
RED HOOK JOURNAL

Press Releases

Studio

Stuart Comer

In 1993, as the World Wide Web first began its ascent to mass public use, and utopian chatter about open-source gift economies was still at a low murmur, the artist Dave Muller offered a decidedly less virtual networking forum in his studio at CalArts in Los Angeles. Muller transformed the space into a gallery for one-day shows of work by his peers and friends, a series he later developed into Three-Day Weekend, a nomadic project space that ran from 1994 to 2004.

In hindsight, the CalArts shows Muller organized reflect a telling moment in the recent history of artists' studios and artistic labor. Playing with the "post-studio" agenda established by John Baldessari and Michael Asher at CalArts, Muller evolved his studio space from a site exclusively devoted to production into a nexus of creation, exhibition, and curatorial enterprise. No longer the solitary studio of Abstract Expressionism, nor the dispersed site of production advocated by Robert Smithson, nor even the hierarchical "studio system" of Warhol's Factory, Muller's studio projects framed exhibition making, social interaction and dialogue as artistic labor in their own right. Only a few years later, as commercial interest in young Los Angeles artists rapidly increased and the city's MFA studios and programs became a feeding ground for gallerists and collectors, the model proposed by Muller's transformation of the studio into a public, social, more theatrical space took a less utopian turn.

Projects like Muller's studio exhibitions represent the shift toward a more entrepreneurial artistic practice in which traditional distinctions among artist, curator, worker, owner, tenant, collector, and consumer have largely dissolved. Echoing many writers and theorists of his generation, Alberto López Cuenca notes that "it has been the remaking of the artist's studio as a space of production that has signaled the overlapping of kinds of labour that were previously separated."^[1] Cuenca adds that "the exceptional character of art does not lie in the object or experience it produces but in the sort of social relations artistic practice can put in motion."

What are the working conditions that can facilitate the exceptional character Cuenca invokes? Can the multitude of physical and virtual spaces in which they currently take place still be defined as a "studio"? In defining a more productive public role for the studio, what representations could help visualize and define the conditions and ambitions of artists working today? Caroline A. Jones, for one, has brilliantly detailed the camera's role in constructing and popularizing a modern iconography of the studio,

observing that “as the cameras themselves whirred away in the ‘solitary’ studio, they became participants in the socialization and expansion of that space.”[2]

The following project proposes to chart the degree to which this expansion has evolved, and to involve artists themselves in creating this documentation, using the expediency of digital filming technologies. I will make two requests to one artist. That artist will in turn make the same two requests to a second artist, who will in turn make the same two requests to a third artist, and so on.

Here are the two requests:

1. Using the most expedient digital means possible, please film the space you would define as your working environment. This film will be uploaded to the *Red Hook Journal for Curatorial Studies* website for posterity.
2. While filming, please answer the following question: What is the function of the studio?

Amalia Pica

The first artist in the series is Amalia Pica:

[Vimeo Video](#)

Stuart Comer is curator of film at Tate Modern in London. He oversees film and video work for the Tate Collection and Displays, is co-curator of the opening program for the Tanks at Tate Modern, and organizes an extensive program of screenings, performances, and events.

Amalia Pica (b. 1978, Neuquén, Argentina) studied sculpture at ENBAPP in Buenos Aires and completed a two year residency at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten. She has exhibited internationally at the Venice Biennale, Incheon Biennale, Aichi Triennale, and Malmö Konsthall. Upcoming exhibitions include Modern Art Oxford, The List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. She lives and works in London.

Nina Yuen completed her BA at Harvard University and a residency at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. Recent exhibitions include, An Imaginary Relationship with Ourselves, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Oregon; Genius without Talent, De Appel Arts Center, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Lucid Dreaming, Stedelijk Museum, Netherlands; The Sky Within My House,

Contemporary Art Patios, Cordoba, Spain.

Hee-Seung Choi holds a M.M. in music composition from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University (US), and a BA in ArtScience from Royal Academy of Art, The Hague (NL). She works with various media including video, performance, sound and installation. Her work has been shown in Europe, Korea and United States. She currently lives and works in Amsterdam.

Igor Sevcuk (b. 1972, Banja Luka, BA) received a MFA from Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam. In 2002, he won Dutch art award 'Prix de Rome' in the category of film and video. Recent exhibitions include Gallery JungMiSo in Seoul, Westfaelischer Kunstverein in Münster, Changdong Art Studio in Seoul, Living Art Museum in Reykjavik, Kunstverein in Frankfurt, Plattform in Berlin, Public > in Paris. Curently Sevcuk is organising artist-led-space Project Goleb, Amsterdam.

Naro Snackey (b. 1980 Bonn, Germany) studied at the Art Academy in Den Bosch, the Netherlands and was an artist in residency at the Rijksacademie in Amsterdam and LIA, Leipzig in Germany. Her unique, and often expansive sculptural and collage based works incorporate photography, simultaneously deconstructing and reconstructing images and their positions in time and space. Her work has been shown in Europe and Asia. She currently lives and works in Amsterdam, NL.

Semâ Bekirovic uses photographs, videos, and installations to explore the tension between control and chance, often creating opportunities for situations to occur, and letting coincidence decide how the work develops. Bekirovic's work has been exhibited widely throughout the Netherlands, and the Hayward Gallery Project space in London featured her solo exhibition *Matters in Space*. She studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and worked as artist in residence at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam.

Notes:

1. Alberto López Cuenca. "Artistic Labour, Enclosure and the New Economy." *Afterall 30*, Summer 2012. [return to text](#)
2. Caroline A. Jones. *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. [return to text](#)

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