retreats, particularly the small or micro-programmes encountered here, pose a further challenge, as they do not tend to produce a series of neatly reciprocal artist projects that can be used to reflect back upon programmes. Artist projects both rise up to fill the frame of a selected situation made possible through a given residency and they disappear into longer multi-sited processes. The residency 'product' might be a single line on a CV, a short-written reflection, the seed of idea that comes to fruition later or never.

These programmes can be considered in the context of a wider phenomenon of small-scale programmes in rural and remote locations. There is some research on small-scale artist-residency programmes done by the micro-residency network, though these are defined specifically as artist-run programmes. I borrow from their definition of small-scale as meaning

small in terms of facilities and budget.[538] The programmes considered here include two artist-run programmes, and two funded by a local government body, the Ålandskulturdelegation. While material conditions and residency models vary enormously amongst small-scale residency-retreat programmes, there are some common tendencies. They tend to accept only one resident at a time or small groups, often require some form of self-funding by residents, are generally short-term (1-3 months), are often interdisciplinary, make minimal expectations in terms of outputs or public engagement, and tend to offer opportunities for withdrawal and privacy as well as opportunities for artistic fieldwork, research, and site-specific practice (facilitating such practices to varying degrees). While we might wish to grasp at what such residencies elicit or encourage in terms of artistic practices, this is made difficult by the sheer diversity of residents, the wide ranging uses to which small programmes are put in terms of artistic development, and the variety of ways artists might choose to engage with or respond to local sites and communities. There is often an absence of many of the things that so often ground art-historical discussions of relationships between artists and places (long biographical accounts, public commissions, ongoing artist communities, regular exhibition programming, or institutional histories).

There is oftentimes an altogether more subtle and scaled-down exchange of values at play in these programmes than in larger more proscriptive or production-based ones. Discourses on site-specific art are instructive as a counterpoint. Rather than the site-hopping artist as 'international flâneur', flying in for a commission, mediating the local and global through a discursive project that might align with local regeneration prerogatives, in these programmes one might find local and regional artists managing their own practices or projects through multiple small pockets of support, seeking out programmes that have some resonance with their practices, whether as idyllic short retreats to find focus, or more aligned

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[538] MicroResidence Network, 'Publications'.

to their current research interests or material investigations.[539] On the side of the programmes, productive alignment is often found between ideas of artistic retreat and local arts cultures, tourism, and heritage. Rather than a flow of final artistic products that reproduce place, the flow of artists newly present in a place can have multiple values: to contribute to a sense of dynamic local arts community, to encourage new forms of responding to local sites, and to inhabit and make use of places of local significance.

The quotations that began this chapter were in part meant to bring geographic imaginaries of islands into the conversation from the outset, yet I also wish to critique the extent to which they are each applicable. Before undertaking this fieldwork, the idea of visiting residency programmes on three islands in an archipelago immediately led to the most obvious associations with Western island imaginaries – as anthropologist Michael Taussig suggests, the charismatic eccentricity of islands as places of individual creative dominion. Yet everywhere in these case studies and in interviews were ever complex understandings of geographic relationality – an idea to which the metaphor of archipelagos is so often put.[540] As I argued in regard to the 'rural idyll' and residencies, place-based imaginaries are often layered and interrogated through residency practices. Forms of removal to nature are co-constituted as desirable and understood as performative and fantastical simultaneously.

Then, as suggested by Christian Pleijel (who studies small islands and is resident in Åland), I also thought of the relation between artistic processes in residencies and the potential boundedness of small islands as charismatic field-sites. Indeed, there is a programme, Rabbit Island residency programme, described as 'The story of a remote island in

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[539] See Meyer, 'The Functional Site', 32; Mackay, 'The Barker Topos'; and Kwon, *One Place After Another*. I discuss site-specific art discourses in more detail in Chapter 1.2: The Right Place.

[540] Here I am thinking of Édouard Glissant's famous 'archipelagic thinking' and the world as becoming an archipelago as a key post-colonial frame for understanding the complex relationionalities of the world, exemplified by sites such as the Caribbean. See *Traité du tout-monde* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 194. There has notably been an 'archipelagic turn' in island studies, as outlined by Jonathan Pugh in 'Relationality and Island Studies in the Anthropocene', linked with the status of islands as 'emblematic figures of the Anthropocence'. See Pugh, *Island Studies Journal* (2018): 93.

Lake Superior', that hosts artists and scientists to engage directly with the landscape of a 91-acre forested island, such that the island becomes a continuously used field-site for successive artistic and scientific research projects.[541] And yet for the most part, the residency programmes considered here, and many others similar to them, do not produce an ongoing succession of projects that more wholly inhabit local, more bounded, geographies as spatial-temporal limits for engagement – in other words, as bounded field-sites. Projects may often make use of local places as sites of research and inspiration, but projects rarely wholly inhabit the bounds of the residency as a kind of total site or project.

Another analogy for the 'field' might be more appropriate here. In regard to anthropology, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson have written about the 'constitutive role of a certain dominant tradition of 'the field'' that relies on certain validating modes: promoting ways of separating 'field' and 'home', expectations around long duration, and the continued force of 'othering' tropes of exotic, non-urban locations.[542] They ultimately argue, not against such fieldwork, but for attentiveness to location and to the 'epistemological and political issues of location', essentially a preference for thinking location and methodology together, as against too valorising and romantic an attachment to bounded sites.[543] In more recent work, social anthropologist Matea Candea has written about the anthropological field-site as an experimental device, with device meaning 'a patterned teleological arrangement.'[544] Rather than succumbing to validating regimes derived from models of long-term single-sited field-work, conducive to 'the slow continuous adding-up of time spent in one place', Candea suggests that working with conditions such as multi-sitedness and time-based concerns (such as needing to undertake short, temporally separated visits to a place), can be an incitement to

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[541] Rabbit Island, 'About'.

[542] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, '1. Discipline and Practice: "The Field" as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology' in *Anthropological Locations*, ed. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (Berkeley; Calif.: University of California Press, 1997), 19.

[543] Ibid., 39.

[544] Matei Candea, 'THE FIELDSITE AS DEVICE', *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 6:3, 2013: 241.

reapproach questions related to field-site.[545] Instead of focusing on questions of quantity, he suggests viewing a field-site as a way to experiment with space and time.[546] I raise these ideas of the field as they acknowledge the continued romanticism attached to more bounded, longer-term, away-from-home fieldwork, though the reality is that today fieldwork in the anthropological tradition are often multi-sited and time-limited, and so too it is in contemporary art. Short retreats in charismatic remote locations often contain the allure of romanticised and more traditional notions of the field-site, but they are generally one-off visits, short in duration, and are often at least partly self-funded. They are thus more likely to elicit engagements that work within temporal-spatial-material limitations and might fold into longer multi-sited projects, as one pocket of support and development amongst many.

Robin Mackay has argued in favour of site-specific practices that shift away from 'the classic site-specific question 'how do I (qua artist) respond to this site'.[547] In regard to art-historical analysis of the artist's relationship to place through their practice, it is common to encounter this type of framing: how has an artist responded to site? How have site and artist acted upon one another? Contrary to my own expectations that small programmes suggestive of bounded romantic geographies might produce attempts to represent them in more direct and fulsome ways, instead I found these programmes were used as devices towards multiple ends and that made use of the contingencies, opportunities and limitations of the situation in various ways. Rather than artists coming to the problem of place and how to use it, the situation is reversed. The artist's pre-existing practice – and potentially an overarching ongoing project – is what needs progressing, developing, transforming – and a single short-term residency may only be useful in quite specific ways. This is what I take from the quotation by Rosemary Heather and Nicolaus Schafhausen, that 'practice brings its own

[545] Ibid., 252.
[546] Ibid.
[547] Mackay, 'The Barker Topos', 267.

context.' In the small retreat-residency there is a certain shift towards the weight of practices and processes over places; the artist isn't so much positioned to respond to site, but to embrace the transformative effects of new places. This also tracks with Gratton and Sheringham's notion of the dominance of contemporary project-based creative work, where the project 'begins as an idea that then requires to be developed into a planned undertaking', and often proceeds through processes that map out and make an itinerary for actions.[548] While Gratton and Sheringham refer to more specific forms of practice (often based on repeated rituals and inherently serialised), there is a broader dominance to project logics, well theorised in contemporary art discourse, which I consider further in Chapter 4.1. Put simply, projects, as evolving, often iterative forms of practice, can benefit from the spatial-temporal limitations of retreat-residencies as well as the opportunities presented for forms of research and fieldwork. Projects can pour into residencies as situations: whether to test an idea, develop research, or find new sites of investigation. Inhabiting a situation as a device works well with the ongoing, often multi-sited, multi-stage nature of project work. Given the self-directed and self-selected nature of many small-scale residencies, they are often part of a considered self-management of a practice, and sometimes a project. Small remote retreat-residencies can become convergences almost of what is most epic and adventurous and what is most pragmatic in contemporary art practice today, acting as small intensities valued both for their unpredictable effects as well as their usefulness for managing precarious work, and giving boundaries to the rather nebulous nature of ongoing project-work.

Eckerö Post- och tullhus gästbostad

Image 3.8

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[548] Johnnie Gratton and Michael Sheringham, *The Art of the Project: Projects and Experiments in Modern French Culture* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 17.

As the westernmost municipality of Åland, Eckerö is a gateway to the Åland archipelago from Sweden. Regular ferries from Grisslehamn bring over large numbers of Swedish tourists, some just for day trips. I am a resident at the grand Eckerö Post and Customs house. Built in 1828, during the time of the Russian Empire in Finland, the ostentatious and oversized posthouse was built as a symbol of Russian might, to be visible to the Swedes from the sea. I mark my days by the regular nearby ferry arrivals. While many tourists continue on to other parts of Åland, many stop in at the posthouse, now containing an art gallery, a postal museum, a café and shop, as well as the artist residency. Malin Åbery, one of the gallery guides who also helps out with the residency, notes how the staff play a welcoming role at the posthouse. Occupying the old postmasters house, I feel a sense of being stationed somewhere, occupying a certain role. At the same time, outside of the ferry arrivals and museum hours, the place is extremely quiet, and it feels strange to occupy the large yellow building alone. While the area is home to quite a number of summer houses, it is possible to walk along the nearby coastline and in the pristine surrounding forest and be completely alone. Days are marked by regular fika (coffee and cake breaks) with the museum staff, work in the large office/studio of the residency, and long hikes along the rounded red rocks or in the brightly green beech trees. The residency sits almost perfectly between the two residency models I've discussed so far – embedded in a heritage building and art museum, yet also the ideal remote retreat, close to nature on a small island in an archipelago. These two sides of the residency have been utilised by residents in different ways: some have taken advantage of the public face of the museum for performances and interaction, while others have preferred secluded retreat. Staff describe artists who have had their doors permanently open, others who have barely been seen.[549] As Åbery describes these two sides:

> it's a really good place both for being alone, having your own time, it's really calm, the nature is really close by, you can just take a few steps outside and you're in the middle

[549] Interviews with Malin Åberg at Eckerö Post and Customs house, 23 July 2017; and with Mervi Appel and Yvvonne Törneroos at Eckerö Post and Customs house, 25 July 2017.

> of the forest. You have the sea close by, so that, I think that can give people a lot of inspiration. But on the other hand, since we have a lot of tourists and visitors in this house, you can also get that kind of interaction. So no matter which side you're after you will find it.[550]

Unlike the more integrated programs of the museum residencies I've already discussed, such as the large array of public exhibitions by former residents at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, here the notion of residing plays a far subtler role in regard to cultural heritage. Many artists come and go with little public interaction, but there is a certain symbolism in having people live in this significant house, which was unoccupied for many years. Åbery explains that there is a great deal of public interest in this fact, and a lot of enthusiasm from people when she explains that the house is now lived in by artists.[551] With many large windows facing the courtyard, the residency is somewhat visible, and as Åbery says, 'just having lights on in the windows, that gives the visitors a different perspective on this house…it gives life to the house.'[552] Although it is rare for artists to stage final productions or shows here, many have hosted open studios, which gives public access to both the house and the resident's work-in-progress. Director of Eckerö Post and one of the residency coordinators, Mervi Appel, also notifies the local newspapers and radio about the residencies, who she says are usually very interested. As a resident, I do an interview for Ålandstidningen during my time, explaining some of my research on residencies. Appel says that this is an important way of opening up and sharing with people in Åland what the programme is doing.[553]

The residency was started in 2006 by the famous ceramic artist and former Posthouse Director Peter Windquist, who was also involved in the initial rejuvenation of the Posthouse.

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[550] Interview with Malin Åberg.
[551] Interview with Malin Åbery: 'Usually it's people asking "does anyone live in this house anymore?" and then we can say that yes during the summer half of the year, then yes people do live here, and then they're like "oh who?" and then we get to explain the artist in residency, and most of them are like "wow but that's great, that's really good." And some of them know what it is, but not all of them. So we're also spreading the word.'
[552] Ibid.
[553] Interview with Mervi Appel.

The idea for this and the residency, had their genesis in a successful symposium Windquist ran at the Posthouse in 1984, bringing thirteen established ceramic artists from Nordic countries to work together. Windquist's involvement in various different international exchanges, as well as his longtime working as a Swedish-speaking Ålander in Lapland, gave Windquist an enthusiasm for the cultural exchange aspect of residencies.[554] Today he remains emphatic about the possibilities: 'It's quite clear that Åland needs input', he says, 'and artists from abroad…can bring, and show, or learn or open new doors…they can bring something to stimulate our cultural life here.'[555] As a paradigmatic example, Windquist discusses the work of former resident and sculptor Alexander Reichstein, who came to Åland by plane, and ended up depicting it with an installation, showing the archipelago with one small single figure on every island, capturing his perspective from outside and above, work that took a much longer residency of a year to complete.

I was fortunate, while being the sole resident at Eckerö, to meet another former resident who was passing through on a holiday with her family and stopped in to visit the staff at the museum. Anna Luhtasela was a resident at Eckerö for one month, along with two visual artists, a writer producer, and was also joined by her family for two weeks. I was already somewhat familiar with Luhtasela's residency, which had been mentioned by staff at Eckerö, for it being uniquely productive and publicly accessible. The residency was used to finish developing and to stage a puppet theatre production for children, based on the story of the old coastal postal route from Sweden to Finland, in which the Eckerö Posthouse played an important role. Indeed, the idea that it was possible to reside in the old Posthouse, inspired the idea for the play. New details were found on-site, such as the mouse narrator, the story of the museum's ghost, and materials from nearby nature were incorporated into the design. During the first two weeks, with her children helping, Luhtasela built the set and puppets, and

[554] Interview with Peter Windquist at Eckerö Post and Customs house, 27 July 2017.
[555] Ibid.

they ran workshops for children, also leaving the doors to the residency open for the public to drop-in. The final two weeks allowed more time for private working ahead of the production. Although it sounded like a highly productive schedule, Luhtasela still viewed the residency as both a retreat and even at times a holiday. She enjoyed the access to ample space to work and time away from other obligations, saying: 'when you're away from home you have more time to just focus on the work and not take care of normal daily stuff.'[556] In some ways Luhtasela's project sits at the opposite end of many other residency projects, where artists often come to immerse in a new place and generate new responsive ideas; instead her workplan was designed from the outset to complete a new site-specific production. Interestingly though, the project was still designed with the contingencies of site in mind and was experienced by the artist as a form of retreat, a break from everyday routines, and a chance to focus on her own work. That the residency allows for families to possibly attend also makes it more accessible than most, in this case, allowing a family holiday to exist in tandem with a working residency.

The Åland Archipelago Guest Artist Residence, Kökar

Image 3.9

The next residency I visited during my stay in Åland is a programme called the Åland Archipelago Guest Artist Residence (AAGAR), that was started in 1997 by the artist Satu Kiljunen. It was close to a five-hour journey from Eckerö, including two bus trips, and a two-and-a-half-hour ferry ride to reach Kökar, the southernmost municipality of Åland, the furthest from the capital of Mariehamm, and one of six regions not to be connected to the main island by a road or bridge. It is a micro-community of around 230 permanent residents and consists of a mainland of around 64 km2 (comprised of three principal islands connected by roads – Karlby, Finnö and Hellsö) in a total area of 2165 km, of mostly open sea dotted

[556]Interview with Anna Luhtasela at Eckerö Post and Customs house, 25 July 2017.

with hundreds of treeless islands and skerries, such that it is an archipelago in itself.[557] The landscape differs from the mainland of Åland, where instead of woodlands and red granite, there is mostly small brushwood and grey gneiss. The main tourism website for Kökar emphasises its uniqueness in several areas: it is 'far out in the archipelago', but well connected by ferries from Åland and the Finnish archipelago; it is 'a unique miniature society', but with good local services; and it is geographically and historically unique, a history filled with 'seal hunters, monks, pirates and soldiers.'[558] As in much of the tourism literature, descriptions strike a balance between an identity as remote and adventurous, 'a magnificent seawashed and wind-swept island', and being a peaceful and convenient retreat, a 'little paradise for each visitor.'[559] Over the summer, a large influx of summer residents and tourists visit, around a quarter of whom come on their own pleasure crafts.[560] In a case study on Kökar for a European Union analysis on European islands (EUROISLANDS project, 2009-2010), Godfrey Baldacchino and Christian Pleijel summarise the island's major appeal and key to it sustaining a population, as

> peace and quiet, security, the art scene, all surrounded by an almost spiritual natural beauty and tranquility – while at the same strategically improving its links with mainland Åland and the rest of the world.[561]

While allowing for artists to work privately and autonomously, AAGAR both aligns and intersects with aspects of this broader identity.

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[557] Statistics Finland lists a population of 234 residents for October 2018. Statistics Finland, retrieved 25 November 2018, http://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/en/StatFin/StatFin__vrm__vamuu/statfin_vamuu_pxt_001.px/?rxid=6c2b3d86-5c9d-4be3-8fc3-6008576380c4; and National Land Survey of Finland, 1.1.2018, retrieved 25 November 2018, https://www.maanmittauslaitos.fi/sites/maanmittauslaitos.fi/files/attachments/2018/01/Suomen_pa_2018_kunta_maakunta.pdf.

[558] Kökar Tourism, accessed 25 July 2017, http://www2.kokar.ax/en-en/kokar/tourism.

[559] Tourist brochure produced by Kökar kommun, 2016, 2.

[560] Godfrey Baldacchino and Christian Pleijel, 'European Islands, Development and the Cohesion Policy: A Case Study of Kökar, Åland Islands', *Island Studies Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (2010): 103.

[561] Ibid., 107.

Over fish soup at a local restaurant, I discuss how AAGAR began with Satu Kiljunen, who has long had a home and studio on Kökar. Kiljunen is a famous Finnish painter and performance artist. Before the programme officially started Kiljunen had long been bringing her students to the island on fieldtrips, and she found it a stimulating place for working. The residency initially began in 1997, with an international artist exchange project between artists from Kökar, Ireland, and Catalonia, a project which resulted from meetings held during a Res Artis conference.[562] Then came an opportunity to occupy a house owned by the local community that had once been a municipality office and health centre but was being underutilised. The residency has the house for free but pays for its upkeep. As with Eckerö, the residency is thus closely tied to the repurposing and regeneration of a local heritage building, a trend which can be widely seen across the European phenomenon of small rural residency retreats.[563] Today, the house contains three apartments, two studios, and a sauna, and is idyllically located just a few metres from the sea, overlooking Hellsö bay.

The residency activities cut across other cultural activities on the island, in which Kiljunen has also played a formative part. AAGAR comes under the auspices of Kökarkultur – a wider cultural association whose board, of which Kiljunen is the chairperson, selects the residents, and which also organises its own projects, cultural events, discussions, and courses.[564] Another sub-division of Kökarkultur is Kökarform, which aims to develop the production of local handicrafts, linking its activities to raising the artistic profile of Kökar, and which cooperates with the Kökar Museum, a folk museum whose collection includes historic furniture, objects, and textiles, and which has a smith's cottage and a ceramics studio, which artist residents have been able to access. Kiljunen takes me to the museum, where some of the Kökarform products are available and which are rooted in local materials and traditions.

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[562] Meetings took place during the 1997 Res Artis meeting, Cassis, France.
[563] For a discussion on this see Maria Rita Pinto et al., 'Artists Residencies, Challenges and Opportunities for Communities'.
[564] See Kökar Kultur, 'Kökar Kultur', accessed 24 June 2021, https://kokarkultur.wordpress.com/kokarkultur-rf/.

Kiljunen also spoke about plans to further integrate the use of local materials, such as wool and clay, and local cultural production, with the residency activities. After my visit, artist residents Chikako Sato from Japan, and Anne Räisänen taught courses there using local wool. Although cross-overs are not usually so direct, AAGAR can be seen as part of an intertwined and growing cultural ecology on the island, that combines local, regional, and international aspects, and which is actively involved with regeneration efforts closely tied to the histories and cultural and artistic traditions of the island.

Another site we visit during our interview is the ruin of a medieval Franciscan monastery, which has made Kökar a place of religious and spiritual pilgrimages. Baldacchino and Pleijel have even written that there are possible synergies to be explored based on ideas of religious and artistic retreat. They write:

> Kökar could further develop itself as a site for 'pilgrimages' (today, we call them retreats, or team building exercises) by company managers and other groups, sampling local wholesome produce, and indulging in art therapy or art creativity exercises. This is a tourism niche which can appeal to relatively more affluent visitors.[565]

Baldacchino and Pleijel also write about the 'goodness of fit', in terms of attracting niche tourism, between the artist residency and the 'beauty, tranquillity and security of the place.'[566] While the establishment of something like commercial artistic retreats has yet to happen, these comments show ways in which the artist residency might be considered a part of local rural place-making (processes that usually imply government-led processes of strengthening place identity, but can also be community driven), in this case, adding to a sense of the island as a place with an artistic scene and well established cultures of retreat. This is different from how contemporary art is usually seen to overlap with local development and place-based identity, where the focus usually lies on direct community engagement, public programming, or public

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[565] Baldacchino and Pleijel, 'European Islands', 105.
[566] Ibid., 104.

commissions.[567] While some artists have worked with local people, Satu notes that the small community would become exhausted if they were always being approached by residents: 'We don't sell our local people for the residents', she emphatically states.[568] That said, some very positive public engagements have taken place. As Satu notes, when forty people showed up for one artist-resident's performance, this constituted a huge proportion of the island's population.

Another place we visit during a drive across the island is the site for one such performance – the island's only wind-turbine, which sits atop a rocky hill, and is affectionately called Mika by locals. When sound artist Jeff Talman visited Kökar as a resident in 2005, he had planned simply to 'develop concepts for new work, to make new friends, and to explore the islands, the local culture, and terrain.'[569] Instead he was unexpectedly offered what he called a dream scenario – to ride across the island and pick any site he wanted for a sound installation for the annual Midsummer Celebration.[570] He ended up creating a four-hour long event and sound installation, *Hearing Curved Space*, that utilised the sound of the turbine blades travelling across the curve of the hill, replayed through six loudspeakers inside six granite cairns which locals helped Talman to build. The event was extremely well received and became formative to Talman's developing approach to performative installation.[571]

Kiljunen notes that for some artists coming to Kökar, especially from cities, it can be quite a culture shock, particularly in the winter, when there is extreme cold and darkness.[572] On the other hand, as with Eckerö, the majority of artists have come from Nordic countries. I also ask if applicants tend towards certain kinds of practices, such as environmental ones. Kiljunen replies that she thinks 'there are certain kinds of artists who really need to have some

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[567] For example see Kester, *The One and the Many*; and Kwon, *One Place After Another*.
[568] Interview with Satu Kiljunen, various locations on Kökar, 18 July 2017.
[569] Jeff Talman, 'Hearing Curved Space', *Environmental Sound Artists: In Their Own Words*, ed. Frederick Bianchi and V.J Manzo (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 61.
[570] Ibid.
[571] Ibid., 67.
[572] Interview with Satu Kiljunen.

kind of remote places and who have to work with basic elements in nature.'[573] She also says that the residency receives many applications that come from artists who have worked in similar places, such as other remote islands, or Nordic environments.[574] For example, Regine Neumann, a 2017 resident at AAGAR, worked on environmental installations, connecting the residency on Kökar to another one-month stay at The Reardon House Artist retreat, in Fogo Island, a project titled 'In between islands.'[575] Milla Koivisto, a resident in 2014 and 2015, developed a multidisciplinary narrative project, Kaiku, which takes place on an island in the Baltic Sea, through time spent living on three small islands: Kökar, Bengtskär, and Kemiönsaari.[576]

Notably, following a residency by the artist John MacLeod from the Hebrides, Scotland, an exchange project took place where artists from Kökar and Åland exhibited in the Hebrides, and vice versa. An exhibition at An Lanntair, Scotland in 2008, called 'Insiders in the Landscape', featured four Finnish artists, including former AAGAR resident Santeri Tuori. Tuori's status as a Kökar 'insider' might be based on his multiple visits to the residency and the island, working on a series, *Metsä Forest*, in which he meticulously documented the same trees at different times of the year. In the catalogue for Tuori's 2009 show *Metsä Forest* at the Espoo Museum of Modern Art (EMMA), Jan-Erik Lundström writes:

> It is, of course, not the forest that we see in the *Forest* works of Tuori. We are not brought to the forest by *Forest*. Surely, the artist has been there. Innumerous times over a period of several years. Taking meticulous and methodical notes in order to be able to return to the same place, the same space, the same view. But the point of the work is not to bring us there.[577]

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[573] Ibid.
[574] Ibid.
[575] See Regine Neumann's artist website, 'In between islands', accessed 29 June 2021, https://reginejapan2016.wordpress.com/in-between-islands/.
[576] See Nicole Maiterth, 'milla koivisto and kaiku', 12 February, *Nordic Style Mag*, accessed 28 June 2021, https://www.nordicstylemag.com/blog/2016/02/milla-koivisto-and-kaiku.
[577] Jan-Erik Lundström, 'Captivating time: The art of Santeri Tuori', in Santeri Tuori et al., *Santeri Tuori: metsä = forest* (Espoo: EMMA - Espoo Museum of Modern Art, 2009), chapter excerpted on Santeri Tuori artist website, accessed 28 June 2021, http://santerituori.com/?page_id=274.

Tuori's work seems to hinge on exacting place-based specificity, in his repeated use of the same precise location, and reflect upon broader spatio-temporal themes (for example, the compression of seasons into a single image in *Forest 9*), without revealing content that might identify Kökar as a specific site of production. In a project description for the video installation *Forest Reddish* (2009), images are described tantalizingly as having been made 'on a remote island between Finland and Sweden.'[578] Through this dedicated process Tuori has become a consummate Kökar 'insider', but like many of the projects that have been facilitated through AAGAR, his work is not recognizably indexed to a specific place. Like many artists, though, he has been drawn there by the particular environment, and it has become a site for gathering materials. Instead of a list of international flâneurs in search of alterity, AAGAR's residents reflect a spectrum of proximities, often blurring the line between insiders and outsiders. And this development has flowed from the decision of one artist, Kiljunen, to make the island her home, due to the creative inspiration she found there, a not uncommon story when it comes to micro-residencies (which are specifically defined as artist-run).

At the residency house, I meet three current residents who have just arrived and are undertaking a short week-long stay in order to collaboratively work on developing and rehearsing a script for a performance planned for the following year that will take place on an island in the Finnish archipelago and incorporate the audience sailing to a location where the performance would continue outdoors. As I was planning to come back through Kökar, to visit the residency on Källskär, and they were also interested in seeing the island and potentially even applying for a residency there, we talked more about their residency together on a tourist boat over to the island when I return a few days later. Veera Alaverronen, the director and scriptwriter, and Rikka Kosola and Satu Hakamäki (both scriptwriters and performers) had then been in residence for five days. Part of the appeal of the residency was

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[578] Santeri Tuori artist website, project description for *Forest (Reddish)* (2009), accessed 28 June 2021, http://santerituori.com/?page_id=288.

to utilise the landscapes of Kökar as sites to develop and rehearse the performance, as Veera describes it: 'we need the sea and the rocks.'[579] Though not the final location, the island itself provided a kind of testing ground, a way to work through material and conceptual concerns. Riikka spoke about how it was good to be working right away with the landscape. As a dancer working with a new piece of equipment there were practical and material contingencies with performing on the rocks. As well as working through more practical and site-based considerations, Veera says that the landscape also shapes the material for the script. A part of this process was to think through future contingencies affecting both performers and audience, such as weather conditions. Though Kökar had so far provided sun, Satu describes the potential to work with the rain: 'I'm thinking that the nature and the weather is also kind of one performer or one part of the performance.'[580] Ability to access the indoor space to work for this residency was conceived more as a backup. This use echoes something that can be characterised as a broader feature of remote retreat-residencies: because they are not always the site for the final output, or the most furnished with what might be considered traditional production facilities (especially in smaller programmes), their broader contexts can suggest a variety of useful natural sites, locations, geographies (such as rocks, sea, weather, and regional proximity). And as they tell me about the local area and the archipelago, as we ride the ferry, I am reminded that these small residencies are not always about outsiders experiencing remoteness and difference, but can provide much needed regional infrastructure as well: in this case, supporting a group of regionally based artists to develop work specific to the area and attentive to the environmental issues of the region.

Gästbostaden/Artist in Residence på Källskär, Kökar (Ålandskulturdelegation)

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[579] Interview with Veera Alaverronen, Rikka Kosola, and Satu Hakamäki, ferry from Kökar to Källskär, 20 July 2017.
[580] Ibid.

Image 3.10

Källskär was the residency that first incited my interest in studying the programmes in Åland. I met Mervi Appel, who works on both Ålandskulturdelegation residencies, at the Residencies Reflected symposium on the island of Suomenlinna, Finland, where I was introduced due to my interest in retreats. She told me about the unique program on Källskär where it was possible for artists to stay alone on a tiny remote island, and it seemed exemplary of the small and remote retreat currently rising to the fore in the residency field. Källskär, 'a small, mythical island, far out at sea', is less than one square mile in area, and one of the most popular tourist excursions from Kökar, due to a unique ice age rock formation called the Källskärskannan, as well as the prominent presence of the house and gardens of the Swedish Lord Göran Åkerhielm, designed by famous Finnish architect Reima Pietilä.[581] A small wooden cottage on the southern side of the island has been a residency for artists since 1990 where artists can stay between one and two weeks between May and September. The 30 square metre cottage has no electricity, and the programme description forewarns: 'here one lives by the motto simplicity.'[582] Residents are supported by the island's caretaker but are expected to be fairly self-sufficient. While it is possible to enjoy a great deal of solitude on the island, there are still steady flows of tourists over the summer, indeed my trip to Källskär to meet with the current residents, was on one of the daily tours.

Particularly associated with the present-day residency is the unique story of Åkerhielm's house project, and his struggle to create his own personal ideal of retreat on the remote island. The Swedish Baron first visited the island on a Swedish sailing boat in 1958, leading to an ambitious project to build a summer house there that would lead to him becoming known, unofficially, as the 'Count of Källskär.' The historical narrative is eminently

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[581] Källskär Tourism.

[582] Ålands kulturdelegation, Källskärs gästbostad, accessed 28 June 2021, https://www.kultur.ax/exempelamne-1/exempel-undersida-1/kallskars-gastbostad.

charismatic, the story of an eccentric Count, who had to overcome numerous difficulties to realise his aesthetic vision, including the fact that the stone dock had to be re-built every summer due to the storms and ice floes. Kjell Anderson writes how the Count refused to use concrete, adamant that, 'No artificial materials shall be allowed on Källskär.'[583] The house designed by Reima Pietilä is in the form of a traditional Finnish log cabin but with Classical touches and a Mediterranean garden. Anderson describes it as the combination of a 'Nordic longhouse and a Greek temple.'[584] Tove Jansson, who visited the island twice, was commissioned to do a painting for the house. Eventually, Åkerhielm donated the house and grounds to the Province of Åland in 1984. 'Källskär and its buildings and statues were his work of art'", Anderson says, 'And when an artist is finished with a work, he leaves it and moves on.'[585] This charismatic cultural history has provided the bedrock for the identity of the contemporary residency.

As with the Eckerö residency, also managed by the Ålandskulturdelegation, there are no production requirements, and there is little in the way of online documentation of the residency projects. But its significance to the cultural life of Åland was cemented in a 2008 exhibition held at the Ålands Konstmuseum called 'Källskär', which explored the artistic legacies of the island and featured work by previous residents. A number of essays and artist interviews in the catalogue draw a clear through-line between the history of the island, the project of Count Åkerhielm, and a new era of artists' residencies. While the residency does not directly inhabit the Count's house (unless one considers, as some do, the island as his *Gesamtkunstwerk*), there is a sense that the residency continues his legacy of seeking retreat, inspiration, and inviting creative collaboration on Källskär. From the introduction to the Källskär catalogue, the island is described as 'a meeting place for artist's and friends' during

[583] Kjell Anderson, 'The Mysterious Island', *Källskär*, eds. Susanne Procopé Ilmonen, Heidi Sjöblom, Gunilla G Nordlund (Mariehamn: Ålands landskapsregering; Museibyrån: Ålands konstmuseum, 2008), 26.
[584] Ibid., 36.
[585] Ibid., 41.

the Count's time, and today a place where 'artists and scholars have been able to use the island as a retreat.'[586] And as Jan-Erik Berglund and Heidi Sjöblom write about the residency, 'The spirit of Baron Göran Åkerhielm, the 'Count of Källskär', is everywhere. His artwork lives on.'[587] This is a slightly different approach to cultural heritage than was discussed in regard to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Chapter 2, where many residency projects have directly addressed the founders' history. In regard to these artworks, I suggested that residents, and their processes of residing and responding, were often more a form of ephemeral 'memory-work' than cogent historical re-interpretation. While there is less direct focus and desire on re-enlivening the Count's legacy through responsive projects, here, it appears to be the subtle act of dwelling that re-invigorates the Count's legacy, the continued presence of artists that follow his lead in seeking an inspirational and isolated place of retreat. As in the residency field more broadly, a sense of artistic retreat finds productive alignment with proximate historical practices. The projects in the Källskär exhibition rarely directly utilise this history, but nearly all of the artists featured in the catalogue discussed its effect on the island. For writer Pirkko Lindberg, the 'Count's bizarre personality was everywhere.'[588] And sculptor Pekka Jylhä was drawn to the programme by the Count's story, of building 'his own little world on a remote island in the outer archipelago.'[589]

The residencies might present a kind of symbolic and ongoing re-performance of the Count's sovereign dominion over the island, creating their own private worlds of retreat against harsh conditions. Berglund and Sjöholm write how 'The island conjures up powerful experiences and awakens strong feelings.'[590] The stories they tell of the various residencies

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[586] Susanne Procopé Ilmonen and Jan-Ole Lönnblad, 'Källskär – a tribute tot he exchange between Nature and Man', in *Källskär*, 7.
[587] Jan-Erik Berglund and Heido Sjöblom, 'Källskär Awakens Strong Feelings', (artist-in-residence interviews), in *Källskär*, 61. In *Källskär*, edited by Susanne Procopé Ilmonen, Heidi Sjöblom, and Gunilla G Nordlund, 7. Mariehamn: Ålands landskapsregering; Museibyrån: Ålands konstmuseum, 2008.
[588] Ibid., 67.
[589] Ibid., 72.
[590] Ibid., 61.

sometimes read as minor epics. There is the 'dramatic stay' of the first resident Anders Wallin, in 1990, who found the weather on Källskär to be 'in one of its foulest moods', the island covered in poisonous vipers, and an ill-advised trip back to Stockholm to retrieve the family boat during a violent storm meant his wife and three small children were left alone on the island, without a phone or electricity.[591] As Norwegian actor and playwright Anders Berndtsson describes the island, 'You cannot be too comfortable with yourself to stay there.'[592] Berglund and Sjöholm list the different affects and moods described by residents as ''demonic, spooky, brutally pagan, inspiring and even erotic.'[593] A more contemporary take on the experience, in line with current cultures of retreat, comes in Gisela Linde's personal essay, called 'Källskär - Simplicity and Luxury.'[594] For Linde, a lifestyle writer, the luxury of the residency experience rests in the simplicity and solitude it allows for, recalling themes from earlier in this chapter, which emphasise it as an escape from hectic everyday life. For Linde, it is a reprieve from 'an everyday net of accessibility and efficiency and being connected up', such that the 'uncomfortable and the immediate' become valued.[595] There is something quite poetic about the small wooden cabin of the residency in proximity to the Count's more decadent and eccentric monument. The residency combines registers of the simple and ascetic, with the sublime, adventurous, and mythic. That is something I experience a small part of, running across the rocks and sheltering from the pouring rain in the Count's dark wood cabin, to be re-joined by the large and noisy tour group. The island is not so remote and inaccessible as it once was, in the Count's time, but I can imagine how it might feel so, alone, at night, with the violent winds.

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[591] Ibid., 63.
[592] Ibid., 67.
[593] Ibid., 61.
[594] Ibid., 75.
[595] Ibid., 77.

The two current residents at Källskär use similarly poetic language as the other former residents to describe their unique experiences on the island. Tuomo Rainer speaks about the 'dramaturgy of the weather', and Anni Leppälä, the humming sound of the wind from the sea.[596] The timescales are different from their usual life in Helsinki, they say, where they live in the centre of the city. Although they have only been at the residency for two days, Anni and Tuomo are rare amongst residents in that they have visited once before. Last-time Tuomo was the official resident, while this time it was Anni that applied. In their memories the distances between places on the island seemed much greater than they do now, and they have noticed how time has seemed to slow. Rainer even made work back then that addressed experiences of time, observing the changes in light over the geometric rocks, trying to make an average image to reflect a single day. In their two days on Källskär this time, they have so far been noticing the nesting swallows, who have now left, another timescale they say 'you are usually not comparing your own life to.'[597]

While Tuomo followed a stricter work plan last time, making predominantly video work, this time he is here on the island in search of new influences. Anni says that she works intuitively, without too much of a plan. As with last time, she intends to take photographs, and is particularly interested in certain materials, such as wood and stone on the island. She notes how unique the colour of the pink granite is here, a kind of skin-tone, something you don't see elsewhere in Finland. Her photographic practice tends to work on subtle connections across images, without closing them off into separate series. She has worked in many locations (including at other residencies such as at Aomori Contemporary Art Center (ACAC), Japan) but there is often nothing overtly specific to these places revealed in the images, which are connected more by certain affective atmospheres. It can even take years for

[596] Interview with Tuomo Rainer and Anni Leppälä at the Artist in Residence guesthouse on Källskär, Kökar, on 20 July 2017.
[597] Interview with Tuomo Rainer and Anni Leppälä.

an image to appear in her work, and she notes that particular times and places can sometimes be untraceable in her finished pieces. Both Tuomo and Anni describe the residency in terms of gathering new materials, something like fieldwork that precedes making final work. Unlike what is usually understood by the idea of 'fieldwork', traces of the field may be obscured and buried within their final work. Tuomo speaks about how it becomes a different kind of surrounding or situation to gather all kinds of new influences and experiences, but then 'you need that time at home, in your studio, where you put all this together. It's difficult to jump from [one] residency to another, at least from my point of view, and to produce work, you need both periods somehow.'[598] Anni calls it a 'starting point to be at the residency, that you can actually gather new thoughts.'[599] I am reminded of Pekka Jylhä's comment that he has reverted to influences from Källskär in several works made years later.[600] Unlike the timescales of other kinds of site-specific working, or even of other kinds of artistic fieldwork, the lack of production requirement means the traces, impressions, and influences of Källskär can be realised a long-time after the residency, even though residents tend to speak of the experience as formative and significant.

Sitting in this small wooden cabin, discussing art practice, I also begin to think how these tiny retreat residencies emerge and recede as institutions of art – this is certainly a strange and unexpected place to encounter two contemporary artists from Helsinki. Looking for an archetypal retreat residency, something like the Källskär residency looms as potentially exemplary of the way a charismatic place and cultural legacy can be leveraged as part of a contemporary programme and re-enlivened through artistic presence. And yet, as a micro-residency – two weeks, one or two artists, minimal direct interference – it is also at one end of the spectrum of residencies that overlaps with the holiday cabin or a self-organised stay

[598] Ibid.
[599] Ibid.
[600] Berglund and Sjöblom, 'Källskär Awakens Strong Feelings', I72.

somewhere. The narrative of the residency retreat scales up in its relevance to contemporary art precisely because of this nearness to the small and obscure, towards constructing forms of authenticating 'fieldwork', and accessing forms of 'transformative alterity' (this for Hal Foster is defined in relation to the 'cultural other', but is arguably also to be found in tropes of the exotic, remote, or peripheral).[601] Such programmes dissolve into micro-situations that artists largely self-manage, but they also rally into structures and places with performative weight. Although many of the artist residents have come from Nordic countries, none of them fail to mention how unique an experience it is to dwell on this small island. Mervi and Yvonne note how word of mouth about Källskär has meant the residencies are well known in Finland, as former residents tend to tell everyone they meet about it.[602] For Åland creatives, it is even something of a rite of passage – knowing they can only apply once, they save the opportunity. In this way, the residency even becomes a kind of piece of shared cultural heritage. Symbolically, as projected in the Källskär exhibition catalogue, these residencies have a cultural meaning far beyond being merely an interesting place for artists to retreat to. Even the tour guide points to the residency as we are leaving the island. The islands' islands' island – if one thinks about how it is framed by the Count's estate, itself framed by the island – a lingering piece of creative dominion.

Conclusion: Subtle Place-Based Identities in the Residency Retreat

The stories of so many diverse and idiosyncratic retreat-residency programmes, as well as the artists who pass through them, frequently share some similar patterns. Artists or cultural workers, who have had experience in the residency world, find a productive use for a building or rooms of a building for artists to temporarily reside in. Sometimes, even, access to the residence seeds the idea of the programme, and they can fluctuate on the threshold between

[601] Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', 173.
[602] Interview with Mervi Appel and Yvvonne Törneroos.

using contemporary art (and artists) as a means to safeguard forms of public access to locally significant or interesting buildings, and a semi-privatised use as a residence. Wider cultures and practices of retreat are ambient, reflected upon, and can be narrativised in regard to the local area: historical and contemporary travellers, often other artists and creatives, flow in and out of these places, similarly seeking repose, reflection, and creative inspiration. Indeed, it is highly common for these retreat-residencies to be in locations where touristic forms of retreat are commonplace. Sometimes artists have visited such a place in search of their own retreat, and ended up initiating their own residency programme. Many concerns intersect: contemporary art norms, the heritage boom, rural gentrification and regeneration, artist movement to rural areas, and interest in sustaining local arts ecosystems. Persistent and re-vitalised ideas of artistic autonomy, withdrawal, slowness, and creativity, thread through the desires, fantasies, performances, and subject positions of programme workers, residents, and (while less explored here) occasional audiences encountering these programmes. Architectures, local sites, and geographies are constructed to align with ideas of temporal-spatial withdrawal and artistic autonomy.

What is at once overtly contemporary about residency-retreats, as short-term, intensive, working situations 'elsewhere', is also now being positioned as remedy to the time-puzzle of contemporary life and work. Residency-retreats often attempt to provide temporary pathways out of such conditions, but they also keep up with them – inextricably bound up with the labour patterns that necessitate them. Perhaps then, to 'use' a retreat is to sink into its offer of temporary intensity and support after all, to embrace the 'micro-situation' as Paula Roush has called it, and tether work to its charismatic promise of temporal-spatial withdrawal to a new and idyllic place. With the rise of small-scale rural and remote retreats, being utilised by artists for all kinds of different ends, the residency-as-retreat is no longer only the colony or patron model of large estates hosting well-known artists for fairly long periods of withdrawal, but a vast infrastructure of small situations wherein artists largely carve out and

self-manage periods away for the purpose of developing work or undertaking artistic fieldwork. As in wider contemporary cultures of retreat, these small 'bounded' situations are a kind of disciplining device for artists to find repose, and to progress small parts of expansive projects through the structure of a short remote residency. Retreat is no longer the grand 'gift of time' of a seasonal colony, but almost a set of small practices that position themselves against the tide of hectic overwork, and are tethered to these places constructed as small utopic pockets of reprieve, repose, inspiration, adventure and leisure.

4 Residency Work

Throughout this project, I have often searched for residencies or residency projects that might suffice the most minimal definition of a residency. My go-to anecdote has been that someone once asked me about a residency that I didn't know I had done, where a part of an art project that involved a half-day of activity at a museum (writers interviewing artists) was later publicised as a residency. The absurdity of this situation spoke to the possible expediency of the residency label as a way to designate just about any activity as a recognisable and promotable relationship between participants and a place. Most particularly, it was a way of giving something that might usually be a more or less private and unquantifiable period of labour a kind of framework in order to publicise it. In their statement on the definition of residencies, Res Artis acknowledges 'that the field of Arts Residencies is rapidly expanding and evolving in today's fast-paced global and innovation age'.[603] Their list of thirteen core values includes: 'Organised and sufficient time, space and resources', as well as 'Based on clear mutual responsibility, experimentation, exchange and dialogue.'[604] While emphasising the need for support to be offered, these values are accommodating of the varying scales and diversity of models amongst contemporary residencies. Though seemingly far from the longer-term patronage and support provided by brick-and-mortar residential art centres, many small and experimental programmes are nevertheless faithful to some central tenets of residencies, constituting arrangements that set out temporal and spatial boundaries around a period of artistic development while negotiating degrees of public exposure and participation. Evacuated of the more stabilising and enticing material conditions that might be provided by larger programmes, the appeal of these residencies is often closely related to their ability to

[603] Res Artis, 'Definition of Artist Residencies'.
[604] Ibid.

stimulate, structure, and manage small pockets of time, while also providing some visibility over artistic processes or entailing inclusion in a curatorial project. However, this situation raises a variety of dilemmas in how we might analyse residencies, particularly in regard to their imbrication within precarious arts ecosystems. Should any mutually understood and negotiated period of artistic development be promotable as a residency? What are the stakes and scenes of these understandings and negotiations?

In Chapter Two, I considered the way residencies negotiate, perform, and represent ideas of artistic retreat and withdrawal *away* from the time-pressures of everyday work and life. This chapter considers programmes that might be considered at the other end of the residency scale, as they more directly grapple with and interface with struggles to manage work and remain productive under contemporary conditions, often leveraging the cultural value of being performatively situated as a minimal guarantor of 'productive' labour. While I have thus far considered ways that residencies have constructed their identities within widespread understandings of contemporary conditions for artistic work as time-pressured and accelerated (a 'problem' which retreat-residencies often rhetorically purport to solve through modes of slowness and withdrawal), this chapter delves further into the literature on contemporary artistic labour and considers the sometimes parodic, autocritical, and expedient ways that particular experimental residency programmes have sought to grapple with, tackle, or elucidate problems of artists managing their time. Instead of the more separatist and escapist politics of retreat-residencies as opportunities for renewal and reflection, here the residencies examined often cast the artist in scenes and situations that reveal the precarious nature of their working lives: from inhabiting a time of hiatus forced by the unstable and insecure nature of being a practicing artist; to being potentially exposed 24/7 in a residency-as-exhibition; to balancing a temporary arts job with a site-specific research project. If, as Annette Kamp writes, contemporary work involves significant labour dedicated to the 'time puzzle of resolving *time conflicts*', this chapter attempts to understand residencies as offering up

a variety of temporal and spatial strategies; variously critical, strange, ludic, and self-defeating, to make time for artistic development.[605]

Armed with a laptop on a Sunday morning, writer Alex Baumhardt walked for ten minutes to one of Iceland's N1 gas stations to set up and work, an experience she wrote about as a 'failed attempt at an artist residency in Iceland.'[606] The perfect image of an optimistic contemporary creative freelancer who can work from anywhere, the situation nevertheless presented a number of challenges and disappointments for Baumhardt, who ended up at a self-designated 'workstation' on a bar stool by the automatic doors, still wearing a coat, and without Wi-Fi or power outlets.[607] Baumhardt concludes the tale:

> I packed my things and left with the inevitable products of a gas station artist residency: the narrative material for this article, a bag of Cheese Doodles, and a can of soda.[608]

Without ever having made an application, Baumhardt participated in the N1 Residency programme devised by Kat Danger Sawyer and Paul Soulellis, where residents are invited to make use of the facilities at N1 gas stations which can be found predominantly along Iceland's main highway. Danger Swayer and Soulellis suggest that residents could simply use the sites to 'undertake administration of their practice', but also that 'projects demonstrating systematic inquiry and innovation are also encouraged.'[609] Subverting the expectation that relationships to site should be developed through longer-term embedded stays, Danger Sawyer and Soulellis write that the project 'tosses the idea of a 1 month or 2 month stay required by other remote residences of the region'.[610] Rather, residents 'stay only in intervals and continue

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[605] Annette Kamp, 'New Concepts of Work and Time', in *Living Labor*, eds. Milena Hoegsberg and Cora Fisher (New York: Sternberg Press, 2013), 140.
[606] Alex Baumhardt, 'My failed attempt at an artist residency in Iceland', November 14 2013, *Matador Network*, accessed 2 November 2021, https://matadornetwork.com/notebook/my-failed-attempt-at-an-artist-residency-in-iceland/.
[607] Ibid.
[608] Ibid.
[609] Summer We Go Public, 'N1 Residency', accessed 28 June 2021, https://summeratnes.wordpress.com/2013/09/13/n1-residency/.
[610] Ibid.

returning to work with the N1 Residency Program at will.'[611] Against more idyllic varieties of retreat, such as the NES artist residency in the small town of Skagaströnd, Iceland, out of which the project grew when Danger Sawyer and Soulellis were residents there, the N1 residency reflects upon the flexible, mobile, non-routine aspects of precarious work on the move. It also parodies the investments of labour and time normative in retreat-residencies, both the usual obligation for artists to stay primarily on-site for a defined period, and the labour of applications and evaluating them (inquiring N1 residents are asked to 'evaluate their practice and whether it makes a contribution to the quality output of the Program').[612]

The residency acts as a temporary mooring within the frustration and fatigue of individuated freelance work from anywhere, a kind of self-management device, as well as a loose framework for a micro-project or process (Baumhardt ends up with a story after all). The programme was originally devised to provide for artists travelling between two remote residencies, NES and Textílsetur Íslands, and situates itself at an extreme end of artists adapting to work in new places – accepting and optimising whatever conditions are provided – in a way that also reflects on the wider complexities of work and mobility within (and between) residencies. Instead of an inversion of the residency-retreat, one might think of the N1 residency as allowing for compressed slices of time to be taken out of the working norms elicited by larger residencies, which also set artists off on journeys to adapt to new working conditions and to find sites of interest within the limits and curatorial framework of the situation being offered.

Artists' experimentation with the institutional form of artist-residencies has been formative to the early development of residencies since the 1960s, from Barbara Steveni and John Latham's Artist Placement Group (APG) (founded in 1966), to David Harding as the Glasgow town artist (1968-1978), and Mierle Laderman Ukeles' unsalaried residency at the

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[611] Ibid.
[612] Ibid.

New York City Department of Sanitation since 1977. Such residencies have formed a part of a history of artist-residencies as embedded practices, usually understood within paradigms of the social role of the artist and their intervention into non-art and often civic contexts.[613] Intertwined with such legacies, are a wide diversity of parodic, self-appointed, artist or curator led residencies that experiment with the residency form, sometimes by being embedded in unusual or unlikely situations such as the N1 residency.[614] As with earlier embedded placement-type residencies, these projects have often seen artists utilise the residency as a form through which to experiment with social forms and non-art contexts.

This chapter, rather than attempting to historicise the trajectories of the residency as an experimental artistic or curatorial project, turns specifically to programmes that particularly elucidate contemporary concerns around the nature of artistic labour. While often overlapping with the idea of embedded residencies, particularly through residents performatively adopting particular roles designated by the residency situation, these programmes were selected as they are in some senses directed to the scene of artistic labour as a balancing act between different forms of work and identity-positions. Here, the focus is less on how such programmes enable artistic engagements with externalised sites of interest (such as a particular community, location, or research area), but on how these programmes also turn to the scene of artistic labour. The N1 Residency, for example, while ostensibly an opportunity for artists to embed at a non-art location (a gas station) it ultimately becomes more of a meta-commentary on the nature of artistic work on-the-go. It is less of a social intervention, as in many placement-type residencies, where the artist's attention is directed outwards, but instead turns to the artist's working situation – here trying to carry on their own practice in far from ideal circumstances.

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[613] For a discussion of embedded / placement type residencies and references, see Chapter 1.3: Scope of the Thesis.

[614] For discussions of more experimental or DIY residency projects see Lisa Niedermeyer, 'DIY residencies: a career in the arts on your own terms', 1 April 2014, *The Guardian*, accessed 5 August 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2014/apr/01/diy-residencies-career-arts-us; and Lesser, '11 of the World's Most Unusual Artist Residencies'.

Artistic Labour: Post-Fordist Precariat

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, a large discourse positioning the artist as a post-Fordist labourer has emerged over the last two decades, focusing on the artist-subject as a 'model labourer' under capitalism, an argument which frequently cites sociologists Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello's notion that an artistic critique, encapsulating ideals of individualism, detachment, and mobility, became thoroughly incorporated into the ideology of capitalism, as evidenced in their study of management discourse from the 1990s that routinely encouraged worker autonomy, flexibility, and self-management.[615] Following post-operaist conceptualisations of immaterial labour, the contemporary artist today is very often depicted as emblematic of the precarious creative post-Fordist labourer: adaptable, innovative, and entrepreneurial. As Pascal Gielen argues, artists today readily align with an economy focused on 'qualities such as communication skills, eloquence, creativity and authenticity, as well as to think in terms of projects, with temporary contracts or none at all, flexible working hours and mental mobility.'[616]

There has also been a large uptake of this theory in contemporary art discourses, leading to publications, exhibitions, and forms of activism.[617] As artists' careers are very often hybrid (comprised of different kinds of work and entailing professional competencies in different areas), and as artists are today employed across a wide range of social and cultural projects in the expanding 'cultural economy', artistic labour is not only at the vanguard of

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[615] Boltanski and Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*.

[616] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude*, 2.

[617] Over the last two decades there has been a significant range of production in the contemporary art world in regard to artistic labour, post-Fordism and neoliberalism, including art specific publications such as *Are You Working Too Much?*; and *Work, Work, Work: A Reader on Art and Labour*, eds. Cecilia Widenheim, Lisa Rosendahl, Michele Masucci, Annika Enqvist and Jonatan Habib Engqvist (Berlin and Stockholm: Sternberg Press and IASPIS, 2012). Also for a discussion on a range of artistic and curatorial projects related to art and labour see Anderson 'Retreating in/from Art Institutions', 61.

precarious creative labour, but very often a patchwork of different forms of this work.[618] As discussed in Chapter Two, the notion of the residency as a retreat is often positioned as an opportunity for artists to focus on their primary artistic practice in a context that doesn't directly instrumentalise this labour (or only minimally so). Yet as novel situations of temporary work, they still promote some of the key characteristics of post-Fordist working, encouraging flexible, responsive, social, affective, and mobile working modes. Moreover, residencies might be seen as a valuable arena for professional performance, as artists are made visible at work, often embodying many of the characteristics valorised in the current system. What better display of an artist's flexibility, creativity, and authenticity than to see them jettisoned into an entirely new situation, where they must adapt their own practice to a new place and set of working conditions, and then, generally speaking, communicate this experience for an outside audience?

A potential of residencies is that they might frame, account for, or make visible, forms of artistic labour that are immaterial, relatively invisible, and largely unwaged. This might include the social time of networking, ongoing self-management and administration, and what Annette Kamp describes as the 'timeless time' of the core activities of an intellectual or creative profession, such as thinking, researching, and developing new projects.[619] In their tendency to make parts of residencies publicly visible, such as through blogs or open studios, residencies can become, as Windhager and Mazza write, 'a kind of "shop window" of artistic labour.'[620] In general, it is not only material production processes that are made visible; instead, works-in-progress, the experience of residing, and the nature of the residency are

[618] Yúdice uses the term 'cultural economy' (also a synonym for the 'creative economy') to denote the way neoliberal governments have further expanded the social, political, and economic uses of art and culture. See Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture*, 16.
[619] Kamp, 'New Concepts of Work and Time', 136.
[620] Windhager and Mazza, 'Neither Working nor Unworking'.

usually also communicated by the resident.[621] Artist-residents are thus cast as a particularly flexible, communicative, responsive, and mobile figure, telling tales of travels, meeting people, research, and experimentation. With any finished material object production usually deferred to some future point and place (such as an upcoming exhibition elsewhere), the resident becomes less an artisan than, as Windhagger and Mazza argue, the ultimate knowledge worker, someone 'who produces and sells ideas.'[622] Yet, Windhagger and Mazza also see political potential in the way residencies allow for 'continual shifts between moments of engagement and disengagement', opening up the possibility of countering the pressures of immaterial labour through 'reclaiming laziness or unproductivity as a mode of production'.[623] There is some ambiguity, however, which exists in the wider discourse on artistic labour, as to what modes specifically might constitute a lack of productivity, when cognitive processes and forms of immaterial labour are forms of artistic working and where labour, leisure, and social time are inextricably blurred. Moreover, the attentiveness to less obviously productive times in residencies (such as documenting social and leisure time), can also dovetail with a broader ideology of productivism, where, as Bojana Kunst argues, even a lazy artistic gesture today can today be turned into work.[624] Nevertheless, Kunst also sees potential in art embracing, not non-work, but a kind of continuous mode of doing less in the face of demands to do more.[625] There is arguably a tension between, on the one hand, a certain labour in the regimes of visibility, publicity, sociality, and public engagement that residencies tend to produce, requiring presence and professional performance – explicating processes, networking within

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[621] I engaged in many studio visits as background and primary research for this thesis, and these were key tropes across these visits. See Bibliography 'Interviews' for a full list of artists interviews and site visits undertaken for this thesis.
[622] Windhager and Mazza, 'Neither Working nor Unworking'.
[623] Ibid.
[624] Bojana Kunst, *Artist at Work, Proximity of Art and Capitalism* (Winchester, UK; Washington, USA: Zero Books, 2015), 187.
[625] Kunst writes: 'Doing less could also be understood as a new radical gesture that opens up speculation about the value of artistic life and rather than working towards the perfection of work, starts working autonomously for life itself. It is therefore an important aesthetic and ethical attitude for the artist as a worker.' Ibid., 192.

the residency community, getting to know the local area, forms of responding to and inhabiting a place – and on the other hand, a certain degree of autonomy gifted by what can also be fairly minimal forms of exposure and engagement, wherein the open-ended, unfinished, and meandering tale are all made acceptable forms of being productive. The question remains: do residencies, as Windhagger and Mazza suggest, provide a kind of validating screen for less hectic working modes or might the residency 'shop window' serve to open up more parts of an artist's time and processes to examination, quantification, and publicness?

Perhaps most ambiguous is whether the residency provides a reprieve from the blurring of work and life said to occur under post-Fordist labour modes, or whether it exacerbates it. This goes beyond simply the centrality of one's professional subjectivity, or the dissolving of social life into networking, but, as Cederström and Fleming write, 'work becomes a continuous *way of life,* rather than just something we do among other things.'[626] Many activities considered less productive, done for leisure, to get by, or even to escape from work, can remain tethered to the ideology of work. As Peter Fleming writes, 'most organizations require a massive amount of 'invisible labour': inside and outside its formal domain to function.'[627] Fleming argues that neoliberalism doesn't need to take over 'non-work zones', so long as activities are being indexed to work.[628] For example, he writes how workers now struggle to properly take time off during holidays, something evidenced by some of the extreme forms of isolated retreat I discussed in Chapter Two, which show the extent to which people struggle to detach from constant work. Curator Angela Serino, in arguing for understanding residencies as 'learning environments', proposes: 'to look at each singular moment or activity of a residence – even the seemingly unproductive ones (like cooking a

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[626] Carl Cederström and Peter Fleming, 'Selections from *Dead Man* Working', in *Living Labor*, 183.
[627] Ibid., 198.
[628] Ibid.

meal or exercising together) as an occasion to produce and put in circulation a specific knowledge that can eventually but not necessarily lead to a new work.'[629] Residencies both purport to evacuate certain demands and pressures around work (making few or no immediate production demands), yet also present a kind of total horizon of potential instrumentalization – some even become total projects, where artists performatively inhabit the situation and make everyday life in residence a learning experience, a part of their research, or an artwork.

This kind of totalising quality, where just about anything in a residency can be viewed as potentially productive, bears overlap with another area of contemporary artistic practice; the prevalence of the 'project' as a normative frame through which work is produced and made legible.[630] Boris Groys has written of the loneliness of project work, which is isolating due to the way projects immerse subjects in a heterogeneous time that is desynchronised from the time experienced by society.[631] Groys acknowledges that while projects are often a collective effort, loneliness persists as 'their isolation thus frequently becomes a shared one.'[632] The demand (and also pleasure) of large collective projects like exhibitions, or films, or journals, or group residencies, is to retreat from the time pressures of 'regular' social life, into a more immersive and separate time-space. This notion of the project shares with traditional conceptions of artistic autonomy the idea of a separate space of creation away from the mundanity, routine, and utility of daily life and labour. Project-time is antisocial in one sense, yet it might also promises an intense and exciting form of sociality through a shared endeavour. If projects are already symbolically a kind of separated time-space of immersion and dedication, then residencies can assist in physically realising this. Moreover, residencies are suited to the qualities of project-work, which Bojana Kunst describes as 'processual,

[629] Serino and FARE, 'Introduction', 8.
[630] See Hutchens et al., 'Introduction – Working and not working with you,'.
[631] Groys, 'The Loneliness of the Project', 70–84.
[632] Ibid., 73.

contingent and open practice'.[633] One might say that residencies can perform a kind of total dedication to practice, allowing all processes, relations, and experiences that occur through them to potentially become a part of project-work. Groys writes how attention is shifted from the production of artworks towards 'documentation of life-in-the-project.'[634] Residencies, which often turn to artistic processes, revealing them through open studios and forms of documentation, can provide valuable frames for mooring and making open-ended project-work visible and legible.

While residencies can indeed provide a screen for artists to do less, they also offer highly charismatic situations through which artists can showcase their time. Residency websites, catalogues, and artist's social media accounts are filled with images and tales of social, leisure and working time in residence, which tend to blur together. As artists retreat into the idyllic or strange situation offered by a residency, it is often the case that they become more present, especially online. As we will see in this chapter's case studies, these programmes exist primarily as documentation of the processes and experiences of the artists undertaking them (both prospective and retrospective) and the projects they developed iteratively therein. Such programmes are less time-spaces of retreat, where the artist can work relatively privately, but are heavily realised through documenting the artists life-in-residence, their life-in-the-project.

Rather than allowing for forms of non-work, residencies might encourage artists to engage in slower and less quantifiably productive and material forms of it. On that score, residencies might be seen as providing for reproductive and often less visible forms of labour, thus playing a supportive social and economic role to the wider art world. Their radicality might lie precisely in giving time and space to this labour while it is edged out elsewhere, highlighting that it requires material forms of support that should not be borne solely by

[633] Kunst, 'The Project at Work'.
[634] Groys, 'The Loneliness of the Project', 78.

individual artists. Residencies thus potentially function not only as a 'a leeway not to produce anything', but as a validating frame over this period of less intensive production, thereby helping to take account of the time necessary for artists to develop work, labour often partly hidden and very often materially unsupported. In Chapter Two, I examined more specifically the modes of idleness, such as laziness and leisure, that are often allowed or even promoted through retreat-residencies. This more pronounced form of seemingly 'doing nothing', strongly associated with creative processes and the figure of the artist, continues to provide a challenge for how we understand the role of residencies in supporting artistic development. Do residencies allow for forms of idleness as a reprieve from work, or do they recuperate idleness as work, particularly as 'doing nothing' can become performative and subject to forms of representation and critical reflection? The wider contemporary stakes around idleness and work are well summarised by Audrey Evrard and Robert St. Clair:

> Are we to think of idleness as a mere interruption – that is, as a necessary element – of the structures, apparatuses, and teleologies of 'work' under neo-liberal capitalism, tending ever more towards an intensification of labour both material and immaterial, and the colonization of spheres of leisure by the logics of biopolitical capital? Or is it possible that 'idleness' opens up a space in which we can 'work our way out' of labour?[635]

A broader re-engagement within labour discourses and contemporary art with autonomist Marxist strategies, such as the refusal of work, has suggested creative methods for resisting current labour conditions. Ideas such as Virno's notion of refusal as '*engaged withdrawal*' have potential relevance to residencies' wider performance of spatial and temporal separation.[636] Kathi Weeks has argued, following Hardt and Negri, and Virno, for the constructive character of refusal, arguing it should be understood as a 'creative process' that 'comprises at once a

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[635] Audrey Evrard and Robert St. Clair, 'Introduction: Time for Idleness…', *Nottingham French Studies* 55(1): 1.
[636] Paulo Virno, trans. Ed Emory, 'Virtuosity and Revolution: The Political Theory of Exodus', in *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*, eds. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolos: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 197.

movement of exit and a process of invention.'[637] Weeks both acknowledges the radical call of such strategies to refuse the system of work rather than negotiate concessions and also proposes seeing these strategies in creative terms, as 'laboratories both conceptual and practical in which different subjectivities can be constituted and paths to alternative futures opened.'[638] Curator Heather Anderson interprets Weeks' stance as suggesting small art institutions 'have the potential to refuse over-work and re-envision their activities and ways of working.'[639] There is possibly a kind of pre-figurative potential of creative gestures to re-imagine work within residencies through experimenting with ways of supporting artists to do less. In reality, though, residencies probably represent only small concessions towards less intensive work modes, and they are also imbricated in a field of artistic opportunities that elicit continuous labour, mobility and adaptability.

Windhagger and Mazza argue that residencies can enable forms of 'miming the process of productivity', a kind of creative tactic to use the residency as an authenticating screen to allow for less work. But when do such processes, say of self-promotion and publicity, or narrativisation and exegesis, *become* the work rather than the screen for forms of idleness? Something as simple as a residency 'kitchen table' is ever a potentially productive place: for networking with other residents or hosts, learning or triggering new ideas through discussion, a place to work on multiple projects on a laptop, photographed for social media, a site for a temporary artwork or cooking performance and so on.[640] Given their general flexibility, the choice over what can be made productive within a residency ultimately rests on the shoulders of individual artists, who can either choose to withdraw and work less or to inhabit the boundaries of the residency in a more totalizing way, turning everything into a

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[637] Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 100.
[638] Ibid., 101.
[639] Anderson, 'Retreating in/from Art Institutions', 67.
[640] This notion is even directly suggested by Serino and FARE, 'Introduction', 8.

project opportunity. Kuba Szreder has written how contemporary project modes of living and working have turned artist freelancers into constant opportunists.[641] A residency may indeed provide conditions that could offer artists the chance to be less productive, but can artist freelancers within a competitive creative economy afford to not utilise a residency, to mine it as a particular context for one of their ongoing projects? Or as a chance to make their open-ended project-work more visible for a time?

Maria Eichhorn's 2016 work at the Chisenhale Gallery – *5 weeks, 25 days, 175 hours* – focused on some of these tensions. In Isabell Lorey's essay on this work – for which the gallery was closed, and full-time staff were given paid time off for the duration of the exhibition – Lorey considers what it might mean to give time in a debt economy under a regime of 'precarious work without free time.'[642] Important for Lorey is that the given time must be a 'time of break' that 'suspends the time of debt.'[643] She writes:

> It is about a capacity to lose hold and let go: to wander around, to risk the incalculable, the unforeseeable, that which cannot be anticipated. The gift that breaks with equivalence, with the debt economy, evokes a leap in time. It allows for a becoming-precarious in the present, without credit into and for the future.[644]

While still entirely possible that the Chisenhale workers would continue to engage in activities that might constitute work, particularly given that their social activities might also be productive for the institution, the artwork still functions as an imperfect hiatus – a forced break from various forms of work, as well as absence from the workplace (both physical and virtual). Perhaps the residencies' 'gift of time' functions as a similar gesture. It is no guarantee of a radical break from working patterns that might intrude on 'timeless time', but it provides

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[641] Kuba Szreder, 'How to Radicalize a Mouse?' in *Mobile Autonomy*, 196.
[642] Isabell Lorey, 'Precarisation, Indebtedness, Giving Time: Interlacing Lines across Maria Eichhorn's 5 weeks, 25 days, 175 hours', in *Maria Eichhorn - 5 Weeks, 25 Days, 175 Hours* (London: Chisenhale Gallery, 2016), 43.
[643] Ibid., 44.
[644] Ibid., 46.

a kind of temporary cover for non-production. It might be understood in Lorey's terms as a 'becoming-precarious in the present' because neither the support offered nor the activities that can be accomplished within a residency can resolve ongoing precarity, while at the same time, the residency refutes the one mode of precarious work as more constant productivity, or as constant management of the onslaught of various kinds of work. Instead, it encourages a kind of immersion in the present situation offered, one that is supposed to be evacuated of most other work obligations. The resident becomes visible both as a precarious worker – filling a temporary position, being responsive and adaptive – but also as one in a kind of exodus, temporarily untethered from any particular future plan, all the while living off the usually meagre support offered, even paying for themselves, to have this gift of less calculated, quantifiable, and future-oriented time.

From Gig to Gig: Work Temporalities

Unlike the full-time Chisenhale Gallery staff in Eichhorn's project, how can one quantify giving artists a break from their normal working life, when the hybrid and freelance work of many artists doesn't occupy clearly defined or predictable rhythms and spaces? The residency 'gift of time' can look less like a break from peripatetic, non-routine, precarious work, than one stratum of temporary work opportunity, another gig amongst many. Considered against the wider patchwork of different kinds of work, and work temporalities, the temporal spatial boundaries of a residency might look less distinct, less like a true break. Indeed, the N1 gas station example seems paradigmatic of the archetypal creative labourer, a self-disciplined flex-worker armed with a laptop and able to adjust to just about any working space. It is an extreme and parodic version of the residency to be sure, but one that also reflects on the residencies' role as a provider of temporary situations that must be adapted to.

Gerald Raunig argues that post-Fordist labour has two defining temporalities: smoothing (blurring traditional categories such as work and leisure, employment and

unemployment, and so on), and striating (divided, hierarchised, modulated time).[645] Striated time becomes fragmented and parcelled out by different kinds of opportunities, and is hierarchical because these opportunities are officially ranked or come with varying degrees of cultural prestige, such as between different residencies, PhD programmes, grants and awards, or in the degree of creative autonomy or material reward a particular job or project allows. Raunig lists some of the many temporalities post-Fordist working patterns can entail

> a time of a poorly paid or unpaid internship, a time of looking for work with or without pressure from the employment office, a time of preparing new projects, a time for unpaid practices of self-organization, a time for paperwork, a time for electronic correspondence, a time for brief regeneration, a time of training and continuing education, a time for socializing--whether in direct communication or through social media, a time for developing networks, a time for unpaid sick leave, a time for dealing with bureaucracy, and sometimes several of these at once.[646]

On the one hand, residencies often foreground less differentiated 'smooth time' in their blurring of work and leisure, yet they also attempt to 'give time' through striation, marking out and validating a particular time-space as a recognised period of development. They might also be plotted within what Raunig calls the 'modulating valorisation of the times of creativity', parcels of time that are part of an overall pattern of segmentation.[647] If residencies are unique within this contemporary condition, it is perhaps because they sometimes draw particular attention to this segmentation, both attempting to mark out temporal and spatial boundaries for work yet suggesting it can be open-ended and development-oriented, something that at the least gives a frame to the individuating and isolating nature of managing work from gig to gig, and also of finding time for more open-ended processes of developing ideas and projects.

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[645] Gerald Raunig, trans. Aileen Derieg, *Factories of Knowledge, Industries of Creativity* (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2013), 102–104.
[646] Ibid., 103.
[647] Ibid.

Residencies also play into notions of the 'modulating valorisation' of time through the ways in which they attempt to validate this time-out, leaning on mythic, romantic tropes of the artist in retreat, or ironically designating situations as minimally supportive as a gas station café as a period of artistic development, thus branding a mundane struggle to work on the move as, at the least, an interesting moment of participation in a project. Instead of the more dramatic physical upheaval of a remote retreat to immerse in more idyllic conditions for developing work, the residencies in this chapter are more akin to self-administered workarounds – attitudinal, DIY, and acts of self-branding with a modicum of institutional validity. Within striated and smooth time, the residency can perhaps provide a temporary structure, frame, and usually a community, in which to anchor largely unmoored and insecure creative work. Following Shorthouse and Strange's argument, that there is a 'lack of formal structure at the heart of the creative ecology' resulting from 'an exclusion from regular work situations in which to express one's creativity', residencies might provide a kind of supportive and less isolating situation in which to structure, define, and embed creative work for a period.[648]

In another sense, residencies might generally be seen to belong to the remit of an area of labour in itself, that of self-management, and particularly, time management. Small-scale residency situations can overlap with the wide range of productivity techniques and devices today that attempt to produce self-discipline in distractive environments. Contemporary cultural practices around personal motivation and time management work on increasingly small units to combat highly distractive environments, while personal devices give fine-tuned daily analytics (such as Apple's daily screen-time updates). Jonathan Crary has written how many of our activities and consumer purchases are oriented around better self-administration that 'sustain the illusion one can 'outwit the system' and devise a unique or superior relation

[648] Jim Shorthouse and Gerard Strange, 'The new cultural economy, the artist and the social configuration of autonomy', November 2004, *Capital & Class* 28(3): 43–59, 52.

to those tasks that is either more enterprising or seemingly less compromised.'[649] However, he argues, this is really only a form of the 'compulsory labor of self-management.'[650] As Isabell Lorey describes it, people can end up 'in a dynamic of disciplinary self-governing, which secures not only productivity, but also obedience.'[651] Residencies purport to interrupt working norms, often aiming to be a point of difference in artists' everyday working lives. Yet, valorisation of non-routine, flexible, adaptable working modes might arguably support the idea of the residency as a culturally validated mode of self-management. While many experimental residencies purport to find collective strategies to temporarily shift working norms, there is also potential in such gestures to innovate even more finely grained forms of individuated administration. One of the founders of a case study which I will discuss shortly, the Residency for Artists on Hiatus, calls it 'a way to hack into the art world'.[652] I would argue, however, that this project as a critique of the institutional conventions of the art world, most particularly the norms around personal professional development, also sits in tension with the project's own embedding of highly individuated self-management strategies within a temporary support structure. The notion of 'hacking' into the artworld, can also be thought of as analogous to the contemporary 'life-hack' – a culture of developing personal workarounds to more efficiently manage daily activities against an onslaught of work. In such cases, the residencies' generalised offer of freer time and space is partly revealed as conditional and illusory, but through the operation of creating a form that is even more contingent and precarious in various ways. Rather than only a stage for 'becoming-precarious in the present', however, programmes still offer peer support structures and turn to daily pragmatic concerns around managing time, projects and careers, often finding creative solutions towards better

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[649] Crary, *24/7*, 46.
[650] Ibid.
[651] Lorey, 'Precarisation, Indebtedness, Giving Time', 41.
[652] Matthew Evans, in Back to the Drawing Board Podcast, Episode 027, transcript, accessed 1 November 2021, https://backtothedrawingboardpodcast.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/027_Transcript.pdf, 2.

self-management and self-promotion. While the rural residency often putatively offers a retreat from such concerns, by contrast, other programmes re-inscribe such management as the scene of the residency, while still offering supportive structures to manage creative development.

A residency run by the Main & Station Nonesuch residency programme (a heritage house residency in a small seaside community in Nova Scotia) involved one-second projects 'taking place' at the leap second between December 31 2016 and January 1 2017. The project archive contains each project proposal, the artist's biography, material from the project itself and then sometimes a reflective post-script (for example, the artist Sara Platon adds that she failed to produce what she proposed, a PHP script to automatically generate code for a one second virtual return trip to Neptune).[653] Because of the extremely minimal conditions of the residency and usually the attendant projects (some that were links to other platforms have now disappeared entirely), focus is actually drawn to the labour that precedes, follows and accompanies residencies but is often somewhat outside their official temporal spatial boundaries: the work of preparing a proposal, fine-tuning a biography, updating a personal website, post-residency reflection and self-promotion. It speaks to the granular perpetual labour of self-management, such as cycles of proposing, exhibiting, and exegesis. The failure of Platom's code hardly matters in the context of an archive so heavily focused on the gesture of making innovative proposals for a novel situation. In one sense, such residency projects might be viewed as ludic art world hacks, playing with institutional forms and working modes. But in another sense, they partly reproduce, and bring to light, central features of residency project-work, as being a basic structure of proposing projects, the work of inhabiting – opening up one's project to the contingency of the situation however slight, strange, or mundane – and of documenting, reflecting, reporting, and narrating. The residency 'time

[653] Main & Station Nonesuch, '2016-2017 Nonesuch Leap Second Residencies', accessed 28 June 2021, http://hmsnonesuch.com/2016-nonesuch-leap-second-residencies/.

without quality' (as Jean-Baptise Joly has called it) also accrues its own normative and routine forms of work and self-management.[654] In the three case studies that follow, I look at programmes particularly attendant to ideas around labour and professional identity and the way these are negotiated and exposed within residencies.

4.1 Residency for Artists on Hiatus (RFAOH)

> Over the past six months when I'd see artist friends and was faced with the expected question of "What are you working on these days?", I would gladly reply that I was on hiatus.[655]
>
> – Karen Zalamea

The Residency for Artists on Hiatus (RFAOH) is a virtual artist residency run by the artists Shinobu Akimoto and Matthew Evans and is intended for artists who are already on a break – intentional or otherwise – from artistic production. The residency asks artists to extend and reflect on this hiatus. For a period of six to twelve months residents must refrain from artistic practice, including using the period for future projects, and instead must propose a non-art on-hiatus project. The residency provides a web page where participants report on this non-art activity, as well as gives a modest stipend of $30 per month. The idea for the project arose out of the founders' own experiences of mid-career lulls, where instead of taking expected routes, they decided 'to skip the trajectory of applying to galleries or talking to curators locally or domestically.'[656] This residency makes for an elucidating case study regarding artistic labour because it draws attention to the ebbs and flows of artistic careers and the stop-start patterns of work that have been associated with creative labour generally.[657] While residency discourses generally focus on the accelerated and hyper-productive nature of creative labour,

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[654] Joly in conversation with Sienkiewicz-Nowacka, 'One Day, One Question', 226.
[655] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Karen Zalamea, Canada', accessed 28 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/past-residents/karen_zalamea/.
[656] Shinobu Akimoto, in Back to the Drawing Board Podcast, Episode 027, transcript, 2.
[657] Gill and Pratt describe the normative conditions of cultural work as 'a preponderance of temporary, intermittent and precarious jobs; long hours and bulimic patterns of working', see Gill and Pratt, 'In the social factory?', 7.

another consequence of self-managed precarious work are periods of down-time, burnout and deliberate hiatus. Reasons for artists undertaking the RFAOH have included periods of depression, the need to focus on other paid work, personal issues, and general disenchantment with the expected pathways for maintaining an artistic career. It thus provides vantage over some of the less visible aspects of career management. Against an image of the 'artist-celebrity as a globetrotting, biennale showing, party-attending cultural worker', the RFAOH focuses on the majority of artists who 'continue to maintain modest careers while working other jobs or foregoing any otherwise comfortable, if less "glamorous" lifestyles.'[658]

While the programme ostensibly encourages 'non-art' activity, it acts as a kind of performative institution, acting out the basic structure of a residency while denying its central premise as a period dedicated to artistic development. The programme, which borrows heavily from Canada Council criteria, uses an artist contract, requires a portfolio submission even though artists will not be making work, as well as a final report, creating for participants what the founders describe as 'the performance of being a resident.'[659] The programme interrogates the slippery definition of art and non-art practices, citing conceptual practices such as those of Tehching Hsieh, who sits on the advisory board, whose work *Thirteen Year Plan* (1986-1999) entailed quitting art during the thirteen years before the new millennium. Yet, given that today nearly all of the residency projects could easily be recuperated as a form of art practice, the conceptual strength of the RFAOH lies more in its interest in testing 'the limits and liminalities of professionalism in the arts.'[660] By providing a validating frame for artists' secondary, non-art activities and interests, the programme purports to free them from ongoing professional performance. Resident Lee Oldford Churchill describes the residency as

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[658] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Synopsis', accessed 28 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/synopsis2016.pdf, 1.
[659] Matthew Evans, in Back to the Drawing Board Podcast, transcript, 5.
[660] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Synopsis', 3.

'an external, and thereby legitimizing, force to say it was 'ok' not to make art.'[661] At the same time, the programme becomes a means through which artists can test and reconsider their own professional identity, shedding light on the grey areas of artistic subjectivity, created by the fact that many artists' careers are already often a hybrid of different creative identities and pursuits.[662]

The RFAOH faces a difficult question in regard to artistic professionalism: what might be considered non-art practices when artistic identity is so often associated with a blurring of art and life, when the sustainability of artistic careers is often dependent on multiple income sources that may leverage or become incorporated into one's identity as an artist to varying degrees, and when arts education and contemporary art practice often looks to other disciplines, fields, and occupations, both as part of acquiring 'broad competencies' and as research interest, subject matter, interdisciplinary engagement, or social project?[663] Residencies, particularly retreat-residencies, often blur lifestyle, leisure, travel, and touristic practices, as they evoke broad notions of artists seeking inspiration, undertaking site-oriented research, and having time-out, with residents and programmes tending to recuperate all experiences in residencies as a part of artistic development. The RFAOH attempts a similar, but inverted territorialisation of time, where life and work activities that might blur into or intrude upon artistic development are supposed to be given maximal time and space. It is not

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[661] 'Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Lee Oldford Churchill, Canada', accessed 28 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/residents/lee_churchill/.

[662] Sociologist Pierre-Michel Menger has written on the complexity of artistic careers and multiple job-holding. With only a very small percentage of artists living exclusively from their artistic work, multiple job-holding is a key part of artistic professionalism. Menger argues that multiple jobholding can actually be a lever for success in maintaining an artistic career, with high earners still tending to hold multiple jobs. Moreover, rather than there being a clear distinction between artistic and non-artistic forms of work, Menger argues that 'career progression usually entails a shift from a random dispersion of activities to a concentration around key hubs, wherein the artistic vocation is associated with similar or related supplementary activities.' In other words, far from non-art vocations being an impediment to artistic careers or entirely separable from primary artistic work, Menger suggests that artistic professional identity and progression is heavily shaped by multiple job-holding, often within related fields. In a way, this is an under-examined aspect of artistic professional subjectivity which RFAOH shines a light on by having artists turn specifically to their 'non-art' activities in an artistic way. See Pierre-Michel Menger, *The Economics of Creativity: Art and Achievement under Uncertainty* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2014), 127.

[663] Elizabeth L. Lingo and Steven J. Tepper, 'Looking Back, Looking Forward: Arts-Based Careers and Creative Work', *Work and Occupations* 40(4), (2013): 341.

a precise inversion, however, as both share an escapist tendency away from labour associated with greater production pressures and networking-oriented aspects of artistic labour, the retreat providing a reprieve, and the RFAOH inhabiting and turning to the very conditions that make ongoing participation difficult. Both also provide a legitimating frame over activity that might be less readily quantifiable as work.

The RFAOH seems far less concerned with clearly delineating between art and non-art activities than in ceasing particular forms of participation in institutional activities (although they elicit participation in a public blog managed by the residency). Residents generally have, for a variety of reasons, already begun to partly withdraw from certain forms of professional activity. In some cases, there appears to be a kind of fatigue or dissatisfaction with normative routes for participation, particularly as these can entail exhausting and defeating forms of ongoing self-speculation and self-management – applications, proposals, administration, finding time to develop work independently or generate new projects. Resident Ramla Fatima wrote in her proposal that she did not want to 'run on the usual trajectory of group shows, solo shows, residencies, and biennales etc.'[664] While residencies often sell themselves in terms of novelty, as situations productive of charismatic forms of alterity to trigger new ideas and work (new location, new community, new temporal modes of working), Fatima felt that residencies were in fact 'running very similar programmes.'[665]

Amateur Professional Projects

In many ways, the list of non-art projects undertaken for the RFAOH could easily be considered fertile ground for forms of artistic research. As well, the lifestyle aspects of many of the artists' 'non-art' projects are similar to activities frequently undertaken in retreat-

[664] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Ramla Fatima, Pakistan', accessed 28 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/residents/ramla_fatima/.
[665] Ibid.

residencies. Projects have included moving to a new city, organic gardening, meditation, leisure activities, training for a marathon, opening a bar, renovating an old farm, and experimenting with micro-brewing. The trend for artists to show an interest in other professions, fields, and disciplines is now ubiquitous, particularly entrenched within the paradigm of artistic and practice-based research. Tate Britain Director, Alex Farquharson, has argued that rather than artists acting as specialists, 'their subject-position often equates more to that of the amateur, which in French means 'lover of', suggesting that that dissolving agent is indisciplined desire.'[666]

I would suggest a qualification to this. Instead of entirely 'indisciplined', the institutionalisation of longer-term, often interdisciplinary, research projects through practice-led PhD programmes, and research-based commissions and residencies, has seen 'amateur' passion for other fields and disciplines become increasingly validated and professionalised.[667] As a particularly strong example of this, the rise of BioArt practices and art and science collaborations since the 1990s, often enabled and developed through access to laboratories and scientific training (often through residencies), has seen artists engage in multidisciplinary specialisation.[668] While artistic research can be seen to interrogate disciplinary boundaries, often from an outsider or amateur perspective, equally, many projects today rely on seeking specialist skills and knowledge and reaching semi-professional competencies. As artistic research has become increasingly validated and come to carry its own validating norms, particularly in regard to trans-disciplinarity within the arts, residencies have provided sites,

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[666] Alex Farquharson, 'Institutional Mores', *Institutional Attitudes: Instituting Art in a Flat World*, ed. Pascal Gielen (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2013), 225.

[667] See the edited volume *Specialism*, ed. David Blamey (London: Open Editions, 2016), which addresses the paradox of artists being both specialists and not having specific skills and knowledge in the disciplines they work within.

[668] For example, a long list of science and BioArt related artist residencies, which all take place in science and technology settings, including research institutions and laboratories, can be found at SciArt Initiative, 'Residencies', accessed 25 August 2021, https://www.sciartmagazine.com/residencies.html.

contexts, and situations in which to embed artistic research processes.[669] Florian Schneider even argues for 'rethinking the residency as artistic research', while tending to draw mostly on examples of embedded or placement type residencies, which he describes as 'embedded in specific contexts of knowledge production.'[670] For Schneider, the artist, and indeed artistic research as a particular mode of inquiry, brings the benefit of being uncoupled from the demands of research protocols of the institution, acting as a 'foreign agency' not beholden to 'provide solutions or optimize processes.'[671] The RFAOH might be seen as an extension of this widespread trend for artists to engage in long-term research processes – often related to other fields and even entailing them reaching semi-professional capacities – but instead of marshalling an artistic subjectivity (as 'foreign agency') to effect a particular context of knowledge production, here the artist is asked to use this position as a potential pathway out of the 'art world' (which largely figures in this project as a set of professional norms). It asks: what would it mean for artists to 'reside' within their own lives and wider interests, in which they may already be 'living artistically', by further adopting and honing certain inquiring, creative, research-based processes?

There is now a strong trend amongst residencies to encourage artists to research or gain skills in a non-art field. In contrast to embedded residencies where the artist is an actor of change and critique in regard to an organisation, a 'foreign agency' as Schneider suggests, residency models are emerging wherein residents collectively engage with a place as a site of learning that may elicit a new research interest. Three similar examples, which touch upon ecological themes, include Parliament of Owls, a one-week residency at the Ottawa Wild Bird

[669] I have previously explored questions of validity and artistic research in Jessyca Hutchens, Anita Paz, Naomi Vogt, and Nina Wakeford, 'New Validities', *JAR*, May 9th, 2018, accessed 2 November 2021, https://jar-online.net/en/new-validities; and Jessyca Hutchens, Anita Paz, Naomi Vogt, and Nina Wakeford, 'Is This Enough?', *OAR: The Oxford Artistic and Practice Based Research Platform* Issue 2 (2017), http://www.oarplatform.com/introduction-enough/.
[670] Schneider, 'Artistic Intelligence and Foreign Agency A proposal to Rethink Residency in Relation to Artistic Research', 72.
[671] Ibid., 69 and 70.

Care Centre, where residents immerse themselves in research at the centre (the programme notes there is little time to make art); the Horse and Art Research Program, a one to two-week program which includes lessons of horsemanship, archery and riding; and Bee Time Artist Residencies, a two-week residency where participants engage in the study and practice of bee-keeping.[672] This new research-type residency interpolates the artist less as coming in to offer a unique research-based perspective on the institution than as a kind of amateur enthusiast, there to absorb and learn from a new environment and topic, a 'lifelong learner', who learns in an open, dialogic, relational, and embedded way. These residencies might be placed along a spectrum with RFAOH, because they inhabit a kind of amateur professional space, engaging artists in activities, work, or fields of knowledge somewhat outside of their primary practice but presented as sites for personal development and transformation rather than intervention. Residencies such as these can be sites of overlap between an artist's primary research-based practice (say, pursuing a long-term interest in hive ecologies) and becoming curated project-like situations that can be inhabited as a short-term learning or development process by other artists. Given the wide spectrum of engagements residencies elicit between an artist's primary practice and related areas of interest, and given such residencies may encompass other disciplines, non-art organisations, and even undertaking quite specific skills and training as a conceptual learning process, the question becomes: what can meaningfully be described as a hiatus from non-art activities? RFAOH is perhaps more on a spectrum with the way residencies instantiate forms of hiatus from primary or production-based activities rather than a subversion of residency norms.

Another area of overlap might be the increasing professionalisation of amateur activities generally. Charles Leadbeater and Paul Miller describe a new breed of amateur

[672] Ayatana Artists Research Program, 'Parliament of Owls', accessed 29 July 2021, http://www.artayatana.com/birds.html; HARP: Horse and Art Research Program, 'Horse and Art', accessed 29 June 2021, http://www.horseandart.hu/en/10-horse_and_art; and Bee Time Artist Residencies, 'Art and Ecology Research', accessed 29 June 2021, http://beetime.net/en/projects/bee-time-artist-residencies/.

professional arising in the 1990s as Pro-Am (which they call variously a revolution, a sector, and a lifestyle).[673] Aided by online knowledge sharing and communities, Leadbetter and Miller describe Pro-Am cultures as shaping and sometimes leading cultural and economic changes – from Rap music to the open-source software movement.[674] In a notable convergence with the sometimes ambiguous status of forms of artistic labour as non-work, Leadbetter and Miller describe Pro-Am activities (which generally take place outside of normal working hours) as leisure but still 'a very serious activity involving training, rehearsal, competition and grading' and also yielding 'intense experiences of creativity and self-expression.[675] The Pro-Am subject, as Leadbetter and Miller describe them, is not dissimilar to a post-Fordist creative worker. Passionate and with a 'strong sense of vocation', they work to reach professional standards to such an extent that their amateur occupation can become a 'second, shadow, or parallel' career.[676] The Pro-Am also represents a uniquely self-disciplined figure, managing their own projects and alternative career-like progression outside of the structures and pressures of waged work. While Pro-Am is an extreme version of it, amateur culture generally looks increasingly professionalised through online sharing and social media where hobbies, leisure activities, even domestic chores, become intensively researched, shared, discussed, and judged.[677]

RFAOH projects, at times, present similar degrees of discipline. Mika Johnson, a member of the experimental production studio MomenTech who undertook the residency as a collective (but did so largely independently), in order to each further develop a meditation practice, has said that the main challenge posed was self-discipline 'partly because the

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[673] Charles Leadbeater and Paul Miller, *The Pro-Am Revolution: How Enthusiasts Are Changing Our Economy and Society* (London: Demos, 2004).
[674] Ibid.
[675] Ibid., 21.
[676] Ibid., 22.
[677] A paper on the rise of the 'expert amateur' shows how new technologies have allowed DIY communities to share knowledge and thrive online, see Stacey Kuznetsov and Eric Paulos, 'Rise of the expert amateur: DIY projects, communities, and cultures', *NordiCHI*, Proceedings of the 6th Nordic Conference on Human-Computer Interaction: Extending Boundaries, (2010): 295–305.

residency was not in a physical space, with a community of artists or meditation practitioners working toward a common goal.'[678] Ultimately, though, this lack of supportive structure meant the residency led to greater self-discipline and time management. Johnson writes 'I had to learn to integrate my meditation time with my normal routines and responsibilities, which is also a useful approach to art making as well.'[679] George Major, who used the residency to train for a 100km race, remarked

> Both, I think, require a similar mindset; bloody mindedness, ability to derive satisfaction from something that is not always fun and that can be hard to explain to others. Distance running is very much a lonely, solo pursuit where your main opponent is your own self-doubt.[680]

Artists' RFAOH projects have sometimes seen the resident come to apply similar forms of vocational passion, commitment, and creativity expected of artistic careers to their non-art activities. For example, resident Joyce Lau spent great amounts of time experimenting in the field of micro-brewing, an area she already worked in.[681] Pressure not to spend time on art practice opened up time for engaging in this other work in a more passionate, vocational, and creative sense. Lau concluded: 'My RFAOH project allowed me to make science my art.'[682]

To some degree, RFAOH seeks to be a reprieve from certain professional modalities but, similar to Pro-Am culture, produces shadow varieties. But this is further complicated by the fact that definitions of artistic labour and artistic professional identities already have highly porous boundaries. Rather than a pure transition into non-art work the RFAOH projects show a co-constitution of subjectivities and skills, and even times of work, across different

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[678] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'MomenTech, United States', accessed 29 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/past-residents/momentech/.
[679] Ibid.
[680] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, George Major, UK / Hong Kong, accessed 29 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/residents/george_major/.
[681] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Joyce Lau, Canada', accessed 29 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/residents/joyce_lau/.
[682] Ibid.

kinds of activities, where vocational passion, creativity and self-managed project style working can be found across people's artistic work and supposed non-artistic projects. In a kind of inversion of the retreat – which could be considered a performance of professional identity through a focus on and commitment to more autonomous development-time – the RFAOH shows a multiplicity of ways that artists juggle and negotiate their professional identity across different kinds of activities and work. It has acted as a pathway for artists to conclude that a secondary activity can be made part of their primary practice, as an opportunity to shore up and make time for other work still considered supportive in regard to their artistic work, and even provided possible paths out of an artistic career. One resident, Milena Kosec, returned as an honorary resident for a second year of organic gardening and concluded in her report that she would likely stay on hiatus.[683] Lingo and Tepper write how today's artists have 'complex personalities that allow them to succeed in multiple contexts.'[684] But, they argue, there aren't standard routes to artists becoming professionally socialised and that 'the definition of professional artist is murky and the locations of socialization are varied and diverse.'[685] This lack of uncertainty can make professional performance difficult to negotiate and, as reflected in some of the RFAOH projects, can rely on quite granular individual decisions about what to identity as one's artistic work. This reflects Laurie Fendrich's argument that artists can become caught in a 'tug of war over what exactly constitutes an artistic identity'.[686] The RFAOH perhaps provides time and space for artists to consider this balancing act in a more direct and conscious way.

Art of Life

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[683] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Milena Kosec (Honorary resident), Slovenia', accessed 29 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/past-residents/milena_kosec_honorary_resident/.
[684] Lingo and Tepper, 'Looking Back, Looking Forward', 352.
[685] Ibid.
[686] Laurie Fendrich, 'A portrait of the artist as a young mess', *Chronicle Review*, 51 (2005): 39, accessed 2 November 2021, https://www.chronicle.com/article/a-portrait-of-the-artist-as-a-young-mess/.

In a broader sense, the difference between art and non-art work and subjectivities, is also less distinct as daily life activities become increasingly subject to project logics and where the process and progression of projects – amateur, professional, and in-between – are often comprehensively documented and publicised online. Both Boris Groys and Zygmunt Bauman have written about contemporary life as a kind of ongoing requirement to live artistically (as a flexible risk-taker, compelled to self-manage, and judged by individual life choices). Groys argues that, particularly in the virtual space of the internet, everyone engages in the kind of self-design that was previously the remit of a few (such as artists), writing how today, 'everyone is subjected to an aesthetic evaluation—everyone is required to take aesthetic responsibility for his or her appearance in the world.'[687] For Bauman, it is a function of contemporary life that everyone now, whether they choose it or not, has their life viewed as a work of art, but instead of committing to anything like a 'life-project' where one's decisions are governed by a meta-project, instead a lack of belief in assured outcomes produces ongoing flexibility and a duty of attending daily to the chores of *identification*.'[688] He writes:

> To practise the art of life, to make one's life a 'work of art', amounts in our liquid modern world to being in a state of permanent transformation, to perpetually self-redefine through becoming (or at least trying to become) *someone other* than one has been thus far.[689]

In a way, the RFAOH might be seen to reflect an extreme version of this 'art of life', precisely because it allows for temporary reinvention; artists are freed from an obligation to integrate or justify temporary projects within a more stabilised professional identity and can take up the seductive possibility of an entirely new, temporary, but often all-consuming project, mediated online. RFAOH partially swaps out the artistic self for a new, no less committed and

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[687] Boris Groys, 'The Production of Sincerity', *Going Public,* 41.
[688] Zygmunt Bauman, *The Art of Life* (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008), 78.
[689] Ibid., 73.

productive subject. Such a strategy is akin to Bauman's description of subjects re-forming themselves to meet new situations and demands. He writes

> There is nothing new in seeking escape when things get really hot; people have tried that, with mixed success, at all times. What is really new is the twin dream of escaping from one's own self and acquiring a made-to-order self; and a conviction that making such a dream a reality is within reach. Not just an option within reach, but the easiest option, the one most likely to work in case of trouble; a short-cut option, less cumbersome, less time-and-energy consuming…[690]

Might we see RFAOH's notion of 'hacking', as not so much against the artworld but as a form strategic self-management more in the vein of a 'life-hack'? In circumventing usual ways of working (applications, proposals, production, participation in art events), the project also introduces activities and modes that are also broadly endorsed in the art world: dynamic change, cultivating an in-depth interest, undertaking research or practice in an 'outside' field or activity, commitment and immersion in a self-managed project. The collective MomenTech ask in their final report: 'Could taking a break from 'creating art' help to avoid a kind of 'artistic death'?"[691] For many residents, participation in the project has been a response to an already occurring decline in their participation in the artworld. RFAOH is less escapist than an attempt at revitalisation. While RFAOH inhabits everyday life to the supposed temporary exclusion of an artistic identity, it nevertheless elicits artists to inhabit areas of their life in ways that are clearly informed or inflected by a kind of artistic subjectivity or sensibility.

Hiatus as Refusal

Despite the clear overlaps the project reveals between art and non-art work its gesture of hiatus from certain modes of production might be seen as a form of political refusal of work, or at least, of certain expected professional modes of participation and subjectivation.

[690] Ibid., 14.
[691] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'MomenTech, United States'.

Notably, artists are not allowed to use what they do during their hiatus, or even use any form of documentation of their activities on hiatus, as part of future art projects or displays.[692] Moreover, artists are also not allowed to participate if they have 'an appointed exhibition, presentation, artist residency, or a specific project to start in the future and is simply waiting for it, RFAOH does not consider this as a hiatus.'[693] This arguably does free artists from one central aspect of precarious artistic labour: the need to be continuously calculating about the future, securing various projects to avoid exactly the kind of stall or pause that the RFAOH asks residents to consciously inhabit as a time-out. In a conversation on their concept of 'fate work' (work that exists in the present and contemplates multiple fates) and the way refusals to work or efforts to find meaning outside of work can become easily recuperated, Valentina Desideri and Stefano Harney suggest that both work and efforts to reduce or avoid work blur because of their shared sense of a future oriented strategy, seeking a way out of debt and precarity.[694] They suggest a true sabotage of work would need to refuse this highly productive work of future planning and embrace the present. Moreover, they argue that one should embrace fate work (focused on the present) in opposition to work fate (where work is conceived as the only way out, but also becomes the only possible fate).[695] Fate work requires and potentially opens up free time and space, but, Desideri says, this free time and space cannot be defended too directly where it might be reduced to planning, evaluation, and functionality, in other words, made productive as a form of future oriented work once more.[696]

On the one hand, residencies such as the RFAOH might be seen as a form of rationalisation, a strategy for designating a period of less quantifiable work as productive, yet

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[692] Residency for Artists on Hiatus, 'Application', accessed 29 June 2021, https://residencyforartistsonhiatus.org/application/.
[693] Ibid.
[694] Valentina Desideri and Stefano Harney, 'Fate work: A conversation', *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organisation*, 13, (1), (2013): 159–176.
[695] Ibid.
[696] Ibid., 174–175.

they might also allow residents temporary freedom from future planning, immersing them in a present activity conceived as a deferral or interruption. Their activities constitute standalone projects, but ones that might not readily fit into wider ongoing forms of career management, where separate gigs or projects are usually made cohesive within an overarching practice. While the RFAOH overlaps with forms of self-management and self-discipline, in terms of the way leisure activities are increasingly semi-professionalised and publicised, in terms of artistic work specifically (where artists often play the role of the amateur), the designation of activities that could easily be made into forms of art practice as non-art, is at least a gesture towards a less rationalised hiatus. Its central gesture, after all, is for artists to embrace the present conditions of a hiatus rather than try to work their way out of it, and plan for the future. It is, at the least, ambiguous about its relation to being productive as art practice, and might be said to deny what Desideri describes as a system that valorises the single fate of success, that is:

> A system of valorisation that doesn't want to see (and let exist) the multiple fates, not even the frictions, the time and spaces that such experiences opened, the intensities they produced detached from any notion of success. Fate work disregards the future and with it any system of valorisation that is attached to determining the future.[697]

It is not only that a residency creates a period of time where artists are ideally less inundated with different forms of work and have more freedom over how they spend their time – this might also be achieved by an artist's wage, a long-term grant, or a generous commission. Residencies also immerse participants in a new time-space, one that might allow for greater focus on the present. Arguably they hover around being even more extreme forms of self-management to harness one's productivity – at times presenting remote, strange, and absurd conditions for labour. Yet, in being more totalising and extreme, they potentially open up

[697] Ibid., 175.

zones that eclipse some forms of daily micro-self-management, the guilt of debt, and the rationality of a clear future strategy.

Gerald Raunig's counter-proposal to the 'timeless smoothness and striating interruption' of contemporary labour temporalities is what he describes as streaking time, something he sees in the example of the 'molecular strike' modality of different Occupy movements. For Raunig, this is a mode where occupiers temporarily but totally and seriously inhabit different temporal and spatial relations, for example, 'taking time for long, patient discussions and taking time to stay in this place, developing a new everyday life, even if only for a short time.'[698] For Raunig, this form of strike is both 'duration and break. It is not leaving, not dropping out of this world, no time-out.'[699] While I do not suggest a similar form of politics for the residency, it nonetheless shares a similar orientation in suggesting itself as a form of break that is precisely not a 'dropping out.' Indeed, the hiatus might be said to give visibility to a kind of unintentional dropping out that occurs regularly, which might include times of distraction, times of a loss of focus or drive in regard to one's supposedly all-consuming vocation, times when other obligations need to take preference. Instead of reproductive self-care or productive self-management, or invisible and isolating drop-out or absence, the residency as hiatus might present an opportunity for visible kinds of less rationalised labour, something other residencies might provide to varying degrees as well. It might present, as Raunig describes it, a kind of temporary 'reterritorialization of time.'[700] By giving artists a guilt-free time-out, they are released from an obligation to consistently preference their artistic professional identity, yet have this time recognised and validated.

While much of the labour discussion focuses on the blurring of work and life, and a general lack of time, the corollary to hyperproduction is the rise in periods of complete non-

[698] Raunig, *Factories of Knowledge, Industries of Creativity*, 158.
[699] Ibid.
[700] Ibid., 83.

or less intensive production: daily time wasted on mindless consumption of highly addictive media forms through to burn-out and depression. Non-production or less productive time is either a waste, an absence, even a pathology, while other forms of leisure and idleness are positioned as strategic self-management in the form of personal projects, slowness practices, sabbatical, and retreat. Notably the RFOAH doesn't provide a reprieve from an unintentional hiatus but inhabits it, thus turning attention to these times which are common but often less visible and self-managed, times which can be costly to an artist's career, but which go largely unrecognised. The hiatus becomes a time of reflection on precisely these times of less work. Akimoto has said of some residents:

> Others have no activities per se. They were really almost like depressed about their no-production or not participating in the art world and they didn't know what to do. Like we said earlier, should I quit? They use this time and space to really question that for herself or himself.[701]

Another potential of a project like the RFAOH is that it draws attention to a central problem of residencies, that of access. For many of the RFAOH participants, non-art obligations have been the cause of their hiatus, and they would therefore have been unable to apply for a conventional residency. The residency 'gift of time' relies on the privilege of being able to take time off, something less possible for artists who are juggling multiple obligations or do not have the freedom to travel. An even more pertinent gesture in this regard is a project initiated by artist Lenka Clayton, who documented on her website a 227-day-long 'residency in motherhood' funded by the sustainable arts foundation, as a response to the financial and access difficulties of undertaking residencies after becoming a parent. The project was an experiment in applying a residency framework (particularly the attention to understanding a

[701] Shinobu Akimoto, Back to the Drawing Board Podcast, Episode 027, transcript, 4.

new environment) to what Clayton describes as a 'new world that was unfolding at home.'[702] Clayton now administers a website that provides support (including mentorship and a DIY kit) for mothers to run their own 'Artist Residency in Motherhood' (ARiM). Unlike the hiatus residency, the ARiM attempts a deliberate continuation of artistic professional performance in circumstances where routine forms of participation are less possible. Both, however, use the residencies' conceit as a form of time out, to provide legitimacy, support, and a situated mode of working to frame a decline in certain forms of participation *as productive*. ARiM addresses a particular access problem. Few residencies allow for artists to bring their families, though there is increasing advocacy in this area.[703] Although residencies can create domestic spaces, they ironically detach artists from both support structures and care responsibilities at home. By foregrounding an escapist and autonomous mentality, Tanya Harrod writes, residencies are 'meant to be the antithesis of normal domestic life' and reflect the fact that the home and family life has long been seen as the enemy of avant-gardism and artistic life.[704] Moreover, residencies are part of a broader valorisation of global mobility that entrenches gender inequality. As Angela Dimitrakaki writes:

> The mobility requirement embedded in artistic labor at present (including retreats and the ubiquitous "residency" culture) is in direct conflict with the work of family-focused social reproduction still expected from women —and where women are single mothers, entire "components" of the contemporary art work culture (such as residencies) may become impossible.[705]

While small programmes such as the RFAOH and ARiM cannot provide a widespread solution to the general expectation of mobility, they can direct attention towards some of the

[702] Artist Residency in Motherhood, 'How I Started My Residency', accessed 29 June 2021, http://www.artistresidencyinmotherhood.com/how-it-started/.
[703] For example see the resources for parent artists produced by the Parent Artist Advocacy League and StateraArts, including family friendly residency listings, StateraArts, 'Parent Artist Resources', accessed 3 November 2021, https://stateraarts.org/parent-artists.
[704] Harrod, *The Real Thing*, 139.
[705] Angela Dimitrakaki, 'Feminism, Art, Contradictions', *e-flux*, Journal #92, June 2018, accessed 29 June 2021, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/92/205536/feminism-art-contradictions/.

realities of artistic labour, which cannot live up to its image of untethered, detached, independent work. A physical residency, the Mothers in Arts Residency in Amsterdam, was actually inspired by the virtual ARiM, and there are a growing number of programmes that allow families to attend.[706] Despite their democratic aims, in expanding access through a validating residency framework, a potential of such models might be to increase individuated pressure to innovate workarounds to remain productive. Could this feed pressure to find ways to make development-time or less busy time, visible or authenticated in some way? Or do the strategies of RFAOH and ARiM indicate clever ways of 'hacking' the system, and circumventing the need to apply for more official institutionalised situations? Or are they part of an ideological attachment to work and productivity that engenders rendering all time – even time-out – as productive for artistic development in some way? Residencies sit at an important threshold in regard to such questions, at once embracing the tenets of adaptive, innovative working modes, while also trying to carve out pockets of autonomy and support for precarious artists.

4.2 Post-Studio Tales

Image 4.1

This next project I will discuss sits at almost the opposite end of the spectrum to the RFAOH's validation of temporary absence from the artworld, instead immersing participants in an almost extreme version of the artworld's hypersocial and flexible modes of participation. A 2012 project, Post-Studio Tales (PS-T), at the District Kunst und Kulturförderung, Berlin, pushed the idea of the residency studio on display to its logical extreme. Described as a residency-as-exhibition, the eighteen participating international artists lived and worked together in a shared space for three weeks, one that was regularly open to the public. The

[706] Mothers in Arts, 'Introduction', accessed 29 June 2021, http://www.mothersinarts.com/residency.

participants were invited to develop (and actually construct) their ideal studios in the space.[707] Such a request represents a tension that exists, to varying degrees, in many studio-based residencies. The artists were asked to expose themselves to a high degree of visibility and transparency (both to the public and to the other residents), while exercising sovereignty over the terms of their own privacy through the studio space. This accords with the nature of post-Fordist labour more generally, in its tendency towards promoting flexibility while increasing certain forms of exposure and self-management – something perfectly illustrated in the Post-Studio space's similarity to an open-plan office or co-working space, spaces which encourage individualism, flexibility, and tend towards high degrees of mutual visibility.

Artists were given a physical frame as the structural basis for their studio, a scaffolding tower and platform created by the architecture collective Something Fantastic and invited to fill it in and built upon it with cardboard and other materials. Few of the artists attempted to assert much privacy in the space, or to delineate their space from others. One of the curators, Daniel Eguren, remarked that 'somehow, the artists kept this rather direct, brutal, open space and did not even try to make one individual room with a door and a window, not even anything close to it.'[708] This accords with the artist Burk Koller's assertion that he 'simply took this dissolution of the border for granted.'[709] He says, 'this also meant that I couldn't confine my work to the designated workplace, but had to understand it as something comprehensive happening on the whole site.'[710] The relative openness of the majority of the residents to this highly exposed situation could reflect the extent to which the residency studio is already accepted and understood as an exposed and semi-public site, as a site where the residency itself is staged. Constructing paper walls and attempting to carry on their 'normal

[707] John Beeson, Ulrike Gerhardt and Friedeman Heckel, 'Preface' in *Post-Studio Tales* (Berlin: District Kunst und Kulturförderung, 2013), 4.
[708] Daniel Eguren, in John Beeson, Daniel Eguren, Ulrike Gerhardt, Burk Koller, Laura McLardy, and Dr. Jörn Schafaff, 'To what extent has the social replaced the studio?', transcript of roundtable discussion, 2012, in *Post-Studio Tales,* 26.
[709] Ibid., Burk Koller, 20.
[710] Ibid.

work' may have staged a fiction about the kind of artist labour that can, in fact, be practicably carried out in an experimental residency such as this one.

If the RFAOH provides some critical vantage over practices of professional identity and artistic labour through having its residents attempt to abstain from such practices, then the Post-Studio Tales project provides a view from the other side, casting its residents in a situation where contemporary modes of artistic production and participation appear to be exacerbated and tested. Described as investigating 'contemporary art practice and the spaces of its production', the curatorial and architectural framework of PS-T seems to envisage from the outset a particular view of artistic labour, allegorizing the world of post-studio working as highly exposed, hypersocial, and processual. The curatorial vision also clearly overlaps with post-Fordist labour modes, promoting flexible, networked, creative, and communicative working. Here, Paulo Virno's notion of virtuosity, as the performance of activity that doesn't become a finished product, and which 'requires the presence of others', is particularly apt.[711] Opening up the residency to ongoing display – to have the public find artists mid-conversation, on laptops, partly visible behind temporary paper walls – recasts the idea of the lone artist at work in their studio into a far more precarious, social, and responsive figure. The project catalogue is largely composed of a set of reflexive group conversations which heavily focus on the social aspect of the project, with very little documentation of anything like finished artworks. If, as Boris Buden and Hito Steyerl argue, residencies reflect particularly contemporary forms of work, primarily producing not objects but 'relations between people', PS-T is particularly inclined towards framing and representing this networking function, and the virtuosic labour it entails.[712]

[711] Paolo Virno, trans. Isabella Bertoletti, James Cascaito and Andrea Casson, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life* (Cambridge, Mass; London: Semiotext(e), 2004), 52.
[712] Steyerl and Buden, 'The Artist As Res(iden)t'.

PS-T does so by overlapping three institutional frames: the residency, the exhibition, and the studio, blurring them into a single platform on which highly visible artistic production can take place. To a degree, the indivisibility of these frames is already captured in the term post-studio, which now refers to the predominance of mobile dispersed multi-sited working, and which blurs former temporal and spatial distinctions between conception, production, and display, and tends towards ongoing processual project-based working.[713] In contrast to Daniel Buren's famous essay on the studio – where he described it as one kind of frame, envelope, or limit, that functioned in a linear systematic relationship with other spaces, such as the gallery or museum – today, these institutional frames thoroughly intermingle and overlap.[714] Art schools host open days that blur the open-studio with the exhibition, museums are host to a range of discursive activities involving the artist, and residencies subject the studio to both more extreme forms of isolation as well as greater public accessibility, and can take place within gallery, museum, and exhibition contexts. Lane Reylea suggests that today such spaces are not interlinked in a clearly defined linear system of movement but are horizontally networked, and that studio and museum eclipse their 'former static binary division', and both 'become spaces of fluid interchange between objects, activities, and people.'[715] Despite this blurring, though, the studio remains a space of theoretical interest and performative discursive action.[716] The post-studio condition of many artists, working mobile across temporary dispersed and networked sites, arguably places greater emphasis on the artist to performatively activate and designate particular temporary worksites as studios. PS-T might

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[713] This description accords with Davidts and Paice's description of the post-studio era as marked by the 'dispersal of the artistic workplace across globalized networks'. Wouter Davidts and Kim Paice 'Introduction', in *The Fall of the Studio: Artists at Work*, Wouter Davidts and Kim Paice eds. (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2009), 6.
[714] Buren, 'The Function of the Studio', 51.
[715] Reylea, *Your Everyday Artworld*, 37.
[716] Davidts and Paice argue that despite claims to the obsolescence of the studio, it 'continues to emerge as a fabulous, hydra-headed monster that — like the museum — survives every radical attack.' Wouter Davidts and Kim Paice 'Introduction', *The Fall of the Studio: Artists at Work*, 19.

even be seen to examine whether residency studios have a particular theoretical identity, or performative quality. What kind of site do they provide for the staging of artistic labour?

Artist residencies intersect with different historical trajectories of the studio. Some are directly embedded within urban studio-based communities, with many larger residency programmes having been developed by large studio providing organizations, such as the international residencies at ACME, London, and Cité International des Arts in Paris. Others might be seen to be early facilitators of post-studio practice, as can be seen in placement and embedded type residencies within various kinds of organizations, and often eliciting socially engaged forms of practice. Many of the small retreat type programmes discussed in Chapter Two seem to combine these registers, often providing a space for the lone artist to work, while also promoting site-oriented artistic fieldwork. An important component of most artist residencies that do provide studios, is that they are often live- and work-spaces.

Katy Siegel has written on the live/workspace as intertwined with an artistic subjectivity that also models behaviour for today's flex-workers. She writes: 'People who are working like artists need to live like artists', but continues that today, it may only be the middle-class professional who can now afford to live in the artist-style loft atelier.[717] Instead, she says 'artists… aren't really living—or, therefore, working—like artists today.'[718] Siegel describes the situation of many young US-based artists who now have studios separate from their homes in far less idyllic circumstances, stacked floor upon floor in industrial buildings. She notes how both a sense of community within such spaces, as well as the open temporality of the live/work atelier, are impinged upon by new time constraints, brought about by the 'the attendant pressures of "real," professional or wage labor work' and 'the necessity of working in regular, limited blocks of time.'[719]

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[717] Katy Siegel, 'Live/Work', in *The Studio Reader: On the Space of Artists*, Mary Jane Jacob and Michelle Grabner eds.,(Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 313–314.
[718] Ibid., 314.
[719] Ibid., 315.

In contrast to Siegel's image of the artist as relatively isolated, scrounging limited time and space on the outskirts of urban centres, residency studios often seem to be based on a vision of studios past. From idyllic forest studios, to P-ST's offer to 'build your own studio', these spaces may blur work and life, but in a manner that suggests maximizing one's control over time and space through immersion in a new place, at least temporarily. Artist Joe Scanlan has written of artists' practices today that not only out-source production but also the role of being a studio artist: 'In what might be called a post–post studio practice, the idea of the studio artist makes a comeback, only now the artist is a paid actor performing on a set designed to look just like an artist's studio.'[720] The post-post-studio artist-in-residence re-inhabits the studio once more, but their inhabitation is also being staged, representing yet another performative platform, another site or situation to respond to, another temporary work opportunity to be managed and optimised within fixed time constraints. Geographically, spatially and architecturally, the residency studio often seems to offer-up ideal and autonomous working conditions, but as a temporary staging of work, often to some degree exposed, it is also quintessentially post-studio, a place where adaptable mobile workers pass through. One of the artists from P-ST, Burk Koller, articulated some of the tensions inherent in the project's offer of relative spatial and temporal freedom:

> To what extent were liberties really being used – especially the liberties that were given to the artists with regard to the architecture? To what extent was one kind of pressure simply replaced by another? To what extent did the artists feel the pressure of presenting finished works? Or, as no one actually exerted this specific pressure upon them: What took its place? The pressure of self-representation?[721]

To some degree, residencies, rhetorically at least, partially inhabit an older model of the studio, as a private space of imagination, withdrawal and autonomy. But they also function as

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[720] Joe Scanlan, 'Post-Post Studio', in *The Studio Reader: On the Space of Artists*, 153.
[721] Burk Koller in *Post-Studio Tales*, 41.

'post-studio' type situations, temporary in nature and encouraging site-related work outside of the studio. In *Post-Studio Tales,* the notion that each artist must fashion their own studio speaks to an older model of the studio as an extension of the artistic self. But architecturally it also approximates a contemporary co-working space, ultimately flexible and customizable, the spatial analogue to the labour of freelancing, speaking to a need to carve out time and fashion one's own workable space, often in ad hoc and temporary ways. Instead of the heroic architectural *Gesamtkunstwerk* of historic artist studios – the post-post-studio is arguably a kind of temporary workplace that must be re-arranged, re-imagined, and temporarily appropriated by residents, and often articulated in relation to external sites as well.

Throughout this research project, I have attended many open studios at different residencies, many hosted through a residency conference and open to the attendees.[722] At each of these open studios, residents were tasked with discussing how their residency was going, and in all cases, their projects were also interlinked with processes, spaces and sites outside of the studio. The residency open studio is a networked and relational site, a stage where artists can communicate complex ongoing processes, and is thus inherently performative and virtuosic. It still concerns material labour but generally objects being shown (for example, images on laptops, yet to be finished sculptural works, parts of installations, artist books, reading materials) are part of wider ranging processes and relations that require explanation. This accords more generally with the status of art objects today, as Lane Relyea argues, as functioning less as discrete autonomous objects, than as part of networks, 'embedded in projects and their multiple actors.'[723]

In my experience visiting residency studios, including PS-T, in general one finds residents are caught up, in the middle of things, embedded, mediating for their audience a

[722] These included studio visits as part of Res Artis meetings in Rovaniemi, Finland, and Copenhagen, Denmark, and *Residencies Reflected*, Helsinki, Finland.
[723] Lane Reylea, *Your Everyday Artworld*, 64.

variety of interlinked relational flows: exploring the place, forming new relationships, finishing up old projects or thinking forward to the next one. In contrast to the reflexive, past-tense of the artist talk as an explicatory supplement to an exhibition, studio visits are more apt at revealing networks, relations, and artworks in evolving states (during a given visit, there were often still places to visit, people to meet, things to try and make). Relyea has written of the studio, that in today's networked, situated processes, it presents 'too much of a closed space, cut off from outside communication; it's also not substantial enough, not enough of a "real," singular, and unrepeatable place or context.'[724] By being a somewhat non-specific, conceptual space, according to Relyea, it 'lacks the conditions for real exteriority and exactness, for the pinpointedness and timeliness of sited, performative instantiations and interventions—for projects.'[725] But while the residency studio partly resurrects the autonomous and imaginative space of the artist studio it does so within a framework of alterity and embeddedness, a private place of working situated in a 'real' context, a home-base in proximity to opportunities for context-related, site-specific, field-based research, or social intensities. The open studio is thus often an opportunity for the artist to convey their individual processes, in a space dedicated to their autonomous working, but usually in relation to numerous outsides – other places of interest and research. It is, in this sense, a particularly post-studio form of studio. Likewise, PS-T, which I visited shortly after opening night, was a space of multiple unfolding projects and relations, rather than a space of completed exhibition highlighting discrete finished objects.

In regard to P-ST, a parallel might be drawn to projects related to Relational Aesthetics emerging from the 1990s, where open-ended, processual, participatory projects could amount to, as Claire Bishop described it, 'essentially institutionalized studio activity.'[726]

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[724] Ibid., 70.
[725] Ibid.
[726] Claire Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', *October*, no. 110, fall (2004): 51-79, 52.

Indeed both Bishop and Relyea comment on how the addition of artist-in-residency programs were indicative of new modes of flexible display.[727] Bishop even argued that 'project-based works-in-progress and artists-in-residence begin to dovetail with an "experience economy", the marketing strategy that seeks to replace goods and services with scripted and staged personal experiences.'[728] Something like a residency open studio could readily add a kind of 'laboratory' or 'factory' feel, by having artists processes open to the public. A project like P-ST also readily fits with Relyea's notion of the platform, which he describes as the increasing tendency for art projects to be realised and displayed through loose, permeable, responsive, and dialogic structures.[729] Replacing the more static exhibition, the platform was a means through which open-ended projects, often with many participants, could coalesce and become legible. Then again, as a visitor to P-ST on the day after it opened, the encounter with this open studio situation didn't produce the kind of affect or spectacle I might have expected from a work that seems to sit so closely to the relational experiments of the 1990s. It had more the feel of visiting a working residency, as it was impossible to discern any final artworks, and artists present were either hanging out or at work, mostly on laptops. It also eschewed Bishop's binary, in her critique of Relational Aesthetics, between more convivial participatory projects and more antagonistic ones.[730] The project appeared neither overtly friendly to the viewer nor hostile or confronting. Instead, the effect was more akin to wandering through a slightly strange share-house. I wrote in a review at the time that the place had a 'hazy hung-over afternoon air', with people hanging out, resting, and working on laptops in the communal space.[731] Just as the artists were given some freedom over the extent to which their living and working spaces were open or private, I felt as an audience member,

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[727] Reylea, *Your Everyday Artworld*, 21.
[728] Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', 52.
[729] Reylea, *Your Everyday Artworld*, 21.
[730] Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics'.
[731] Jessyca Hutchens, 'IN RESIDENCE: Post-Studio Tales Review', April 23 2012, accessed 29 June 2021, http://www.berlinartlink.com/2012/04/23/in-residence-post-studio-tales-review/.

that I was responsible for my own voyeurism, for the most part, carefully avoiding looking into spaces that had even a partial paper covering.

To that degree I was reminded less of the 'laboratory' model favoured by some projects related to Relational Aesthetics, than of ways in which open-ended discursive projects are today often presented in art spaces – where artistic research and dialogue is in some senses being staged and made public, but where the audience remains somewhat outside the inner circle. For example, Marina Vishmidt's description of the collaborative research-based projects and exhibitions of curator, artist, and researcher Marion von Osten partly accords with the feel of P-ST. Vishmidt argues that von Osten's projects

> made labor visible where it should be invisible (in the space of art) by displacing the protocols of its inclusion in that space (as found object, as scandal) and to the conditions of production of the artwork as the immediately social ones of cooperative (if fragmented) labor. As projects dwelling in the then not-yet customary zone of indistinction between the curatorial, the artistic, and academic research, they were proleptically indisciplinary in a way that could be interpreted as either "too" elusive or "too" fitting in the era of "New Institutionalism"; their clarity of purpose and complexity of orchestration could only have come into focus through the rearview.[732]

There are parallels to be drawn to P-ST in this description. Because much of its content as a project derived from the messy hyper-social living and working arrangement, as an audience member, I felt I only grasped the project through its subsequent documentation (something anticipated in the title, an event made for later narration). There was something messy about P-ST's convening of a loose dialogic cooperative, and a tension it revealed in playing to a broad cultural valorisation of presence, process, collectivity, and discursivity, while leaning into slightly deflating, inscrutable, contingent, and insular modes. On the one hand, opening up ongoing processes to greater visibility and publicity, can seem to serve demands for live public events and outputs (seen across cultural institutions), but, as Vishmidt describes von Osten's methodology, there might be value in pushing processual events towards being

[732] Marina Vischmidt, 'Beneath the Atelier, the Desert: Critique, Institutional and Infrastructural', in *Marion von Osten: Once We Were Artists a BAK Critical Reader in Artists' Practice*, eds. Maria Hlavajova and Tom Holert (Utrecht: BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Amsterdam, 2017), 300.

'radically open-ended', and committing to 'research as permanent incompletion.'[733] In contrast to the more didactic open studio museum events I discussed in Chapter 2, the residents in P-ST were split in their allegiances (towards other residents, the curators, the project, their own work obligations), with the audience guest not necessarily a priority, and not necessarily owed the spectacle of witnessing material processes or provided with explanation or narration. As one of the curators, Friedemann Heckel said of visitors to the exhibition, they 'often asked, 'What's there to see?' or 'Where is the actual exhibition?''[734] It was in this way that I saw P-ST as speaking to the negotiation residencies generally undertake, between providing insular retreat and some form of public visibility. Claire Bishop speaks cynically of the open-studio residency programmes at the Baltic in Gateshead where, she writes, because studios were only open when the resident chose, 'often the audience had to take the Baltic's claim to be an 'art factory' on trust.'[735] But might not such a gesture in fact be a clever way for 'selling' their residencies, as part of public programming, while actually granting artists an autonomy they are rarely allowed, a kind of bait and switch? This returns us to some of the issues I discussed in Chapter Two around deliberate strategies of opacity and retreat. Might not residencies, even very performative and public ones such as P-ST, provide a partial alibi for messy, inscrutable processes, a stage for labour that partly refutes its own spectacle? Even when embracing a highly visible and accessible mode, such as a residency-as-exhibition in PS-T, the residency can still function as a partial alibi for artists to withdraw, assert privacy, or be present in ways that might not readily fulfil audience expectations for an artistic spectacle.

The Studio and the Social

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[733] Vischmidt, 'Beneath the Atelier'.
[734] Friedemann Heckel in *Post-Studio Tales*, 37.
[735] Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', footnote 4, 52.

> Close to the residency, at Alboinplatz, stands a huge sculpture, 12 meters long, 8 meters high, built of stone in the most detailed manner – small stones put together to fill out this vast area. This was produced by an artist taking part in a job-creation program in the 1930s. Today, on the other hand, the idea that an artist is unemployed as soon as he [sic] has no paid assignment seems totally absurd, because as an artist you are productive because you want to produce. Hence the expectation that a social setting should be productive for oneself, that working and living conditions should be somehow productive even if they don't meet the requirements of work.[736]

In a roundtable discussion focused on the question, 'To what extent has the social replaced the studio?', artist-participant Laura McLardy told the above anecdote. It goes to one of the central aspects of PS-T as a project, as an attempt to stage the 'social setting' that is a primary engine of artistic working today. Here, McLardy notes the transition of the artist as associated with manual labour – someone whose working hours were attached to physical production – to the more immaterial and affective registers of today's artistic working.

One of the core activities of contemporary residency programs generally is to provide artists with networking opportunities. For residencies in large cities, this frequently entails connecting residents to key figures in the art world. ACME Studios in London describes their residencies as 'tailored to suit the development and networking needs of international artists.'[737] The International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York structures their entire programme around events and activities that foster different kinds of networking opportunities (these are categorized as 'Visiting Critics', 'Field Trips', 'Artists and Work' and 'Open Studios').[738] Through time spent immersed in a city's art scene, residents are afforded the possibility of forming important professional ties. For residencies in rural or remote locations, the focus tends to be on the creation of a network between the residents themselves, with the isolated location providing the pressure cooker and intimacy for lasting relationships to form. In the purest articulation of this function, some residencies exist largely

[736] Laura McLardy in *Post-Studio Tales*, 23–24.
[737] Alliance of Artists Communities, 'Acme Studios', accessed 30 June 2021, https://artistcommunities.org/residencies/acme-studios.
[738] International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), 'Residency Programs', accessed 30 June 2021, https://iscp-nyc.org/residency-programs.

to maintain a network, and may involve multiple residencies or meetings of the same or similar participants.[739] In *Mobile Lives*, Elliott and Urry describe how face-to-face meetings are a key component of creating and maintaining network capital.[740] Moreover, they see mobilities as only primarily meaningful because of their social consequences, in their ability to 'engender and sustain social relations with those people (and to visit specific places) who are mostly not physically proximate, that is, to form and sustain networks.'[741] In its ability to turn all social situations into potentially economically advantageous ones, networking represents one of the key features of immaterial labour, and reflects its tendency to dissolve the boundaries between labour and leisure time, private and professional life.[742] Good networking requires being constantly in the moment and also on the move. Boltanksi and Chiapello write about the 'permanent anxiety' that arises from the networked world, where people worry about becoming 'disconnected, rejected, abandoned on the spot by those who move around.[743] But not all productive networking requires fast-paced international mobility. Gielen writes how:

> An appropriate networking can also mean finding a stimulating artistic of intellectual context, with room for artistic mentoring, the opportunity for meaningful, substantive discussions, and so on.[744]

Residencies generally represent this kind of networking, the kind that emerges from relationships that are temporary but intimate.[745]

As discussed earlier, many of the artists in PS-T embraced the open, social situation of the residency. For some artists, who work with social situations, this was an ideal setting.

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[739] For example, the Eternal Internet Brother/Sisterhood, 'Home', accessed 30 June 202, https://eternalinternetbrotherhood.com/; and White Rabbit Arts Residency, 'Residencies', accessed 30 June 2021, https://whiterabbitarts.ca/residencies.
[740] Anthony Elliott and John Urry, *Mobile Lives* (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2010), 53.
[741] Ibid., 59.
[742] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude*, 19.
[743] Boltanski and Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, 364.
[744] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude*, 195.
[745] Ibid., 198.

Artist Pedro Wirz has spoken about how his 'way of living and being' is central to his art.[746] Wirz has described how he makes use of social interactions:

> If I organize a dinner for friends to eat some good food and have a good time with people I love, I would be unconsciously at the same time learning who I can get closer to and modulate my interaction to people.[747]

Wirz has said of P-ST that it 'lent the perfect momentum' for his 'artistic attitude.'[748] But not all artists involved in *Post-Studio Tales* embraced the terms of the project so completely. One artist, Martin Kahout, left the residency shortly after arriving because he 'couldn't imagine accomplishing the work that he needed to do for a forthcoming project within the framework of the project.'[749] Instead, he submitted for the project a description of his ideal studio. This gesture represents one of the key conflicts at the core of the post-studio condition, that artists' assumed flexibility towards a multiplicity of sites can work against their interest in accessing spaces for specific production purposes. Under the weight of a fixed production deadline, the artist needs a useable working space, ideally a studio of their choosing. There were other indications of this yearning for a more ideal studio space. Laura McClardy noted how a feminist reading group established during the project, centered around Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*.[750]

Another artist, Thomas Jeppe, was faced with a similar dilemma to Kahout when he needed to finish work for an upcoming exhibition at Curro Y Poncho in Guadalajara, Mexico. Jeppe's ability to make the residency situation workable might relate to his self-identification as a globally mobile artist. In an interview Jeppe explained:

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[746] Pedro Wirz in Thomas Jeppe and Pedro Wirz interviewed by Susanne Husse, 'How do you cope with mental strain?', in *Post-Studio Tales*, 76.
[747] Ibid.
[748] Ibid.
[749] John Beeson, Ulrike Gerhardt and Friedeman Heckel, 'Introduction' in *Post-Studio Tales,* 14.
[750] John Beeson, Daniel Eguren, Ulrike Gerhardt, Burk Koller, Laura McLardy, and Dr. Jörn Schafaff, 'To what extent has the social replaced the studio?' in *Post-Studio Tales,* 36.

> I am working between three galleries on three continents, so the issues concerning mobile production are central to my work. It is not about having a studio, but about being able to establish short-term, non-permanent working spaces.[751]

Jeppe was able to instrumentalize the residency as a temporary studio, a working situation he was familiar with, and in contrast to the majority of other participants – who to varying degrees created work that seemed to arise from or engage with the residency situation as it evolved – Jeppe worked on pieces that were detached from the site of their production, always destined for somewhere else. In doing so, Jeppe made perhaps the most traditional use of the studio on offer, understood primarily as a worksite for artists to produce works that would travel onto places of display. Both Jeppe and Kohout sat in tension with the project, with one artist refusing to utilize its promise of flexible space and time, and the other using it to such an efficient degree that the residency is reduced to its function as a temporary studio. Jeppe has also implied that other parts of the residency experience did not, for him, constitute artistic work, though such activities have been partly framed this way in the residency materials (the introduction to the exhibition text describes Jeppe using his DIY-tattoo kit at night).[752] Jeppe is also unique in being an artist who attempts to draw a hardline between their artistic practice and other activities; in this way he openly resisted the project's tendency to blur life and work. Jeppe says:

> I want the separation to be really clear and direct. I don't want to think about a dinner as a happening, and I don't want to think about a tattoo as an artwork because I absolutely do not want to bring them into the discourse. The hard line is also strategic and pragmatic. In recent months, as projects I've been involved in have become increasingly high-pressure, it is clear to me that I have to spend at least half of my energy on maintaining mental health. So I am really against this idea of everything being art. It's a job.[753]

[751] Thomas Jeppe, 'How to cope with mental strain?', in *Post-Studio Tales,* 73.
[752] John Beeson, Ulrike Gerhardt and Friedeman Heckel, 'Introduction', in *Post-Studio Tales,* 11.
[753] Thomas Jeppe, 'How to cope with mental strain?' in *Post-Studio Tales*, 76–77.

Generally speaking, residencies attempt to stop the flow of an artist's 'ordinary time', to engage them in a new pace that stems from the durational nature of the residency. When the residency is too disruptive of an artist's working time (Kohout) or too in line with it (Jeppe), it becomes less meaningful as a residency, as a situation normatively understood to have transformative effects on an artist's practice. Kahout and Jeppe's artistic gestures might resemble what Boltanski and Chiapello describe as an 'old notion of authenticity – as loyalty to self, as the subject's resistance to pressure from others.'[754] In a networked world, such loyalty to self 'looks like inflexibility; resistance to others seems like a refusal to make connections.'[755] This aligns with Pascal Gielen's contention that a traditional notion of the 'authentic idea' has given way to the 'appropriate idea' – an idea that evolves and responds to context, is flexible and opportunistic.[756] Such variability and adaptability of ideas is 'required within networks that are always unstable.'[757] Of course, in the framework of a self-reflexive project such as *Post-Studio Tales* both of these artist positions *become* meaningful as residency research, where their status as outliers is perhaps even more valuable. Both artists reveal opposing strategies for dealing with the situation presented. They resist, in a sense, but also still adapt to the situation, using it as a site to generate new work, even if that work is an antagonistic gesture or an expedient use.

The PS-T project undoubtedly did result in useful networks. McLardy has said that the most productive aspects of the project were the 'social contacts, collaborations, or other work relationships' that formed.[758] On another level, the project also provided a visual allegory for this social function, in its exposed 'big brother' style architectural setting. Burk Koller has said how this 'permanent observation' accorded with

[754] Boltanski and Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism,* 451.
[755] Ibid.
[756] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude,* 39.
[757] Ibid., 45.
[758] John Beeson, Daniel Eguren, Ulrike Gerhardt, Burk Koller, Laura McLardy, and Dr. Jörn Schafaff, 'To what extent has the social replaced the studio?' in *Post-Studio Tales,* 23.

> an image of the artist that you can also find outside of this experiment. Even the artist who joins his colleagues for beer at a bar in the evening possibly finds himself as in an exhibition situation, or in a situation that still pertains to the work of art.[759]

But in another sense, the extremity of the communal situation is not an entirely fitting one for demonstrating how networking best functions. Boltanski and Chiapello write that the success of people in a network 'does not depend solely on their plasticity' and argue that maintaining the ideal characteristics in a 'connexionist world' (one operating through flexible networks that blur social and professional relationships), requires the ability to show both high degrees of flexibility and still maintain an autonomous character.[760] In the very operation of residencies as a purportedly transformative process, they can play out almost as minor dramas of such a balancing act, wherein the artist submits to a strange new situation, as a way to perform an individuated professional identity, but one very much based on the idea of being open, amenable, and responsive to a new situation and its contingencies. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, the most successful people must strike a tricky balance between 'a self-constancy that always threatens to turn into inflexibility, and continual adaptation to the demands of the situation at the risk of total dissolution into the fabric of transient links.'[761] In P-ST, the social environment became too over-bearing for some participants; it seemed to risk dissolving people's participation into the social fabric, rather than allowing for more autonomous projects to emerge. Wojciech Kosma has said they found that 'the whole structure was very intimidating.'[762] Ironically, though, the social situation became useful for Kosma because they ended up working with someone from the extended network the project provided.[763] Bradley Alexander has described something similar. They found the project 'in a way very oppressive', but that the social time spent outside of the main venue and the main

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[759] Ibid., 32.
[760] Boltanski and Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, 461.
[761] Ibid., 462.
[762] Bradley Alexander, Ulrike Gerhardt, David Goodmann, Friedemann Heckel, Wojciech Kosma, Florine Leoni, moderated by John Beeson, 'Post-Studio Tales, an Experiment in Artistic Research' in *Post-Studio Tales*, 56.
[763] Ibid., 53.

structure of the project was more interesting and freeing.[764] Such positions also accord with the idea that 'weak-ties', the ties of casual acquaintances, can be more valuable to networking. As Lane Relyea describes it:

> one way in which networks profit from heightened mobility is by favoring casual, weak ties over tight, long-term commitments, so as to increase the prospects of fortuitous, happenstance encounters that lead outward from any one communicational nexus or group, enabling communication to expand by incorporating new connections while maintaining old ones as latent and reactivatable.[765]

Residencies can therefore be valuable, not only because of the intimate connections formed, but because they provide access to expanded global networks. In some ways P-ST missed the mark in terms of its building of an ideal social situation, but its extremity also allowed tensions to emerge, forcing artists to flee, innovate, and look outside of the project to make the most of it. As captured in the title of the project, Post-Studio *Tales*, residencies can be less about creating the most perfect professional opportunities than creating situations out of which new social connections and new narratives to tell emerge. In P-ST the culmination of the project, through the later catalogue, primarily hinges on these social stories.

4.2 CASE STUDY: 12 Days of Research in Venice

In more traditional definitions and models, artist residencies provide a period of withdrawal or time-out to focus on creative work.[766] The need for artists and other creative practitioners to support their practice through a range of activities (which may entail multiple job-holding and include non-art related work), is one reason artists may need this more immersive time-

[764] Ibid., 65.
[765] Reylea, *Your Everyday Artworld*, 54.
[766] For example, Johann Pousette, founding director of the residency programs at the Baltic Art Center and current director of Iaspis, writes how 'The more traditional type of residency offers a studio and provides time and space away from everyday life.' In 'Artists in Flux', *Re-Tooling Residencies*, 45.

out.[767] *The European Agenda for Culture Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencie*s states: 'To focus on their artistic development, artists need to be able to create distance from their secondary activities. Doing this in a physical way (a residency) is an effective way to shift the focus back to creation.'[768] Yet, given the vast range of activities that artists and other creative professionals engage in to manage what have been termed 'portfolio careers', it is no surprise that the line is often blurred between primary, more autonomous, creative work and the 'secondary activities' (often in related fields, such as teaching, design work, or casual employment at art institutions) that support primary artistic development. Many residency programmes engender a range of activities that might not necessarily be considered the 'core practice' of participants.[769] Moreover, the majority of residencies do not cover all of the costs incurred and may be less a temporary solution to precarious working life, than a part of it.[770] Residencies are deeply imbricated in the way artists both develop work and manage their careers. On their checklist for core principles of Artist Residencies, the residency network, Res Artis, includes 'Enablers of the creative process' and 'Reflective of their lexical meaning as 'an act of dwelling in a place.'[771] Depending on the arrangement, this 'act of dwelling' might entail self-directed time to pursue one's own practice with infrastructural support; or

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[767] Pierre-Michel Menger writes how 'even with steadily growing demand for artistic and cultural products and services, labor supply increases faster than demand. Thus artists show higher rates of unemployment and of several forms of constrained underemployment (nonvoluntary part-time work, intermittent work, fewer hours of work), are more often multiple jobholders, and earn less than workers with com- parable human capital (education, training, and age) in their broad occupational category, that of professional, technical, and kindred workers,' in *The Economics of Creativity*, 1.

[768] *The European Agenda for Culture Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencie*s, 15.

[769] Artist-in-residence are often asked to engage various forms of public engagement, such as talks, open studios, and workshops. Where a residency begins to look a bit more like a temporary job, is in something like the Museum of Art and Design where artists work fixed hours, one day a week, over four months, in open studio environments, and 'discuss their processes, materials, and concepts with diverse members of the public.' See Museum of Arts and Design.

[770] This is claimed by Sebastjan Leban in 'Art in Residency: Precarity or Opportunity', and also readily apparent when comparing residency profiles featured on sites such as Res Artis, which has a category 'Expenses paid by the artists', see Res Artis, 'Listings'.

[771] Indicative of the difficulty in concretely defining residencies, Res Artis (an association of over 600 residency centres), acknowledges that the definition should 'remain somewhat fluid and responsive to new developments.' Their definition is a list of thirteen core principles 'crucial to the definition and success of any model.' The top three include: 'Organised and sufficient time, space and resources'; 'Enablers of the creative process'; and 'Reflective of their lexical meaning as 'an act of dwelling in a place.' Res Artis, 'Definition of Arts Residencies'.

the temporal and spatial boundary of a residency may be more permeable. Rather than providing escape from the 'juggling act' of artist career management, they can become microcosms of it, framed by the period 'in residence'. The RFAOH, for example, invited artists to embrace the norm around engaging in non-art work to survive by focusing purely on this, while the P-ST immersed artists in the hypersocial aspect of artistic production today. This next case study looks at a situation where residents were asked to balance a situation of temporary work with a residency project. It thus constitutes a kind of residency *alongside* other work rather than a pure time-out.

The example is a programme I myself undertook as a participant: the British Council, Venice Fellowships, where participants 'share their time between invigilating the British Pavilion exhibition and conducting independent research.'[772] Fellows work four days a week as stewards within the Pavilion and are guided to undertake site-specific research on the remaining 12 days. As a participant of the programme, I designed my own short 'site-specific' project that investigated the programme itself – specifically its use of residency terminology and methods as a way to frame the research aspect of the program and add value to a period of temporary labour. There is also a photographic component, *Appendix 1: Images 4.1–4.7*. Each of these photographs was taken by me, at the British Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2017, and features the work apron worn at the pavilion by each of the other seven August fellows. I asked the fellows to select items for and arrange their aprons as a form of self-portrait related to their work and research during the fellowship.

A Residency in Venice

The Venice Fellowship strongly aligns the research aspect of the programme with what might be thought of as residency methods and models, in a sense, framing a period of travel for

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[772] See British Council, 'About Venice Fellowships', accessed 30 June 2021, https://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/fellowship/about.

temporary cultural work, as well as an opportunity to 'reside' in that place in a more creatively oriented way. While not providing the physical space and uninterrupted time for creative development associated with more traditional residency formats such as retreats, the Venice Fellowship entails a situation of value for its relationship to the contemporary art world: a period of stay in one of the art world's most venerated cities, during the Biennale. And in the framing of its research programme, it attempts to orient this 'act of dwelling' towards a maximising of context specific experience and research. This was achieved in a number of ways. During a two-day induction for the fellowship, participants were asked to do a mini project that involved taking a photograph in the local area of Wood Green, which artist Lucy Steggals used as part of a workshop at a nearby temporary art space. A talk by the artist Robert Orchardson titled 'The value of place in making' centred around research undertaken during a two-week residency in Chandigarh, India. A session on 'Pieces of Places' focused on gathering, collecting, and generating material in Venice, and small group discussions with mentors focused on sharing ideas and plans for the site-specific research in Venice. From modelling how one might begin (very quickly) to process a new place for creative purposes in the local project, to reviewing other place-based methods, to already having participants prepare and plan for their research, the induction was an immersion in place-based artistic research methods that setup the situation in Venice as a considered act of residing and responding.

The 'Creative Carrot'

Foremost, the fellowship might be seen as part of the large field of contemporary art internships. It involved temporary work, was paid as a stipend, and was framed as an opportunity for learning and research, and, given it is run largely through partnerships with

higher education institutions, it is comparable to university internship schemes.[773] The use of the term 'fellowship' over 'internship' arguably shifts the focus away from gaining work experience on the job, and onto the arrangement as a more total learning and development experience. Rather than framed as a possible pathway to a career in the area of the *stewarding* work being undertaken, partnerships were with (primarily) Art and Architecture schools, as well as arts organizations, and the programme emphasized the status of its participants as students of the disciplines which are *displayed* at the Biennale. The programme focuses on the potential for learning in these areas and is described as being run 'to strengthen the British Pavilion contribution as a platform for ideas and research.'[774] Internships have been subject to extensive critique in recent years, for their exploitation of temporary, low or unpaid labour, in jobs where the value of experience and prospects of future employment are low, and they are often at the forefront of discussions about precarious creative workers. As David Lee writes, 'the "intern" has become a poster child for this class, conjuring up images of endless unpaid episodic labour, with the "carrot" of paid, gainful, and, potentially, "creative" work dangled as an elusive reward at the end of it.'[775] As the mirage of internships leading to stable employment has degraded, some internships have begun to look at other benefits they may be able to offer beyond segues into employment, including educational or creative opportunities.

It might be possible to read the Venice Fellowship as offering the 'creative carrot' – of a more self-directed research project – to add value to what might otherwise be considered more routine work. Yet, while the stewarding and study components of the programme are

[773] In Iam-chong Ip's study on a student intern program set up and run through the Department of Cultural Studies of Lingnan University in Hong Kong he found that students predominantly positioned themselves as learners who could extract a pedagogical benefit from an internship, despite perceiving it as disappointing work experience. He writes, 'Student interns, with their ambiguous roles, could keep psychological distance from depressing workplaces or tedious tasks. They perceive their role as that of a learner looking for new experiences and reflecting upon their work, and thereby find the unpaid or low-paid labour bearable.' Iam-chong Ip, 'Negotiating Educated Subjectivity: Intern Labour and Higher Education in Hong Kong', *TripleC* 13(2), September (2015): 501–508, 507.

[774] See British Council, 'About Venice Fellowships'; and for a list of partner organisations, see 'Venice Fellowship Partners', accessed 23 October 2021, https://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/partners/fellowship.

[775] David Lee, 'Internships, Workfare, and the Cultural Industries: A British Perspective', *Triple C*, Special Issue: Interrogating Internships, Vol 13, No 2, (2015): 134.

kept somewhat separate (in the schedule and in the materials provided), they are part of a total package or experience that was integrated in different ways by the programme and participants, all trying to optimise use of their time. India Murphy said she was glad there was a research component, as well as for the title of 'research fellow', but she also looked upon the invigilation side of things as paid work, saying: 'I do refer to it as a job and I do think of it as a job, and I think of it more so as a job than as a research fellowship because I guess I'm getting paid to actually do labour.'[776] Another possible way to consider the two halves of the programme was that it was a kind of training in terms of the management of a personal project in close proximity to other, related work. The Carrotworkers Collective (a London-based group who undertake participatory action research around internships) argue that what the internship may teach is 'precarity as a way of life,' acting as 'rehearsal for uncertain career paths, hyper-active networking, strategic lunching and infinite flexibility.'[777] Likewise, Paulo Virno has argued that professionalism is actually acquired through 'a prolonged sojourn in a pre-work, or precarious, stage', which socialises and trains people in not having fixed habits or routines.[778] One of the fellows, Johanna Flato, saw balancing the two sides of the programme as a way to develop a flexible practice that could be adjusted for similar situations in the future.[779] Through her artistic process of asking to photograph people's mobile phones whenever was convenient, Flato integrated her practice into her everyday routine.[780] A final possibility for thinking about these two sides of the programme was to inhabit the pavilion in a more artistically oriented way. For example, Adele Lazzeri made a series of sculptures related to each day of work at the pavilion (based on notations she made) before placing the sculptures around Venice, a situation she described as meaning she could think of the pavilion

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[776] Interview with India Murphy, Venice, 29 August 2017.
[777] Carrotworkers Collective, 'About', accessed 23 October 2017, https://carrotworkers.wordpress.com/about/; and Carrotworkers' Collective, 'On Free Labour', *On Curating*, Issue 16, (2013): 23.
[778] Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 42.
[779] Interview with Johanna Flato, Venice, 30 August, 2017.
[780] Ibid.

as a studio.[781] Whatever the approach taken, the total work and study situation created by the programme was a structure through which personal projects were balanced, interwoven, and integrated. Ours was not a residency at the British Pavilion, but this stewarding role that occupied most of our days was the backbone for undertaking more self-directed research. Rather than a residency-retreat, which attempts to evacuate most demands made on an artist's time, or an embedded residency, where the resident occupies a particular role within an organisation, this was a residency oriented around deliberately inhabiting a particular situation (as a temporary worker at the British Pavilion) and to maximise it for the purpose of developing a largely self-directed project.

Fellows of the Pavilion

The situation of month-long pavilion work provided a readymade social and professional network of other fellows, and other temporary workers at the Biennale. As Adele Lazzeri said; 'I think that its useful to have people in the same situation, not just our group, but the whole Biennale staff, there are a lot of people here for a brief period of time, so I think it creates a sort of community within Venice and this helps to find your routine.'[782] The identity of being both a temporary pavilion worker and a research fellow were co-constitutive. What Anna Crew termed the 'lanyard effect' – an effective pass to inhabit Venice as more than just a tourist, and in ways conducive to quick mobile research – engendered a rapid sense of belonging, a confidence to navigate the city and to speak to people.[783] Noticing my own lanyard, one visitor to the pavilion commented to me: 'so they've made you a *fellow* of the pavilion.' While this was a stabilising identity position ('I'm a fellow at the British Pavilion'), the programme arguably also relies on what Lindo and Tepper call 'a more portable creative

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[781] Interview with Adele Lazzeri, Venice, 29 August, 2017.
[782] Ibid.
[783] Interview with Anna Crew, Venice, 30 August, 2017.

identity' of some arts graduates who 'are able to see themselves as creative even when working outside of the arts or in a variety of everyday contexts.'[784] Though still work 'in the arts', the ability to produce new work alongside the stewarding role arguably relied on integrating this role within a broader sense of being a practitioner while there. As discussed earlier in this chapter, we are now seeing residency models that extend and depart from placement-models to more hybrid models that make use of all kinds of situations; whether as an educational experience at an apiary, a residency during an art exhibition, or as part of temporary pavilion work in Venice. Oftentimes, a residency (as an opportunity for development-time) is almost blended with another situation that also provides inspiration for site-specific work.

Portable Practices

For well-established artists, context-related working might entail temporally and spatially roving projects engaging multiple working spaces, public sites, and institutions. For more precarious artists, mobility across sites may be more about modes of survival, patching together different temporary projects and engagements into a cohesive practice. Claudia Bell's case study of a group of artists participating in an international tour arranged by the Korean-based Nine Dragons Head organisation, describes how such artists travel as part of their professional development, acquiring 'mobility capital'– a form of 'cultural capital' that is 'required by international artists to mark them as global players.'[785] Their practices on this multi-nation tour are described by Bell as 'necessarily portable.'[786] The degree to which the contemporary art world engenders rapid mobilities has meant that most artists, if not strictly site-specific, often adapt their practices to new, short-term situations, and such practices

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[784] Lingo and Tepper, 'Looking Back, Looking Forward', 16
[785] Claudia Bell, 'Peripatetic Artists: Creative Mobility and Resourceful Displacement' in *Lifestyle Mobilities: Intersections of Travel, Leisure and Migration*, eds. Tara Duncan and Scott A. Cohen (Farnham: Routledge, 2013), 24–25.
[786] Ibid, 22.

mirror those used to describe post-Fordist work more generally – adaptive, flexible, light, mobile, and most particularly, *portable*. This was evidenced across the Venice Fellowship projects, where participants frequently used their phones to quickly capture images or notes, to make best use of the time and spatial restrictions of working in Venice without dedicated studio space. Elliott and Urry term portable devices such as mobile phones and tablets as 'miniaturized mobilities' that transform self-experience and 'track the twists and turns of social life inherited and co-created with others.'[787] Portable practices are not merely those that enable making art works or collecting research on-the-go but tied to sets of related practices, such as navigating spaces, networking, and posting online, that allow artists to work continuously across different spaces. The post-studio condition is exemplified in residencies like the British Fellowship, where artists adopted sets of social and artistic strategies that optimised the busy conditions for work, using mobile devices to mediate online and offline spaces, stay in touch, connected, and able to keep gathering materials for their projects.

Across my discussions with the other August fellows about their projects, there was a sense of making effective use of the time and situation to collect site-specific materials that could be processed later. Discussing how the work would be continued after Venice, Victoria Burgher felt that the situation could not be a residency due to the absence of time to reflect and process.[788] Interestingly, India Murphy's experience with residencies had been at almost the opposite end of the spectrum to more retreat-like situations, having previously undertaken a social media residency online, where, far from quiet reflexive time, she noted how in the digital residency 'the only way you can really become visible is by production in some way, shape or form.'[789] In Adele Lazzeri's conception of residencies, she thought her project might be considered one ('because I'm using the space where I work as a studio as well'), but that it

[787] Elliott and Urry, *Mobile Lives*, 5.
[788] Interview with Victoria Burgher, Venice, 30 August 2017.
[789] Interview with India Murphy, Venice, 29 August 2017.

would depend on the project.[790] There is something in the attitude of consciously inhabiting and addressing space as an artistic work site that is present in many residencies, particularly those that emphasise the studio. But the Venice Fellowships' compressed timescale gave it a predominantly extractive character rather than a chance for more general reflection; it functioned as a stimulus to collect material for later use, and prompted the development of light, flexible methods that made the most of a temporary stay that was largely consumed by other work. The mobile work of invigilating (a standing rotation through galleries, where we wore workers' belts to carry catalogues and notepads), was mirrored and expanded in research work that took people to different parts of the city, often seeking out specific locations, or finding relevant sites for investigation while already on the go. Many times, people in the group stopped on the way to somewhere to quickly take a photo or jot down notes for their respective projects. In this way, the Venice Fellowship operated, as a great many residencies do, as a chance for artistic fieldwork, where material that is linked to the place is gathered for later reflection and processing. The *Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencies* describes how 'residencies enable artists to do fieldwork and to work on site' and also called this 'embedded research.'[791] Temporary work at the pavilion provided an immersive context in which to become embedded in Venice – as a community of fellows, as part of a broader scene, as workers rather than simply tourists. Being embedded in this way was not, for most the most part, the object of research, but it acted as its primary infrastructure. The programme thus cleverly leveraged this situation, constructing it as a site from which participants could engage in work in a larger field, the City of Venice.

A short-term work and research programme is a particular kind of site (or situation) for a project; one that might be seen within the larger contemporary art infrastructure predominated by short-term work, opportunities, and projects. These institutional situations

[790] Interview with Adele Lazzerri, Venice, 29 August 2017.
[791] *Policy Handbook on Artists' Residencies,* 15.

vary, but they elicit certain modes of working: light, portable, adaptive. They often solicit role-switching, as well as a stable creative identity, able to work a wide variety of situations for their implications to a broader practice. Arrangements that land participants in a new place for a defined period can designate this time and place as a field for research. Light structures for facilitation (for instance the British Council assigned mentors and ran the preliminary workshops discussed above), an open-ended research prerogative in a broadly conceived of 'field', the familiarity of temporary work meeting the novelty of a new workplace, new friends, new routines, all provided a situation primed for small flexible site-specific projects to emerge.

A final part of my project for the fellowship entailed taking photographs to represent each of the participants that I had interviewed. As part of the pavilion exhibition we were invigilating –Phyllida Barlow's large-scale installation *Folly* – the artist had designed worker belts/aprons, where workers could carry objects like catalogues, something that suited the fact that we worked standing and needed to be mobile. The workers belt/apron was at once a symbol of the physical, material work of the sculptural installation and yet designed for its more immaterial labourers – temporary workers who would communicate, guide and care for the work. This was exhausting physical work, yet primarily associated with the cognitive and affective labour of service work. The belt became a metaphor for the portable research projects that cut across both the scheduled time of pavilion work (which even had us rotating rooms at precise intervals) and the rest of the time in Venice. The belts, which were sometimes filled with objects related to research and leisure, smuggled into work time, were reflective of the creative and innovative ways participants used their time. The belts reflected how people were making pavilion work ***work*** for their research projects, creating innovative project designs that could incorporate work, travel and sightseeing around Venice, allowing research to be on-the-move and opportunistic. Research snuck into pavilion time, and also wove its way into leisure and social time. Far from the 'gift of time' of the retreat residency, the project reflected the 'life hack' mentality discussed earlier, where the residency elicits

temporal practices of stealing time, of micro manipulations, of self-optimisation, to make use of a designated period of time in a particular place. As a result, I chose to photograph each of the fellows' belts, filled with research materials and other objects of their choosing.

Images 4.1–4.7.

Conclusion

Broadly speaking, residencies have, particularly in recent years, been adapters of discourses on the post-Fordist situation for creative work, and in one common formulation, they can provide temporary reprieve from these pressures. In a retreat-residency, physical distance and conditions and places coded as 'idyllic' set up an escapist logic, whereby the artist leaves behind the onslaught of daily pressures and self-management to find rest and repose. In the case studies just explored, and in growing numbers of small-scale experimental models, the residency is almost enmeshed within other situations: the residents' daily life, their participation in an exhibition, as part of a temporary work situation, and so on. In such cases, the resident doesn't so much flee daily work and life obligations as carve out development time amidst such obligations, using the residency as a device or structure in which to moor and also partially make public, artistic development time. The artist doesn't so much 'retreat' in the sense of obtaining distance from other obligations, as they consciously and performatively inhabit a situation, to maximise its potential for creative development. These are different from placement or embedded style residencies, where the artist plays a particular role within an organisation or institution. Instead, the scene of artistic work is quite close to the micro-manipulations and balancing acts artists already perform to maintain productivity. Residencies present an important lens through which to view the issue of artist labour and

precarity, as they provide something of a 'shop window' over artistic processes, and performative acts of inhabiting a work/development situation.[792]

While residency-retreats also exist in tension with contemporary conditions for artistic labour (i.e., can they really claim to provide time-out, when they also contribute to the elicitation of artists to stay globally mobile and responsive to situation?), in these cases, the pretence for secluded and sanctified time-out is dropped entirely. But in providing a kind of mechanism for making the time of development visible, residencies have a role to play in bringing attention to the often precarious, unsupported and self-managed time of developing projects. Once again, a tension exists between whether such projects can turn to this scene of labour and mitigate its worst effects; or whether residencies only provide another form of self-management, even potentially demanding artists innovate to remain productive in the most minimally supportive of situations, eliciting them to remain ever responsive and situated.

While residencies can provide unique situations through which artistic labour can become visible and discursively addressed, this requires attentiveness to what bargain is being struck between the programme – which reveals the artist at work and desires them to make best use of a given situation – and the artist, and whether such a situation is meaningfully supportive of their practice. As in Martin Kahout's case, when he chose to leave *Post-Studio Tales*, perhaps it always needs to be asked of residencies, which tend primarily to frame themselves as supportive opportunities for artists – is there a reason why this artist should wish to reside in this situation? What kinds of residency work will be expected in exchange for the residencies supposed 'gift of time'?

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[792] Windhagger and Mazza, 'Neither Working nor Unworking'.

5 The Artist in Retreat

5.1 Residing in the World

Residencies are far from neutral work-spaces but have performative weight, whether through forms of making the residency visible, present or accessible to audiences, through forms of curation that might transform residencies into meta-projects or through a generalised expectation that the situation provided have a transformative effect on artistic practice. Residencies can be seen to cleverly leverage forms of artistic practice that are less oriented around final artistic products, centring the artist's evolving relationship to place as having important artistic and cultural value. They are involved in shaping artistic development and representing artistic processes, from creating structures for social participation to forms of publicness such as talks, workshops and open studios, through to forms of publicity, documentation, and exegesis: from catalogues, to reports, to blogs and social media stories. There are also subtle ways that residencies leverage the presence of artists in broader, more symbolic ways, where the flow of artists to a place can be used to highlight the artistic value of a site, locale, building or collection, as a source of inspiration or site of research.

As I wrote about in regard to the small retreat case studies in Chapter Three, residencies are often less concerned with the globally mobile artist flying in to undertake a site-specific commission, a situation where artists come to the problem of place to be critiqued and represented. Instead, the work of inhabiting and responding might fulfil more minimal or subtle needs – to progress parts of an artist's projects that make use of particular places or contexts, and for programmes to make use of a steady stream of international artists who utilise local buildings or sites, and contribute to the vitality of local arts ecosystems and a local sense of place. Residencies make use of the symbolism of an artist residing in a place,

from artists re-performing the legacy of a historic founder's patronage of the arts (The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum), invited to undertake a uniquely isolated residency and re-enliven an island's legacy of remote creativity (Källskär guest-programme), or asked to performatively inhabit their own lives creatively as a form of hiatus from the normative routines and professional performances elicited by the contemporary art world (Residency For Artists On Hiatus). While a diverse range of artists will use a given residency situation for a variety of different ends, residencies can construct broader symbolic identities based around bringing artists to a particular place or situation for the purpose of retreating into their work or a collective project.

While residencies often construct an identity of alternativity in regard to the wider art world, they are a ubiquitous part of contemporary artistic working and thus are complexly entangled within its wider flows and elicitations. Residencies can add value to art institutions by opening out onto artistic process and presence (such as in the museum-residencies discussed in Chapter Two), as well as provide a vast infrastructure of support for the development of projects that often accumulate their main effects elsewhere (such as in many of the retreat-residency examples discussed in Chapter Three). As Francisco Guevera has written:

> It is no coincidence that artist residencies have become central to the art world; although small, the dynamic, multidisciplinary, and socially engaging nature of these spaces has become an answer to the scarcity of resources around the globe. Additionally, they optimize production costs, add the symbolic value of "authenticity" to an artwork, and add validity to the artist. Therefore, larger art institutions such as museums, galleries, and universities are now relying on local infrastructure around the world for art production, putting artist-in-residence programs at the center of the tensions between global forces and local realities.[793]

But these effects should not only be seen as a neutral form of altruistic support but as part of a complex picture of how artists self-manage precarious careers across different kinds of

[793] Guevara, 'Artist Residencies: Art Making and the Renegotiation of Global Tensions with Local Realities'.

development and work opportunities. As Laura Ķeniņš has written: 'given the option to receive funding to work at home, in their own studios, many artists might eventually choose this option instead.'[794] In other words, we must understand residencies as not merely providers of idyllic situations of reprieve from wider demands, but as also having a pull factor, inducing artists to work away from home in order to receive support. While most of residencies discussed in this thesis do not make set production demands or indeed support large-scale production of works, they are commonly used as places from and through which artists undertake place-based research, experimentation and forms of fieldwork.

As it is becoming the norm for artists to go into retreat, artists appear to be more present (or present in more places) than ever: taking over Instagram accounts, in corners of local libraries, inhabiting remote forest cabins, national museums and roadside cafes. To retreat today, generally means to become visibly present in a place coded as elsewhere. Residencies often portray the provision of certain kinds of temporalised-spaces as enabling the artist distance from the onslaught of everyday life and work in order to find repose and focus, yet residencies might be better thought as situations through which artists manage the 'time puzzle' of contemporary artistic working, oftentimes also making this working time visible in some way.[795] The demands of a residency situation are part of this balancing act rather than a pure evacuation of pressures. For some, as with Martin Kahout's decision to leave *Post-Studio Tales* for a more workable studio, the all-encompassing residency situation can be more an interruption than ideal 'time, space, and freedom.'[796]

While residencies often represent themselves as a kind of pressure-valve from the speed and demands of the wider art world, they elicit their own norms and pressures around artistic practice. Given their ubiquity, it needs to be further interrogated what it means for

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[794] Laura Ķeniņš, 'Escapists and Jet-Setters'.
[795] Kamp, 'New Concepts of Work and Time', 140.
[796] This is the description used by Cove Park residency, see TransArtists, 'Cove Park'.

artists that it has become a norm to work for periods away from home, often within situations that carry their own expectations and performative weight. What forms are arising from the widespread expectation that artists be able to adapt and be responsive towards situations that are often coded as unique, or strange or intense? Vytautas Michelkevičius has written on the idea of the 'green cube' in relation to remote residencies coded as close to 'nature', but this idea may be the perfect analogy for what many residencies generally seek to project.[797] The notion of the 'green cube' points to the extent to which residencies are re-inhabiting a traditional idea of the studio, but one adapted to post-studio and site-specific working modes. Residencies often seek to both be unique places, suitable for artists to find inspiration and field-sites, and yet also are symbolically emptied out, fading into the background of larger, often multi-sited, artist projects. The 'green cube' is a symbolically calm, slow, and withdrawn site awaiting the retreating artist – its textures, peculiarities, and details, are there for the artist to uncover. The 'green cube' as a stand-in for the 'white cube' thus also repeats a fantasy construction of a background to be projected into, but rather than a site of display meant to foreground autonomous artworks, we find instead a welcoming and placid site for artistic development and research. While many artists use residency programmes to undertake context, place or site-related work, the elicitations, conditions, and qualities of residencies as *institutions* oftentimes fades from view.

While residencies may make use of the temporary presence of an artist, their residency projects will likely travel elsewhere, accumulating new sites of interest, effect and display, even reducing the intensive situation of a residency to a line of acknowledgement or entry on a CV. This is even something the SITE residency project, discussed in Chapter Three, addressed in a meta-critical way, purporting to free artists from even the minimal labour of narrating their own experiences in residence and outsourcing this activity to a third party. While on the one

[797] Michelkevičius,'Rooted and Slow Institutions Reside in Remote Places', 155–157.

hand, this project was able to accumulate all of the artists' works and the written responses into a unified project around the notion of 'site', the residency as a facilitating agency, with a strong thematic emphasis, tends to be mentioned far less in other material on these artists' projects. This is exemplary of the way residencies broadly foreground artistic autonomy by allowing artists to be seen as having individual engagements with place and being relatively free of demands for participation and public engagement.

While residencies often claim to make few demands in regard to final artistic production, they nevertheless tend to accrete ongoing artistic responses to place and can contribute to place-based identity construction. As in the museum-residencies discussed in Chapter Two, residencies can align with museum values and access prerogatives, or as in the 'heritage house' models raised in Chapter Three, can be seen to contribute to local identity and regeneration agendas. Given that individual programmes may invite a wide variety of artists with different practices, it is difficult to determine norms around how residencies shape artistic responses to place, other than in the broad symbolic ways already discussed. But something I have suggested throughout this thesis is that, while shying away from the larger scale critical interventions of previous site-specific art practice, there is something to the way residencies emphasise a language of care, hospitality, friendship, and slowness, and their inculcating role in mitigating the negative aspects of rapidly mobile artist lifestyles, that is borne out in the ways that residency projects reproduce places or contribute to site and place-based identities. Miwon Kwon has written about the high cultural reward of transience, of 'enduring the "wrong" place.'[798] But, as I argued in the introduction of this thesis, what if instead of 'wrong places', residencies seem to reflect a kind of automatic 'right place'? A place coded, on the one hand, as sheltering and caring, and on the other hand as productive of projects or parts of projects that are less intervention or critique, but which emphasise the

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[798] Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 156–157.

potentially transformative effects of a place on an artist's practice (rather than the artists transformative effects on a place, community or given site).

This was an idea I explored in regard museum-residencies, such as the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum residency programme where I noted how themes of hosting, hospitality, and patronage present in the history of the museum were frequently central to artists' projects, which often seemed to perform the very idea of being hosted by the museum. Instead of outsider-intervenor, I argued that museum-residencies generally were centring the museum as a kind of patron, while the artist-resident often mediated their special access to collections and resources. In regard to the topic of retreat-residencies, I also explored various examples where residencies and residents oftentimes embraced the fantasy of inhabiting idyllic places, accepting and also playing off tropes of retreat and repose in nature. In the case studies of three programmes in the Åland archipelago, I noted that rather than large-scale site-based projects, artists were often making use of the temporary situation to progress their wider projects, while programmes could build identities around ideas of retreat. Finally, in the experimental models discussed in Chapter Four, while I explored programmes that were sometimes critically interrogating or revealing of contemporary conditions for artistic labour, their general modus operandi rested on artists accepting and embracing the ludic, intensive, or overwhelming conditions on offer, eliciting artists to adapt, innovate and respond. In the final case study (the British Fellowships in Venice), I explored how artists maximised the limited conditions for individual research, undertaking quick and mobile research strategies to complete a site-specific project alongside a period of work. In these cases, within the framing of residency programmes and discourses, it is the temporal-spatial experiences of the artist-subject and their practice that largely becomes a vector for transformation by the institution and its attendant place-based identity.

Given the scale of the residency landscape, what does it mean that artists are now regularly travelling to places to make work under conditions that emphasise the transformative effects of new places? Does it create too much false optimism around artists' ability to be at home anywhere and everywhere and to meaningfully incorporate new sites into their work, even if not producing large-scale interventions? Arguably these small acts of embracing a residency situation as a good house guest continue to engender the problems outlined by Kwon and others in regard to the artist-place relation, namely, that there remains a continued high cultural reward for artists experiencing and confronting novel situations and new places as a normative part of practice – one that continues to promote high levels of global mobility not accessible to all artists. While residencies have begun to address their own privileged status – including having discussions on and addressing issues such as global inequalities in regard to mobility, the environmental cost of mobility, and gender disparities – for the most part, residencies appear to often be neutralising the potentially negative, confronting or discombobulating effects of travel to new places, through their emphasis on providing care and autonomy to artists, to providing a 'gift of time.'

To always be 'residing' might be to always be attentive to new places that artists pass through, to always be inhabiting situations in ways that inform an artist's practice. But to what extent are today's artists continually expected to record and narrativise their passage through the world, allowing their experiences to seep into their thinking, their social media posts, their relations, their artworks? Pascal Gielen suggests that residencies can even dovetail with the idea of the 'permanently practicing artist', where the artist is 'the lifelong resident of the whole wide world.'[799] These ideas stem from Gielen's categorisation of an 'embedded chronotoype' for residencies, that describes programmes that are more akin to long-term social projects, soliciting artists in holistic life-as-art projects rather than only being briefly invested in their

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[799] Gielen, 'Time and Space to Create and to be Human', 49.

career development. As an example, Gielen cites *the LAND foundation* in Thailand – a project running since 1998 that has involved cultivating rice fields, and which invites residencies of varying duration. As with other residencies with a focus on ecology or sustainable agriculture (as discussed in Chapter Three) the project operates both as a single holistic artistic meta-project that frequently merges art and life, and also plays host to shorter residencies which may contribute to the larger project to varying degrees (for example working the land or building things on-site). Here, the idea of being 'embedded' speaks to the degree to which the residency itself (and potentially its residents) become immersed in and invested in a place or community, rather than viewing the residency as more of an opportunity to work on independent projects. But such organisations are not the norm for how most artists utilise residencies – as short-term arrangements that might facilitate some small part of developing a project. One might also argue that even if artist-residents become briefly immersed in a new social setting or contribute to a small community project, the takeaway is still likely to be of more personal relevance. A question might be, are artists permanently practicing in a way that opens up their investment in the world, as Gielen suggests, or does permanently residing really mean to bring the world into one's individual projects, thus preserving a more traditional idea of the autonomous artist?

Another trend on the opposing end of the one Gielen identifies, is the creation of residencies in very minimal situations, such as online residencies, or short workshops as residencies. Just as residencies can become all-consuming life-as-art projects, shorter-term residencies can give greater emphasis to parts of artistic development that were formerly more like background conditions or small parts of projects. Preparation for an exhibition (such as in the museum-residencies discussed), a largely self-supported short-term stay somewhere (such as in some of the small retreats discussed), or participation in a curatorial project, can all accrue forms of visibility, publicity, public engagement, and authenticity when framed through a residency. When the COVID crisis hit, numerous residencies arose that turned stay-at-home

order into an opportunity to develop work, taking the residency notion of having relatively private time to work and the isolating conditions of the pandemic as mutually compatible.[800] This continued an already existing trend for artists and programmes to innovate ways for artists to be in residence within or alongside their current conditions (such as the Motherhood in Residence and the Residency for Artists on Hiatus discussed in Chapter 4). Gielen argues that one extreme of the embedded chronotype might entail a kind of 'permanent flight from the world', where art never becomes a finalised product or a discrete career pursuit, but is more akin to 'lifelong learning' or an artistic attitude towards living.[801] Such an attitude would entail a kind of exodus from the normative structures of the art world. But a counter-interpretation of a permanently practicing or permanently residing artist, might also be understood through a critique of the ways that residencies can subject all aspects of artistic life and process to forms of visibility and authenticity – where even a period of downtime (such as a hiatus or motherhood) can become an inhabitable, productive situation that can be used in self-promotion and career management.

While Gielen is positive about the prospect of a kind of permanent residing, is this only desirable if residing is a kind of exodus from wider norms in the art world, such as demands around production? A more dystopian image of the permanently residing artist would see this dovetail with wider demands for constant productivity, by making all relating to the world a kind of performance, something already suggested in the literature on the post-Fordist artist. Gielen, who has written extensively on post-Fordism and creative labour, is hardly ignorant of these overlaps but potentially suggests hope in the residency as a form of exodus in the more holistic life-as-project examples he gives. I posit that residencies do not tend towards one end of this scale or another, but often occupy a kind of liminal possibility.

[800] For example the Socially Distant Artists-in-Residence, 'Mission and Vision', accessed 4 August 2021, https://sociallydistantart.org/mission-vision; and The Self-Isolation Pandemic Artist's Residency Program (SIPARP), 'About', accessed 4 August 2021, https://www.siparp.com/.
[801] Gielen,'Time and Space to Create and to be Human', 49.

On the one hand, they can provide cover for artists to be less productive, through a modicum of participation and branding – artists may indeed experience time relatively freed of wider demands and pressures depending on the conditions on offer, including whether or not they are sufficiently materially supported during this time. On the other hand, with the rise of all kinds of small and often self-funded situations, residencies can represent yet another mode of micro-opportunity to be patchworked together with other kinds of situations through which artists self-manage their work. There are simply far too many types of residencies, and uses to which individual residencies are put, to categorise them as either resistant to or implicated in wider patterns of contemporary artistic labour and self-exploitation. But, as situations that often make artistic processes and labour accessible in some way, residencies are at the least making some of the uncompensated time of artists developing projects more visible and open to discursive attention. Even those residencies that offer minimal support still offer some form of arrangement through which artists can thread and stabilise precarious working lives. With artists facing the pressures of highly individuated working lives, this cannot be underestimated. In this way, residencies might be thought of as temporary moorings: not necessarily able to truly push back against the tide of precarious labour conditions, but perhaps able to give temporary reprieve. Instead of their leaning into ever being 'right places', it would be better to think of residencies as particular work-places that attempt to give support to and boundaries around increasingly precarious and unmoored artistic working modes. I would remain cautious of any notion of 'permanently residing' as this could easily dovetail with existing tendencies towards dissolving life and work, the valorisation of artist mobility, and for all parts of artistic process to be opened-up towards forms of visibility and discursive attention. Instead, the recent turn towards retreat opens up possibilities for the artists' experiences in a place to be relatively opaque and for forms of idleness, non-work, leisure, and private development time to be more possible. And while this tendency in itself leans towards romantic ideas, including a continued reductive set of associations around rural

and remote places, and remains tethered to the privileges of travel and access, the artist in retreat holds the possibility of temporary exit without the demand to represent and aesthetically distil local places. Instead, an image of the artist in retreat is offered up: encountered in a forest cabin, seen working in their studio on a residency website, or telling an anecdote behind a new work years after a residency experience.

5.2 A Gift of Time

The residency relationship to temporality is also affected by the same broad tensions as those just discussed – does it offer a sanctified time-out for artists to ideally slow down and find focus, or are residencies really only another opportunity to be managed amidst the ongoing mixed temporalities of balancing freelance hybrid careers? What might time-out mean when artists have laptops and Wi-Fi access and can undertake multiple kinds of work from almost anywhere? I opened this thesis with the theme of a 'gift of time' because it acts as a commonly used catchall phrase for a number of values being promoted by residencies: that they are patrons of artists; that time is made 'free' through providing distance from other pressures and by residencies making few demands themselves; and that this relatively autonomous time out and time away is highly valuable to artistic development. These values are being increasingly linked to a depiction of the artist as a precariat beset by the time problems and pressures of contemporary labour in an artworld demanding high levels of participation, production, and visibility. But the artists time is still capitalised upon in some way by the residency. Many of the representations produced by residencies emerge from or reflect their durational and situated nature: serial blog entries, social media stories, artists' reflections in catalogues, in-process documentation, studio visits where residents are encountered in the midst of their residency journey or in the process of making work, as well as residencies sometimes being inhabited as durational performances or conducive to iterative practices or

unfolding serial events. Residencies are thus inherently linked to a durational period of time, but this time is not entirely 'free' – evacuated of pressures and elicitations.

While residencies often reveal their durational nature through such representations, on another level, they present a largely spatial solution to the temporal problem of overwork and accelerated lives. In Chapter 3, I explored how Sarah Sharma's critique of slowness practices and the broad diagnosis of a sped-up culture in what she calls 'speed theory', has presented a reductive dichotomy regarding the problem (sped-up lives) and the solutions (slowness), which both ignore the complexity of temporal politics and cultural experiences of time.[802] This formulation elides certain power imbalances, namely, the way that 'slowness' for some may force others to shift their lives in response.[803] Sharma argues that, 'what most populations encounter is not the fast pace of life but the structural demand that they must *recalibrate* in order to fit the temporal expectations demanded by various institutions, social relationships, and labor arrangements.'[804] When the contemporary residency purports to 'give time', this is specifically tied to inhabiting a particular place or situation. Unlike, say, an artist salary that might pay artists for development time wherever they choose to undertake it, the residency 'gift of time' is constructed as emerging from special places and coming with a requirement to inhabit and be responsive towards particular places, even if specific production demands are absent. Moreover, the ability to break with one's daily obligations and patterns and to move away, even temporarily, is dependent on the ability and resources to travel and take time off.

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[802] Sharma, *In the Meantime*.
[803] Ibid.
[804] Ibid., 138.

5.3 Chapter Summaries

In **Chapter Two: Residing in the Museum**, I considered the case of museum-residencies as a kind of leavening between residencies that are more focused either on production or audience or social engagement and residencies which are more focused on retreat, which are the main emphasis of this thesis). Though entangled within the continued trend of artist interventions in museum collections, the emergence of residency-programmes specifically has seen the artist as *both* a more withdrawn figure in the museum (behind-the scenes researching and accessing collections) and also more accessible, sometimes working publicly out on the main floors of the gallery. Across many different types of museum-residency programmes, however, I argued, is a performative force of the museum as offering a 'gift of time' to artists to develop work, and as the artist-resident as both a special guest and figure of activation in the museum, doing the work of enlivening, accessing, and activating collections through their processes of development. I argued that there has been a shift from a positioning of the artist as an intervenor, to being a patronised guest-resident in the museum. As I argued in the case of residencies by Indigenous artists in museum collections, the residency as a cultural mediation of processes of accessing and making use of collections, has sometimes been subverted by artists as they reflect on this mediatory role and the limits of museum access prerogatives. This chapter sought to show, through the more specific typology of museum residencies, ways that residencies can use the notion of a 'gift of time' to mediate issues around artist's time and making this time visible and accessible to wider publics.

Chapter Three: The Residency Retreat turned to retreat-residency type residencies that rely on and also re-imagine the classic model of artists retreating to 'nature' to find repose and time-out. In these cases, the coding of rural and remote places often relies on imaginaries of being distant and removed from the hectic pace of everyday life associated with the city. While such imaginaries may be critiqued within programmes, the majority of these residencies

are located in places coded as idyllic, often tourist destinations already opened up for rural gentrification and associated with a broader cultural desire for 'slowness'. These programmes are part of a wider resurgence in retreat practices, which explicitly locate the ability to slow down and find reprieve within particular constructions of rural and remote place. That many artists are now even paying to attend these short programmes in 'idyllic places', highlights the high cultural premium placed on such practices of retreat; and can make the residency 'gift of time' look closer to a form of individuated self-management to find or make time. In wider cultures of work, employees are also being expected to manage their own work-life balance and make time for the 'creative thinking' that informs their other work.

cIn **Chapter Four: Residency Work**, I used examples that were far from the idyllic conditions of retreat-residencies but which nevertheless were being used by artists as bounding structures that could enable them to find, discipline and manage development-time, while giving this time a form of value and authenticity through the visibility offered by the residency. These cases sought to expose how residencies, in attempting to show the artist at work, could reflect the difficult time-problems that beset contemporary artistic working. Inhabited at times as self-aware devices for artists to carve out a pocket of time to develop work, residency programmes can be revealing of the balancing act of artistic working as well as of the different kinds of labour that residencies elicit: of adapting to situation, of making practices more mobile and portable, self-managing one's time, communicating, socialising, self-promotion online and so on. It may be that as residencies increasingly turn to the figure of the artist precariat as in need of rest, repose, retreat and shelter, that greater consideration of forms of residency work and the subjectivities and temporalities this work entails, are sorely needed, in order to interrogate rather than accept and inhabit the fantasy of a pure 'gift of time.'

Instead of accepting the rhetoric of a 'gift of time' this can rather be seen as a problem-idea that references an ideal of temporal-spatial withdrawal within residencies and

which courses through and shapes residency practices and discourses. The influence of this idea can be seen in the recent turn towards ideas of retreat. Instead of the once celebrated artist-nomad, travelling the world and confronting the 'problem of place', we now often find an emergent figure of the artist in retreat, a precariat, sheltered in an idyllic or at least minimally supportive place, there to absorb its qualities as a site of withdrawal and repose and also as a potential site of inspiration and transformation. Instead of the artist as intervenor in the museum, re-writing or upending the narratives of the museum, we might instead find the artist in their studio, sometimes positioned as an extension of the museum's prerogatives around access, embedded within and absorbing the ambiences of the past. Instead of the site-specific or community-based artist come to reproduce and enliven the specificities of site as against the homogenising effects of global capitalism, we find an older figure of the artist fleeing the city to find repose in nature, perhaps collecting new materials out in the field or allowing the contingencies of a new place to seep into wider, expansive projects. And instead of the artist managing their career alone and out of sight – struggling through a period of hiatus, preparing an exhibition, or accepting a short-term job – we might see them inhabiting these situations as opportunities to reside, to turn processes, research and relations into the fabric of context-related projects. The artist in retreat from 'everyday life', does not simply receive a 'gift of time' away from other pressures but enters a new conditional, temporary situation, one they are often elicited to inhabit in particular ways as an artist-in-residence. As the artist goes into retreat, they also become present in new ways in a particular place: inhabiting, socialising, responding, communicating, documenting, adapting, narrating, and residing. We might therefore understand a residency 'gift of time' not as the absence of pressures, elicitations, and norms, but as one filled with the various practices, subjectivities, and modes of residing, elicited by being an artist-in-residence.

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