The New Fordist Organization

Manufacturing Style

Exhibition Notes

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00.1Introduction

By David Pocknee

As a general rule, manifestos are written by those least capable of carrying them out. This helps explain the gap between theory and practice.

The New Fordist Manifesto is a theoretical readymade, just waiting for the right context. When I came across it last year, soon after joining the recently formed *Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology (www.acesinstitute.eu)*, I knew New Fordism's speculative approach towards artistic production would fit perfectly with the data-driven orientation of the *Institute*. I soon set up the *New Fordist Organization* for the practical implementation of the manifesto's ideas, hence the title of this exhibition.

"We live in a time of crisis.
Therefore, our art should reflect that crisis.
This crisis is an economic one, therefore our reflection and response should be economic."

So starts the *New Fordist Manifesto*. New Fordism is an economic response in its purest form – an investment in Art Futures. This response carries with it its own politics, but one which it embeds intrinsically into the nature of its process, not gaudily externalized as "content". New Fordism is a process-based art.

This booklet is an x-ray of the works, through which the processes of their creation may be seen. These processes range from complex computer deconstructions of artistic methodologies into simple actions, to biomechanical approaches, to data-led ways of working.

This exhibition is the result of a residency at GEMAK, which started on 23 April 2013 and has been kindly supported by both GEMAK and Stroom. It has been the first intensive attempt to apply New Fordist approaches to the mass-production of art. The aim of the residency was not mass-production per se, hence the comparatively small amount of works, but the development of technologies that make artistic mass-production possible across several disciplines. Painting, choreography, sculpture, theater, film and music have all had the New Fordist approach applied to them and are presented here in various stages of development. We will continue to work in the gallery over the course of the exhibition, which will culminate in a *finnesage* on Friday 28 June (16:00-19:00), producing yet more works and exploring yet more possibilities. This residency and its progress has been and will be recorded in a blog on www.acesinstitute.eu.

New Fordism attempts to face the economic realities of contemporary art production by engaging in a radical re-reading of Gramsci and a re-appropriation of Fordist, Taylorist and Pavlovian theories and working methods. This theoretical assemblage is then articulated through the research-led methodology of *The Institute Of ACES*. The result is an affirmation of historiography as a creative discipline and a set of works which silently ponder the nature of the creative act, cultural economics, and labor.

About The New Fordist Organization

The New Fordist Organization is part of the *The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics* and Sociology and is a new collective of composers, visual artists and performance artists, set up to apply the principles of mass-production, industrialization and mechanized creation, pioneered by the American industrialist Henry Ford, to the visual and performing arts.

The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology

The Institute Of Applied Cultural Economics And Sociology

The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology is an independent research organization designed to provide a platform for the use of cultural economics and cultural sociology as the basis for strategic interventions into the art markets.

The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology believes that the world of the arts is not a meritocracy but instead, due to its integration with capitalism, operates on market principles – the same principles that the fields of economic and sociology are adept at describing. *The Institute* seeks to use these fields, not as analytic tools, but as creative instruments to enable the transformation of the art markets themselves.

The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology has, as its principle focus, a data-driven approach to artistic creation. Our **Research Department** collects vast swathes of data on cultural organizations and practices from all over Europe, analyzing it to discover new and emerging market trends, whilst our **Application Department** re-synthesizes the results into new possibilities for artistic endeavours.

Our Application Department consists of a series of autonomous groups, all taking the core principles of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology, as well as the large database resources of *The Institute*, as a starting point for their creative processes. The New Fordist Organization is one of these groups.

The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology believes that art can be improved and revolutionized through the study of the economic and sociological manner of its creation, and that economic and sociological analysis need not be a passive activity, but an active one which transforms its field of study

Section 1: Theory

01.1 *What Is "New" About "New Fordism"*

by David Pocknee

1. Introduction

"Fordism" was a term coined by the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci to describe the working practices of the American car manufacturer Henry Ford in the beginning of the 20th Century.[1] Ford's factories employed a system of principles that allowed the mass-production of complex, multi-part machines, such as the automobile, at rates which far outstripped those of any other producer.

The incredible increases in production that were possible under Ford's system came from three key elements:

1. The division of labour
2. The deskilling of the worker
3. The application of "biomechanical" principles

This paper will look at how these three elements operated in Ford's factories and their connection to the works of the founder of Scientific Management, Frederick Winslow Taylor. We will then look at the way in which these ideas have been developed, extrapolated and transposed into the aesthetic realm in the work of the New Fordist Organization.

2. Fordism and Taylorism

The division of labour and the atomization of the production process found in Ford's factories was not Ford's invention, neither was the idea of mass production itself. Division of labour stretches all the way back, via Sam Colt's firearms, to the industrial revolution, and is most famously seen in Adam Smith's description of pin manufacturing from *The Wealth Of Nations* (1776):

"One man draws out the wire, another straights it, a third cuts it, a fourth points it, a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on, is a peculiar business, to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations... The division of labour, however, so far as it can be introduced, occasions, in every art, a proportionable increase of the productive powers of labour."[2]

This atomization of the process of production resulted in a fundamental change in the role of the worker. Instead of being an employee with a modicum of independence and control over their work, this new mode of production required considerably less skill and saw a re-location of power to

1. *Americanism And Fordism* Antonio Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks" ed. & trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (USA, 1971), 279-318
2. Adam Smith *An Inquiry Into The Nature And Causes Of The Wealth Of Nations* http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN1.html#B.I, Ch.1, Of the Division of Labor ed. Edwin Cannan, first pub. 1776, 5th edition (London, 1904) http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN1.html accessed 10/04/2013

the management. In the case of pin manufacturing, this is not a removal of so much autonomy, as the simplicity of the task does not necessitate a large amount of managerial organization. However, to achieve the complex deconstructions of car-part manufacturing into single tasks, management needed to take on a much more organizatory and invasive attitude to working methodologies than would have previously been necessary. The temporal synchronicity needed to have a certain number of actions performed on a part, ready in time to be connected to another part which had been through an independent series of processes, necessitated the relocation of responsibility to a management level and subjugated the workers' autonomy to a much larger, and centrally-controlled, formal scheme. This shift initiated a much more hands-on approach to factory management, as well as compounding the problem of a Marxian "alienation of labour". Ford described this re-location of control in his writing:

"I have heard it said, in fact I believe it is quite a current thought, that we have taken the skill out of work. We have not. We have put in skill. We have put a higher skill into planning, management, and tool building, and the result of that skill are enjoyed by the man who is not skilled."[3]

Yet, despite this protestation, it is clear that the deconstruction of the work into a set of single, simple actions removed the need for the worker to have anything but the most basic level of skill to work in one of Ford's factories:

"The length of time required to become proficient in the various occupations is about as follows: 43 per cent. of all the jobs require not over one day of training; 36 per cent. require from one day to one week; 6 per cent. require from one to two weeks; 14 per cent. require from one month to one year; one per cent. require from one to six years. The last jobs require great skill--as in tool making and die sinking."[4]

In fact, the worker need not even be in good physical health:

"We have experimented with bedridden men-men who were able to sit up. We put black oilcloth covers or aprons over the beds and set the men to work screwing nuts on small bolts...The men in the hospital could do it just as well as the men in the shop...The tubercular employees – and there are usually about a thousand of them – mostly work in the material salvage department. Those cases which are considered contagious work together in an especially constructed shed...At the time of the last analysis there were 9,563 substandard men..."[5]

Although this division of labour required the employment of a much larger workforce, due to the increase in individual jobs, the savings in efficiency that Ford was able to make under this new system made the investment worth it, especially as the people employed need not be skilled at the job, which would necessitate a higher wage. For example, the operation of constructing the fly-wheel magneto was previously done by one workman. In April 1913, this job was broken down into twenty nine separate operations, each done by a different employee, cutting the time of construction from twenty minutes to thirteen minutes ten seconds.[6]

The division of labour and deskilling of workers was coupled with Ford's final principle designed to increase labour: the introduction of biomechanics. Whilst not referred to as such in Ford's writings, his attitude towards factory arrangement and organization has striking overlaps with that of his contemporary - and inventor of Scientific Management – Frederick Winslow Taylor.

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3 Henry Ford *My Life And Work* (n.p., 1922), 56
4 ibid., 77
5 ibid., 77
6 ibid., 58

Taylor sought to bring a scientific rigour to the analysis, planning and management of work in the factories of the late 19th and early 20th Century, developing a whole system of techniques designed to increase efficiency. These included machine belting, centralized planning offices, standardized tools, equations for the most efficient speed to run specific types of metal, and optimum wage rates designed to incentivize workers. Taylor's rigorous and scientific approach to his work contrasted markedly with Ford's unsystematized methodology which was actively dismissive of "experts":

"The factory keeps no records of experiments. The foreman and superintendents remember what has been done. If a certain method has tried and failed, somebody will remember it-but I am not particularly anxious for the men to remember what someone else has tried to do in the past, for then we might quickly accumulate far too many things that could not be done. That is one of the problems with extensive records."[7]

Despite this difference in methodology, the similarity in result can clearly be seen if one contrasts Ford's "principles of assembly", with the research on bricklaying done by the Taylor disciple Frank B. Gilbreth and referenced in Taylor's own *Principles of Scientific Management*.

Fordism:

"1. Place the tools and the men in the sequence of operation so that each component part shall travel the least possible distance while in the process of finishing.

2. Use Work slides or some other form of carrier so that when the workman completes his operation, he drops the part always in the same place – which place must always be the most convenient place to his hand – and if possible have gravity carry the part to the next workman for his operation.

3. Use sliding assembly lines by which the parts to be assembled are delivered at convenient distances."[8]

Taylorism:

"An analysis of the expedients used by Mr Gilbreth in reducing the motions of his bricklayers from eighteen to five shows that this improvement has been made in three different ways:

First. He has entirely dispensed with certain movements which the bricklayers in the past believed were necessary, but which a careful study and trial on his part have shown to be useless.

Second. He has introduced simple apparatus, such as his adjustable scaffold and his packets for holding the bricks, by means of which, with a very small amount of cooperation from a cheap laborer, he entirely eliminates a lot of tiresome and time-consuming motions which are necessary for the bricklayer who lacks the scaffold and the packet.

Third. He teaches his bricklayers to make simple motions with both hands at the same time, where before they completed a motion with the right hand and followed it later with one from the left."[9]

In both examples, the key is the reduction of surplus movement. In concluding the anecdote about the division of labour in fly-wheel magneto construction, outlined earlier, Ford concludes by showing the huge increases in efficiency that were made by eliminating surplus movement through raising the assembly line to waist height:

7 ibid., 61
8 ibid., 58
9 Frederick Winslow Taylor *The Principles Of Scientific Management* (New York, London, 1911), 40

"Then we raised the height of the line eight inches – this was in 1914 – and cut the time to seven minutes [from thirteen minutes, ten seconds]. Further experimenting with the speed that the work should move at cut the time down to five minutes."[10]

This is essentially the application of Scientific Management-style biomechanics to the assembly line. In Ford's factories, the assembly line itself was also biomechanically designed - it moved, reducing the need for the movement of workers. Similar dramatic reductions in production time were seen in the assembly of the car's chassis; the combination of a moving assembly line, the subdivision of work and the innovative raising of the assembly line to waist-height reduced the construction time from twelve hours and twenty-eight minutes per chassis to only one hour thirty three minutes.[11]

Taylor's work too, abounds with successes, but here achieved through his engineer's background and relentless experimentation. An example of this can be found in the "time studies" he developed to calculate the most efficient time in which a task could be accomplished.

"Two first-class laborers were selected, men who had proved themselves to be physically powerful and who were also good steady workers...These men were given all kinds of tasks, which were carried out each day under the close observation of the young college man who was conducting the experiments, and who at the same time noted with a stop-watch the proper time for all the motions that were made by the men. Every element in any way connected with the work which we believed could have a bearing on the result was carefully studied and recorded. What we hoped ultimately to determine was what fraction of a horse-power a man was able to exert, that is, how many foot-pounds of work a man could do in one day."[12]

This data then provided the basis for calculating a law that Taylor then applied to the handling of pig-iron:

"...the law is that for each given pull or push on the man's arms it is possible for the workman to be under load for only a definite percentage of the day. For example, when pig-iron is being handled (each pig weighing 92 pounds), a first-class workman can only be under load 43 per cent. of the day."[13]

This in-depth and scientific analysis helped dramatically increase efficiency (a change from 12½ tons to 47 tons per man per day) and, in this case, was implemented through a supervisor with a stop-watch indicating when the men should lift, move and rest.[14]

The scientifically-driven improvements in efficiency implemented by Taylor, and Ford's own try-it-and-see approach to improved productivity, have primarily been ignored or badly implemented to the process of artistic production. The New Fordist Organization aims to correct this, drawing not only on the work of Ford and Taylor, but also Antonio Gramsci's analysis of their work, and the underlying Pavlovian nature of Fordist and Taylorist labor.

3. What Is "New" About "New Fordism"?

The term "New Fordism" was primarily chosen to imply an ideology that returns, re-evaluates and renews Fordist ideas of production, yet distances itself from Post-Fordist theory and its numerous offshoots. When we talk of New Fordism, we essentially imply a new way of seeing the past.

10 Henry Ford *My Life And Work* (n.p., 1922), 58
11 ibid., 59
12 Frederick Winslow Taylor *The Principles Of Scientific Management* (New York, London, 1911), 25-26
13 ibid., 27
14 ibid., 27

"New Fordism" was first proposed in 2012, by the writer and cultural theorist Frederick Droppe, in an article entitled "The New Fordist Manifesto"[15]. In it, Droppe engages in a radical re-reading of Gramsci's essay "Americanism and Fordism" to position Fordism as a viable aesthetic agenda, not only to open up a new vista of artistic expression, but also to combat the Performing Arts' increasing decline in income, known as "Baumol's Cost Disease".

Cost Disease was first proposed by the economists William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen in their 1966 book "Performing Arts – The Economic Dilemma".[16] Their contention was that, due to the interlinked nature of the labour markets, an increase in wages in one industry will cause corresponding increases in that of another. Thus, an increase in wages in the industrial sector will precipitate increased wages in the performing arts. However, whilst increased wages in industry are tied with an increase in productivity, or output per work hour; there is a physical limit to the increase of productivity possible in the performing arts. This is due to the fact that whilst, in industry, this productivity may come through improvements in technology or production techniques, requiring less people and taking less time to produce an item, it still takes the same amount of time and people to play a Beethoven String Quartet as when it was first written. To play it in more time or with less people is not possible, thus a real increase in productivity is prevented, meaning that, year on year, the performing arts will in, real terms, lose money.[17] However, Droppe contests this notion. The increase in productivity discussed by Baumol and Bowen is only related to visible, not invisible labour. He contended that through adopting Fordist production techniques, this invisible labour can be externalized, commodified and made profitable. Shortly after the publishing of Droppe's article, the New Fordist Organization was set up, dedicated to putting his ideas into practice.

But not everyone was impressed, the cultural theorist Piotr Zak launched a blistering broadside against New Fordism, describing it as "the cynical, intellectually-bereft attention-seeking of the worst type of immoral, money-fixated charlatans. A movement which seeks to degrade modern art through commodification, a new dark right-wing of aesthetics."[18].

Droppe riposted with an article entitled "Manufacturing Style" in which he not only laid the aesthetic groundwork for New Fordism but proposed it as the only real way for de-commodifying art.[19] Droppe contested that, whilst in industry, a consistent deviation in the reproduction of an object represented a failure in production and a loss in productivity, in aesthetic terms, this consistent deviation was STYLE and that, using behaviorist Pavlovian and Tayloristic techniques to control this deviation, an aesthetically coherent and new style could be produced. He also contested that, in the age of the intense economic commodification in the art market, New Fordism, with its ideology of mass-production detached and ambivalent to market concerns of supply and demand, was a way to articulate old leftist Adornian ideas about the autonomy and de-commodification of art.

"Our new vision of Fordism is not based on the utilization of tools to improve artistic productivity, but to aestheticize the process of productivity and create an art so detached and unconcerned with any type of idea of supply and demand that it achieves cultural autonomy."

This paradox between the traditional right-wing affiliations of Fordism and its connection to the acceleration of capitalist accumulation in the early twentieth century, and the position that Droppe suggests for it, as a methodology for fighting against an increasing commodification of the art markets, is one that is inherent to the idea of New Fordism itself.

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15 Frederick Droppe *The New Fordist Manifesto* http://aces.ricercata.org/index.php?nfos=manifesto accessed 11/04/2013

16 William J. Baumol & William G. Bowen *Performing Arts – The Economic Dilemma* (New York, 1966)

17 *Baumol's Cost Disease*, James Heilbrun, "A Handbook of Cultural Economics" Ed. Ruth Towse (Massachusetts, 2003), 91

18 Piotr Zak *An Aesthetic Which Only Comes In Black – A Critique Of New Fordism*

19 Frederick Droppe *Manufacturing Style* http://aces.ricercata.org/index.php?nfos=style accessed 11/04/2013

4. Externalization Of Labour

A unique characteristic that distinguishes New Fordism from its precursors is the externalization of hidden labour. One of Henry Ford's greatest achievements was the popularization of the barbecue. In the production of his cars, Ford found that wood scraps and sawdust were left over as a waste product of the production process. In order to increase profit, he transformed these scraps into charcoal briquettes, simultaneously created an artificial demand for them by popularizing the barbecue. This ingenious transformation of a waste product into commodity is a key idea in any type of Fordist thinking.

Many artworks have large amounts of waste. Not in the form of physical by-products of the artistic process, but in the invisible, un-commodified labour that go into their production. This waste is hidden labour. With a painting, the labour that goes into its creation is hidden from the public, and only the finished object is presented, just as, in the performing arts, the rehearsal process is obscured from view. This hidden labour could be turned productive by transforming it into a performance, which can be commodified. New Fordism aims to externalize all of the hidden labour of a work and translate into a commodifiable form.

5. New People For A New Art

The final component that distinguishes New Fordism from its precedents is its re-engagement with the social implications of Gramsci's critique of Fordism and a placing of it within a larger context of historical movements which attempted to forge strong connections between art, work and society. This re-engagement draws especially on philosophies and practices of art in Russia just after the 1917 revolution, their connections to behaviorist forms of thinking typified by the work of Ivan Pavlov, and the role that the recently-formed Christian sect "The Church Of New Art" may play in defining the social milieu needed for New Fordism to take root.

In Gramsci's analysis in *Americanism and Fordism,* he highlights the way in which American society constructed legislation (alcohol prohibition) to create the ideal worker for the Fordist/ Taylorist factory, and the way in which this type of working reflects back upon society itself (in his consideration of the "sexual question").

The prohibition of alcohol in America, between 1919 and 1933, created a sociological condition that allowed Taylorism and Fordism to flourish:

"In America rationalisation of work and prohibition are undoubtedly connected. The enquiries conducted into the workers' private lives and the inspection services created by some firms to control the "morality" of their workers are necessities of the new methods of work. People who laugh at these initiatives (failures though they were) and see in them only a hypocritical manifestation of "puritanism" thereby deny themselves any possibility of understanding the importance significance and objective import of the American phenomenon, which is also the biggest collective effort to date to create, with unprecedented speed, and with a consciousness of purpose unmatched in history, a new type of worker and man."[20]

The key idea here is the creation of "a new type of worker and man" better suited to the highly rationalized work of the new factory regime. The "enquiries conducted into the workers' private lives", referenced above, clearly refer to the work of the "Sociological Department" set up in Ford's factories following the introduction of the five-dollar day. The description of their function given in Richard Bak's *Henry and Edsel* is worth quoting in this respect:

20 *Americanism And Fordism* Antonio Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks" ed. & trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (USA, 1971), 302

"The Sociological Department implemented Ford's ideas about self-help. Between 1913 and 1921, as many as eighty investigators at a time fanned out to visit workers' homes, interview neighbors, and examine personal documents, all in an effort to determine wage increases and discharges. "Employees who cannot remain sober and industrious will be dismissed," explained Couzens, "but no one will be let out without being given every possible chance to make good. No one will be discharged until we find that he is of no use to us in any way whatever."[21]

The reasoning for these measures came not from paternalism "Nothing paternal was intended!"[22] but - in accordance with Gramsci's lucid analysis - the need for a new worker to better integrate with the new rationalized system of work, summed up pointedly by Ford as: "A man who is living aright will do his work aright."[23]

The Sexual Question

Gramsci understood the importance of sexuality in the make-up of the Taylorist or Fordist worker, dedicating a section of his essay in *Americanism and Fordism* to the "sexual question", an idea only quoted and briefly mentioned in Dr. Droppe's analysis:

"It seems clear that the new industrialism wants ... the man as worker not to squander his nervous energies in the disorderly and stimulating pursuit of occasional sexual satisfaction. The employee who goes to work after a night of "excess" is no good for his work. The exaltation of passion cannot be reconciled with the timed movements of productive motions connected with the most perfected automatism."[24]

Gramsci sees this as a logical outcome from the Taylorization of working processes, yet its implications for the Taylorization of art are only tantalizingly hinted at by Droppe:

"New Fordism requires the complete subsumption of sexual desire to the creative act. To this end, New Fordism proposes the extension of the existing Church of New Music to become the Church Of New Art – an organization premised on a religious fervour, commitment, and vow of celibacy."

Here Droppe makes reference to the Church Of New Art (CoNA), a recently formed Christian sect whose doctrine explores the point of crossover between the spirituality of art, the formalism of religious regulation and the dedication, focus and zeal which characterizes both undertakings. Led by the elusive Reverend Eli Firmaments, and refusing to assert a web presence, CoNA preaches a message which extends many biblical ideas into the realm of artistic production. Advertising is frowned upon as "the devil's artform", promoting "greed, vanity and fornication". A work of art is seen as a gift given from God "inspiration is God speaking to you", and as such, is an activity that should be carried out with deference and respect. The biblical story of Jesus and the money-lenders is seen as an allegory for the role of money in artistic creation, which is a holy act – by letting your work engage in a market, you sully the Lord's gift. Similarly, *"every single work of art that goes unsold is a gift to the Lord"*. [25]

The most interesting thing about CoNA, in relation to our contemplation of "the sexual question" is its restrictions upon sexuality. Onanism and any type of fornication are thoroughly discouraged

21 Richard Bak, *Henry And Edsel – The Creation of the Ford Empire* (Hoboken, New Jersey & Canada, 2003), 72-73
22 ibid., 88
23 ibid., 88
24 *Americanism And Fordism* Antonio Gramsci, "Prison Notebooks" pg 305
25 All quotations from the author's correspondences with Eli Firmaments (March-April 2013)

as they are seen *almost in biomechanical terms* as activities which divert energy away from the praising of God through the act of working – and specifically of working on art. Also interesting to our consideration of New Fordism is the fact that the church advocates an extremely progressive view of the type of art created, refusing to condemn even those works that may traditionally be considered blasphemous. One reason for this is the distinctly anti-market approach that the sect takes towards artistic creation, seeing it as a holy activity and gift to and from God which should not be sullied by a contamination with a market that promotes vanity and greed. The content of the work is seen as irrelevant due to the focus on the holiness of the act of working, and the fact that "He knows what is in your heart", re-locating judgements of morality from the mortal to immaterial realm. Here we also find the riposte to Walter Benjamin's critique in *The Work Of Art In The Age Of Mechanical Reproduction* that the auric nature of the artwork became lost as it found itself divorced from ritual. In CoNA, the ritual is re-instated, preserving the aura, yet mass-production still ensues.

Given the importance that the "New Person" has in the ideology of Fordism, it seems that the New Fordist Organization may see in CoNA a tool for the transformation of the egotistical, vain and greedy figure of the modern artist, needlessly expending biomechanical energy through fornication and onanism, into the "New Person" best suited to the rationalization of artistic production promised with New Fordism.

6. The Shock Of The New Fordism

New Fordism aims to build upon and develop the many historical precedents for the application of Fordist, Taylorist and biomechanical principles onto the production of art. By using Gramsci's insightful analysis of the Fordist and Taylorist phenomena, the New Fordist Organization hopes to develop a new way of working which uses the process of mass-production as a way of embedding style into artistic works. By using the writings of the four key conceptual figures of New Fordism - Henry Ford, Antonio Gramsci, Frederick Taylor, and Ivan Pavlov – combined with the latest technology and a re-imagining and extrapolation of the historical precedents, New Fordism aims to function as a new way of working, taking onboard the economic realities of 2013 and re-purposing them to its own ends.

David Pocknee
24/04/2013

The full version of this essay can be found at www.acesinstitute.eu

TWO-PART INVENTION

or: on the application of Fordism to an alternative practice for piano and electronics

Robert Blatt

♩= 108

Piano

Electronics

Postmaster, gentlemen, you too politician, The Democrats

elec

are the middle of the road party. The Republicans are the straddle of the road party.

elec

So I hereby nominate Mr. Henry Ford for President and christen the party the all over the road party.

pf

elec

In the first place, it is too bad that he is too competent. That is the only thing that'll be.

pf

pf

pf

pf

elec

He has made more money than any man in the world by paying the highest wages;

pf

elec

yet, he don't even manufacture necessity - neither would you call it a luxury. It just kinda comes un-

pf

elec

der the heading of knickknacks. I was at his home last year and happened to ask him that in case of

elec

stiff opposition just how cheap he could sell his cars. He said, "Why Will, by control-

elec

ling the selling of the parts I - I could give the cars away." He said, "Why those things would shake off in a

elec

poke in a year to pay for themselves, and second year that's just pure profit."

pf

elec

People think Dr. Coué was the originator of autosuggestion but Mr. Ford is. He originated autosuggestion

pf

elec

when he made the synopsis of a car.

pf

pf

elec

He should make a good political race.

pf

elec

He carries two-thirds of this country now. There's no reason why there shouldn't be a Ford in the White House, there ever

elec

were. He's the only man that could make Congress earn their salery. He would start a bill through and give each

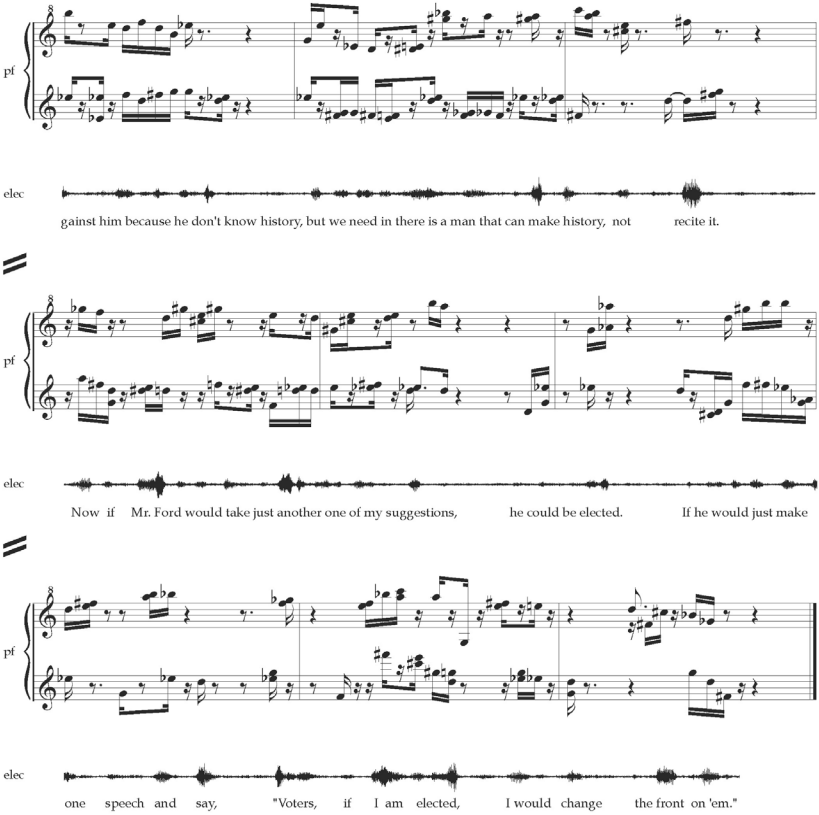
elec

one something to tack onto it. When it'd come out, it would be ready to use.

pf

elec

He's the only man that when Congress started stalling could lift up the hood and see what's the matter with it. Some are a-



Performance Notes

Electronics:

Consists of a 1-channel sound file available upon request or to be created on your own with a copy of "Will Rogers Nominates Henry Ford for President" Victor 45369-A. Currently accessible via:

http://archive.org/details/WillRogers-WillRogersNominatesHenryFordForPresident1923

Create silences at the following points:
1) at 0:26.25 after the word "be" to 0:49.5 before the word "he"
2) at 1:35.25 after the word "car" to 1:50.75 before the word "he"

The resulting sound file can be played back live as one file at the start of the piece, or cut into multiple segments and played back at the indicated moments in the score.

Piano:

Realized using a computer program written by the composer for automating the process of transforming spectral analysis data into musical compositions. Therefore, rhythms and pitches in the score closely correspond to the aforementioned recording. Listen to it for guidance, and stay in close synchrony with the speech sounds in the electronics.

One possible stage layout:

piano loudspeaker

audience

01.2 *Dehumanization*

by Miguel Peres dos Santos

Introduction

In "What is New about New Fordism"[1] David Pocknee, the founder and Chairman of the Institute of ACES (Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology), presents us a reinterpretation of some historical and fictional events in relation to the conceptual framework that is elaborated in 'A New Fordist Manifesto'[2].

Before we dwell on some of the concepts approached by the text, I would like to briefly refer to the use of the term "New" in "New Fordism" and some of the possible assumptions that it may imbed. As with the terms 'pre' and 'post', the term 'New' may imply an absolute rupture in historical time, a demarcation between before and after. This possible allusion to a periodization of historical time not only directly implies a historical demarcation but it can also be misleading in its reference to the present; in fact, as Lyotard in his reference to Aristotle's Physics[3] carefully points out, this type of demarcation, besides being inaccurate, presumably alludes to the present, but in fact fails to represent the 'now' or in this case the 'New'.

In fact 'New Fordism' seems to be semantically more referential to Fordism itself than to the concept that it is trying to grasp.

Division, deskilling and biomechanics

Leaving this semantic question aside, let us now try to approach some of the conceptual analysis made in the text from a slightly different perspective. In the introduction Pocknee describes the increase of production by Ford's methodology as mainly originating from three factors: the division of labor, the deskilling of the worker and the application of biomechanical principles. I would like to try now to relate to some possible direct inherent implications of the introduction of these same methodology by analyzing the referred three factors both separately and in conjunction.

An immediate consequence of a division of labour, besides the improvement of productivity that is, seems to me to be the direct implication towards individualism. Although one must be aware that the Fordist methodology and production process (in this case: assembling a car) is a group process that cannot be fulfilled without the effort of the entire chain of production, the direct consequence of limiting labour of an individual to one specific repetitive task, can lead to a direct alienation the same individual from all other aspects of the same production, and therefore from his peers.

When applied systematically to all the individuals in the same production chain, this same methodology directly implies the direct annihilation of communal practice, leaving the individual with no option but to relate only to his own task. The apparent paradox that arises is then: that by using Fords' methodology to manage the individual task in a given community in order to improve productivity, one not only annihilates the possibility for a communal practice, one may also be providing stimuli for individualism, as the individual is forced to relate exclusively to his own task.

A division of labor that is intended to restrict the participation of the individual to one single task, would logically imply a specialization of the determined task and therefore a specialization of the worker, but remarkably enough the opposite is true. In Ford's methodology the consequent result of a demarcation of functions or tasks is a deskilling of the worker. To use economic terms: the consequence of excluding communal labour and stimulating individualism is not the valorization of the individual but rather the precise the opposite: the devaluation of the individual worker.

In this setting, and from this specific perspective, a process of objectification of the individual seems

to be unfolding; an objectification that starts by isolating the individual by a division of labour and subsequently by devaluing the individual by deskilling him. From this perspective what is left of the individual is a biological machine that is compelled to exercise a repetitive task, the logical next step is to optimize the exploitation of the biological characteristics of this same machine by applying biomechanical principles in order to increase production.

Please notice that by now we are not even using the term individual in order to make reference to the worker, instead it is here chosen to use the term machine, as if the term individual would be already to closely related to the term human. In fact this reflects my own assumption that the application of biomechanical principles in order to increase productivity may reflect a reduction of the body of the human worker to a biological machine that has to be ultimately maximized in order to increase production. This last stage concludes then the process of "objectification that transforms human beings into subjects".[4]

The argument that I am attempting to make is then that: this chain of processes that Pocknee describes as the factors that are responsible for the success of Fordism are more than an industrial management method, they represent in my view a systematic process of what I would like to call dehumanization. I am aware that my analysis of the methodology of Henry Ford is in direct opposition towards what The New Fordist Organization is declaring to be the freedom of the worker by means of mass production[1].

Freedom

The New Fordist Organization grasps at the theoretical work of Antonio Gramsci in order to refute the argument of human subjugation and to declare mass production as a tool for the intellectual freedom of the worker[1]. The plain logic behind this intellectual construction would be that by restraining, compelling and repressing a human being, you actually free him intellectually; a remarkably similar construction to the majority of totalitarian institutional reasoning in history that has risen or attempted to rise to institutional political power in order to reinforce a certain ideology or belief, and law, order, repression and domination into a population.

As CoNA means 'cunt' in slang Portuguese, this is how far I am intellectually going to engage or relate to the reference to that supposed Church in this text. As for the reference to sexual restraining of the body in order to achieve a higher spiritual and intellectual awareness, I would just like to briefly to mention pedophilia in Catholic Church and incest in Protestant communities that has shown us, I believe, what is the true result of sexual restraint towards spiritual and intellectual grandeur in the so called Western world.

Leaving this completely absurd theological rhetoric for what it is, what strikes me as remarkable is the line of reasoning which links conditioning to intellectual freedom. The quotation of Gramsci lasting more than seven hundred words in "A New Fordist Manifesto" is here the main foundation for this conceptual framework. In a very condensed exposition this framework argues that by "mechanization" of labour a physical automatism is developed in order to fulfil the task as efficiently as possible, consequently leads the brain of the worker to a state of complete freedom.

Having no empirical evidence to sustain his position whatsoever, I am inclined to dismiss Gramsci's proposition of intellectual freedom through physical mechanization as purely dogmatic. But the New Fordist Organization goes further than just relating to Gramsci's analysis of Fordism and Taylorism, it also builds a conceptual link towards the work of Pavlov on conditioning[2]. From my interpretation of the two main texts of the New Fordist Organization, Pavlov seems to work as a pivot between the necessity for empirical ground for Gramsci's theoretical formulation on the relation towards biomechanization of labour, and the realm of aesthetics that the Organization seams to want to approach.

Relating Pavlov's experiments and theoretical work on conditioning, linking it to Aesthetics and the concept of intellectual freedom, forms one of the most amusing acrobatic reasoning I have personally been able to come across for quite some time. The link between Pavlov's experiments and the 'mechanization' of labour is too obvious to deserve further explanation I guess. The link between conditioning and Aesthetics is quite peculiar as it is described in a setting where "art could manipulate human behaviour".[2] But now I would like to turn it around: how is human - or better, dehumanised - behavior manipulating art?

Aesthetics

"We live in a time of crisis. Therefore, our art should reflect that crisis. This crisis is an economic one, therefore our reflection and response should be economic"[1]. These are the opening sentences of the manifesto of the New Fordist Organization and that is, of course, not a coincidence. The New Fordist Organization is embedded in The Institute of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology - The Institute of ACES, in which I am proud to be able to modestly participate in. The Institute has a particular research focus on (as the name of the institute itself discloses) the correlation between culture, economics and sociology. It is in this specific realm that you can conceptually place The New Fordist Organization.

After an extended period of conducted research during the summer of 2012[5], upon the public funding of the arts in The Netherlands and impact of the ongoing economic crisis in Dutch cultural policy, The New Fordist Organization seems to me to emerge as an Aesthetic outcome of that same research. Adopting a text called Manufacturing Style[6] as a theoretical background, The New Fordist Organization claims an Aesthetic approach towards the process of (mass-) artistic production[2] as a departing point. The direct consequence of this strategy is the metamorphism of Aesthetics from a field of research into a field of action.

Would the assumption above be accurate, that would mean that The New Fordist Organization is more activist than it actually it ever intended to be; instead of simply making a mere rhetoric critique, the New Fordist Organization seams to choose the opposite approach: to use Aesthetics based on mass-production methodology in order to devalue that same Aesthetics. By taking this specific approach though the paradigm remains that: "One flatters the 'taste' of a public that can have no taste, and the eclecticism or a sensibility enfeebled by the multiplication of available forms and objects. In this way one thinks that one is expressing the spirit of times, whereas one is merely reflecting the spirit of the market"[7].

1 http://aces.ricercata.org/index.php?nfos=manifesto

2 http://aces.ricercata.org/nfo/what_is_new_about_new_fordism.pdf

3 Jean-François Lyotard, "The Inhuman". Chapter two "Rewriting Modernity", page 24. Polity Press, 1991. ISBN 978-0-7456-1238-6

4 Michel Foucault, "Power", "Essential works of Foucault. 1954-1984", "The Subject and Power" page 326. Edited by James D. Faubion Volume 3. New Press, 2000. ISBN 978-1-5658-4709-5

5 One of the outcomes of the research can be found here: http://aces.ricercata.org/index.php?res=aces001

6 http://aces.ricercata.org/index.php?nfos=style

7 Jean- François Lyotard, "The Inhuman". Chapter seven "The Sublime and the Avant-Garde", page 106. Polity Press, 1991. ISBN 978-0-7456-1238-6

01.4 New Fordism: A Contextualization

by Ana Smaragda Lemnaru

The following text aims to discuss some of the core issues involving New Fordism as an artistic endeavour and the artistic forms it engages with. First, we will approach the essential features of New Fordism. Secondly, we will identify the broader context in which this ideology emerged within the art market and the economy related to it: that of capital, referenced through art-discourse.

New Fordism identifies itself as having a core list of characteristics:
division of labour
deskilling of the worker
the reduction of surplus movement
commodification of invisible labour
externalization of labour
application of biomechanical principles
work ethics
education through practice
experimental approach
mass production
mechanization of the workforce
no accountability policy [1]

All of the above qualities are made into esthetic statements that should not only define a style - but should dramatically affect artistic production and distribution.

Leaving the production process aside, The New Fordist artist's actual orientation remains unstated; from its publication onwards it would be hard to say whether it is a form of satire - with witty tongue-in-cheek comments on the socially assigned role of art and artists within the formal governmental infrastructure of neo-liberal institutions, or whether it is a failed endeavour aiming at economic autonomy, that would sincerely attempt to offer an alternative solution to whatever embedded problems might arise from the cost loss (be that privatized or public) that is so blatantly associated with the art sector.

The omnipresent vagueness of the New Fordist Manifesto can be seen in pragmatic terms. A clear affiliation to any one institution, a political spectrum or, in fact, any content - would be a systemic mistake. Even more, the reading of a particular art work and its references can vary depending on the visibility, power and prevalence of some social groups and their political interest, in relation to others. For instance, the depiction of Saint Sebastian by Peter Paul Rubens might have been painted with the religious fervor solicited by dogmas of the Catholic Church, at the time of its production. Five hundred years later, it is described as a homo-erotic icon by an article in The Independent[2]. Thus, the statement of intention about the representation of conceptual content coming from the makers, outside its technical aspects, is in fact unnecessary. Its meaning will be created or revisited by the viewers themselves.

1 Based on: David Pocknee "*What Is New About New Fordism?*", http://aces.ricercata.org/nfo/what_is_new_about_new_fordism.pdf
2 Charles Darwent *"Arrows of desire: How did St Sebastian become an enduring, homo-erotic icon?"* http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/arrows-of-desire-how-did-st-sebastian-become-an-enduring-homoerotic-icon-779388.html

Returning to the New Fordist Manifesto, we can pertain that the interpretation of New Fordism is left open. Still there are some un-stated elements that are visible, and that can, and should in fact, give a more clear image of what New Fordism is trying to achieve.

One of the key problems in the New Fordist Manifesto revolves around the differences of an art drafted by the taste of a given elite, be that a scholastic or economic elite (the Jeff Koons problem) - and its Low Art cousin, that already has made the formal adaptation to mass production: comics, mass media, video games, illustrations, designer products etc. The market value of High Art would be artificially inflated by economic interventions in the market. Unique art works that would be culturally priceless, and therefore excluded from the trade system, will still be quantified or sold, at very high prices. As Hans Abbing declares: "The gift sphere in the arts is large because governments and donors believe people underestimate the value of 'quality art'. Therefore, they protect and stimulate 'quality art' through donations and subsidies".[3] In return, the costs of the art forms that would be enjoyed by masses and are created by "Low Culture" will always remain low, when available in large numbers. Still, these boundaries can be transgressed and often are.

The debate about these forms of art is too vast to be accommodated by this text. What should be mentioned is that both performing and object-based arts have been known to bring substantial revenues to private and public sectors alike. According to The Guardian, the Leonardo Da Vinci exhibition hosted by the National Gallery in 2012 was sold out, with tickets being re-sold for up to £400[4].

The value distinction, as transferred in economic terms would be regulated by culture. Culture not only regulates the number of commodities, but also defines what commodities are:

"The counterdrive to the potential onrush of commoditizations is culture. In the sense that commoditization homogenizes value, while the essence of culture is discrimination. Culture ensures that some things are left singular"[5]

Even so, the culture industry is rapidly adapting to the economy of souvenirs that might accompany otherwise non-commodifiable works produced by the high art end of the artistic spectrum. In 2013, the Barbican hosted the The Bachelor and The Bride Exhibition: Duchamp with Cage, Cunningham, Rauschenberg and Johns (Mise en Scene by Philippe Parreno), with ticket prices ranging from £7 to £12. After seeing a replica[6] of Duchamp's notorious "Fountain", visitors could pay £30 pounds for a chess set, vaguely resembling the one exhibited in the documentation of the electronic chess game played by Duchamp and Cage in 1968. Those who could not afford the exhibition album, priced £40, could buy a set of chess set matches for an affordable 80p. Although these souvenirs imply an exoticization of artistic practice or experience and are not the equivalent to the artistic product in itself, their sale is by no means disconnected from it. Art works, when not being commodities in themselves, can generate a flux of secondary by-products that would refer to the knowledge, experience and cultural hype associated with the original work itself.

In this given setting, The New Fordist Organization seeks to reunite the by-products of the art industry with the artworks themselves, by producing works that still hold a well-defined aesthetic stance, are created by individuals, address a large group of people and can be produced in virtually unlimited numbers. This shortcut should benefit all of the parties involved by decreasing the unnecessary motions and durations distributed among all the lines of an aesthetic experience and its production.

3 Hans Abbing, *"Why Are Artists Poor"* Amsterdam University press 2004,

4 Peter Tullin, „*Why cultural entrepreneurship is a win-win scenario for the sector*", The Guardian http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2012/sep/24/cultural-entrepreneurship-technology-remix-ebook

5 Igor Kopytoff, "*The Cultural Biography of Things"* ,P73 , "*The Social Life of Things - Commodities in Cultural Perspective*; edited by Arjun Appadurai, Cambridge University Press, 1986

6 Author"s note: the original work was lost

The construction materials used by The New Fordist Organization, have a short life span and/or are unpretentious in themselves. The adjacent technology and software are readily available. In short, the artworks created tend to be quasi-ephemeral. In this formula, the idea of planned obsolescence of an artwork is highlighted. There is no need for an artwork to be preserved (and thus increase its maintenance costs) when in fact it can be re-created any number of times. Similarly, all the deviations present in any one artwork or musical piece will constitute the singularity that makes a particular interpretation unique.

Late(r) economic perspectives (as controversial as they might seem) are based on the linkage between production and services, as increased industrialized economies situate their products in the market. The dichotomy between product and service is thus being replaced with "The Service-Product Continuum". An even later development is related to the "Experience economy", a concept derived from Gerhard Schulze's "The Experience Society"[7], and amply exposed in Pine and Gilmore's homonymous book[8], published in 1999. Pine and Gilmore argue that, not only services (so immaterial labour) can be treated as commodities; on top of the production and servicing costs, a new economic value can be added to the product: that of the consumer experience. This opens up for businesses to create a specific environment in which the products are sold and serviced, that would make the interaction with the product a memorable life experience. Thus, through the aesthetization of the market place a whole new set of charges can be added to the product. Not only that, but this aestheticization promises to place a transformative power over the consumer. Similarly the transformative power that the artwork experience will create in the viewer can be charged for moderate costs: concert tickets, museum and art exhibitions operate by these premises.

By a strange coincidence, in 1998 the book *Esthétique relationnelle* by the french critic Nicolas Bourriaud was published, gathering ideas about the works of some of the most prominent artists in the late 90's generation and the new modalities of artistic production. Relational aesthetics is defined as: *"a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space*."[9] Relational art will then create the circumstances in which, by the intervention of the artist as social catalyst the experience of the art work would be shifted from the actual object to the relationships between people, their coming together in a well defined setting and the generative power these actions would precipitate.

This type of art would be different from the utopian or revolutionary art movements of the 60's and 70's because it works with elements already present in the micro political scene, and would not attempt to envision utopias, but would realistically access current problems important for one or more representatives of a minority. It relies on participation of an audience. In 2007, the French pavilion at the Venice Biennale hosted the work of the French artist Sophie Calle, titled "*Take Care of Yourself*". After a painful break-up, the artist decided to show the text written by her former partner to 107 women, which were asked, in their professional capacities, to respond to the email. The work attempts to create a direct exchange between the women participating in it, its context making it easy for virtually anyone to identify with the artist and her situation. The issue addressed here, would not necessarily be the personal suffering of the artist, but the qualifications or skills of the respondents and how that might be reflected by language.[10] In this work, the artist takes a managerial role - creating the infrastructure - but the largest part of the labour pertains to the women that agreed to answer the call to participate. All the unedited texts, are available in a book, currently out of print but available for sale on Amazon for $114 US. The author of this text could not find any references or specification on how exactly the 107 women were remunerated (if at all) but, assuming they weren't, sees in this kind of setting a possible solution for saving labour and capital when constructing an artwork. The visitors of the exhibition could view the texts as

7 Gerhard Schulze, " *The Experience Society*", SAGE Publications, Feb 29, 2008
8 B. Joseph Pine, II, James H. Gilmore, *"The Experience Economy"*, Harvard Business Press, 2011
9 Nicholas Bourriaud, "*Relational Aesthetics*",Les Presses du Réel, 2002
10 Sophie Call- EAI interwiew, 2009 http://www.eai.org/user_files/supporting_documents/calle_interview_0509_2.pdf

well as the original letter and benefit from the diverse experience accumulated through their visit. The visit would be a transformative experience in itself, making Calle's work a fine example of what Pine and Gilmore refer to when they argue for the experience economy.

Linking the externalization of labour with the commodification created by the culture industry and the development of experience economy as stylistic and aesthetic features, The New Fordist Organization is however, condensed around the idea of mass production. The emphasis on production is rooted in the belief that, even though there are secondary and tertiary layers (service and experience economy) that can augment and reposition the distribution of a given product, or build a certain kind infrastructure, mass production is still at the heart of the cultural industry.

The radical stance on the importance of production in itself would require us to reconsider the importance of Taylor and Ford's works, from an artistic perspective.

Although rooted in the Fordist and Taylorist perspective on efficiency: the division of labour, deskilling of the work force and the application of biomechanical principles, the New Fordist Worker's interest is primary leisure, with the economical associations of what that entails.

The New Fordist Work is art work and it is done in art galleries. Its associations make it denounces the shift of the late capitalist society in which, because of emancipation offered by technology and the mechanization of work, the distinction between working time and leisure is blurred. Due to its association with art, New Fordist Work will always be leisure, in a form that is conveyed through the economic and theological paradigm of late consumer society: as patriotic duty.

The managers in this topology may be artists, yes. But the workers, that fulfill the aesthetic object and convey its value, are audience members. The divide between the aesthetic object and its receptor is collapsed. In this situation the spectators are the makers: the ones who physically construct the artwork, the performance. In the economical loop that Ford created, workers are given higher wages in order for them to afford to become owners of the commodities they produce. They do not own the production line - the means of their work, but they are allowed to have propriety on the results of their labour, in a decimated form. Similarly, the New Fordist worker, will not own the aesthetic form of what they produce, nor will they be available to undermine the production process. Since they are not paid, and they offer their time voluntarily, the only form of resistance would be inaction.

To condense the above in one sentence: where immaterial labor is the primary form of labor , production of material work will become entertainment.

Section 2: Study

ACES_004: A New Fordist Guide To Painting With Acrylics

by David Pocknee

The New Fordist Organization uses Fordist and Taylorist principles to mass-produce art. One of the ways in which these methodologies have been applied is to the mass-production of painting. This paper explains the methodological techniques used by the organization to study painting, and the way in which this data is used to improve efficiency via its implementation in a computer program that facilitates painting by people with no artistic training.

Full results and an expanded version of this paper can be found at www.acesinstitute.eu.

Introduction

As part of a residency in GEMAK, The Hague, between 23 April 2013 and June 2013, *The New Fordist Organization* carried out a number of tests into the efficiency of painting with acrylics. These tests were based on Taylorist methodologies, as well as more general forms of testing. The tests undertaken are as follows:

1. The measurement of the time taken to perform brush-strokes from 0.25cm – 120cm in length in five different brush sizes.

2. The measurement of the area covered by each of these brush-strokes.

3. Measurement of the amount of paint used by each of these brush-strokes.

4. Motion study of movements created when painting

5. Analysis of the correlation between RGB values and different ratios of white and black paint.

The first three studies were performed simultaneously, using an extended version of Frederick Taylor's "Time Study" technique. Acrylic paints were chosen, as their quick-drying nature and cheap cost fitted in with the general drive towards efficiency of *The New Fordist Organization*.

02.01 A Time Study Investigation Into The Effects of Brush Size & The Length Of Brush-Stroke On The Efficiency Of Surface Coverage & Paint Usage

Introduction

Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915) was the inventor of Scientific Management – a series of techniques used to study and improve efficiency in the workplace. One of the techniques which he developed was "Time Study". Time Study involves the timing of an adept worker performing a certain action multiple times, in order to calculate the maximum number of these operations that could be produced in a given period. This information was then used to both calculate the maximum level of efficiency that could be achieved, as well as how wages should be adjusted. The following experiment uses an expanded form of Time Study to calculate the efficiency of the size of paint brush and the length of brush-stroke in relation to the amount of surface area covered, the time taken, and the amount of paint used.

Equipment

Brushes

Xenos brand, pig hair oil brushes in sizes 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 were used for this experiment, along with standard black acrylic paint (also *Xenos* brand). Due to the lack of standardization in oil brush sizes, the brushes used are listed below with their width in mm, and in pixels. The pixel measurement refers to the width of square projected by the program which ran at a resolution of 480x360 pixels and was projected onto a 120x90cm sheet of Fabriano Accademia Drawing paper (100% E.C.F. pulp) 160gm^2, giving a ratio of 4 pixels per cm, or 0.25cm per pixel:

Brush Size (on brush)	Brush Size (in cm)	Brush Size (in pixels)
12	1.5	6
10	1.25	5
8	1	4
6	0.75	3
4	0.5	2

Fig 1. Chart Of Brush Sizes Used

Paint

All of the paint used was uniformly mixed to a 2:1 ratio of water to paint and measured out into 20ml portions using a syringe.

Method

1. A large piece of paper (120x90cm) was attached to a board of the same size.

2. A projector was set-up so that the entire area projected was aligned precisely to the edges of the board.

3. The program Pure Data was used to project randomly -placed, -sized and -ordered flashing rectangles, one at a time, onto the paper. Each of these rectangles was the height of the width of the brush being tested, and ran parallel to the bottom edge of the paper.

4. A participant was instructed to paint over each rectangle as fast as possible.

5. As soon as a rectangle had been painted over, the experimenter ordered the program to produce the next rectangle, which the participant then painted over as fast as possible. This process was repeated until 20ml of paint had been exhausted.

6. The Pure Data patch logged the time taken to paint each brush-stroke, the horizontal length of the brush-stroke, its position on the paper, and the total area covered.

7. This procedure was repeated for five different sizes of brush.

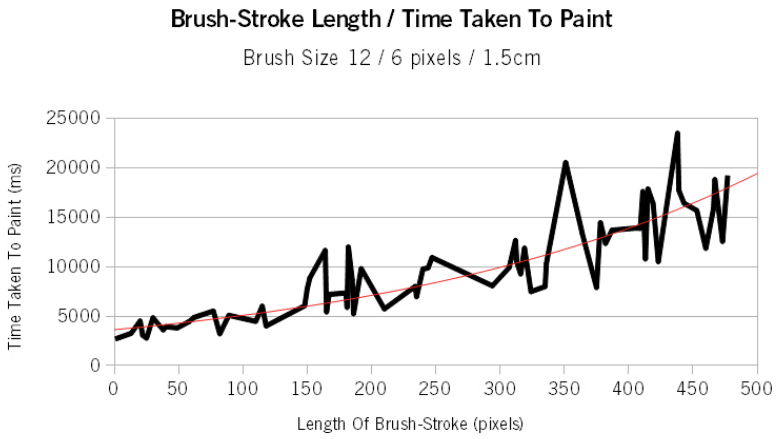


Fig 2. Time Taken To Paint Different Lengths Of Brush Stroke (Brush Size 12)

Results And Analysis

The results collected (full results can be found at www.acesinstitute.eu), show the time taken to paint the brush-stroke in milliseconds, the position and length of the rectangle painted over, the brush size in pixels, the area covered by the brush-stroke (also in pixels), and an efficiency score, calculated by dividing the area covered by the time taken.

The lengths of individual brush-strokes against the time taken to paint them were plotted on a scatter chart. This revealed a shallow exponential relationship in each brush-stroke size – an example of this can be seen in figure 2. where a line of best-fit has been superimposed onto the data. In Figure 3. all brush sizes tested have their brush-stroke lengths plotted against the time taken to paint them.

However, due to the varying width of brushes and the varying amounts of paint that they can hold and distribute in one go, this is not a good indicator of efficiency. Efficiency, in this case, would be measured by the largest area covered in the shortest amount of time. In Figure 4, the efficiency of brush lengths was calculated by dividing the area covered (calculated by multiplying the brush width by the line length) by the time taken to paint. This number was then plotted against the length of brush-stroke.

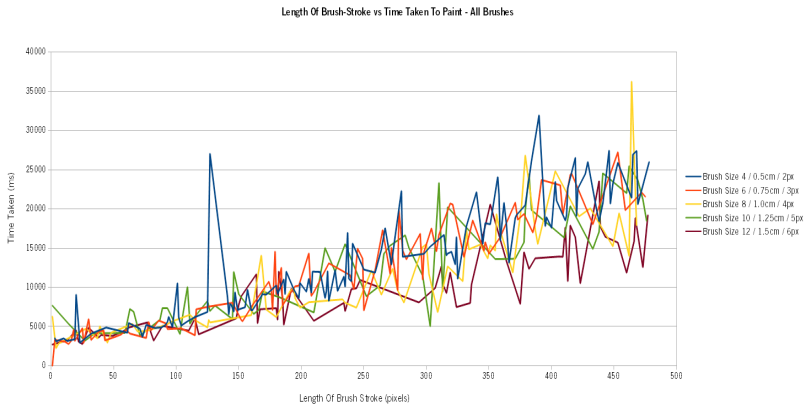
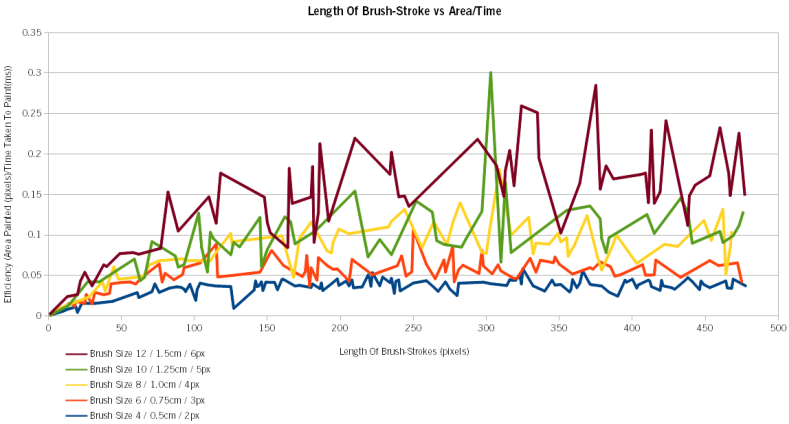


Fig 3. (Above) Length Of Brush-Stroke Against Time Taken To Paint (All Brush Sizes)

Fig 4.(Below) Efficiency Of Brush-Stroke Against Length Of Brush-Stroke (All Brushes)



In the graph above (Figure 4), it is clear that the larger brushes are more efficient, as would be expected, due to their ability to hold larger amounts of paint at one time. However, due to the fact that, in painting, size of brush is not only used to increase efficiency, but also to do small-scale detail work, this information is not so useful for our purposes. What is useful and visible in this graph is a clear plateauing in efficiency after a brush stroke has exceeded 100-200 pixels (2.5-5cm). This plateauing appears to occur later for larger brushes and is presumably due to the fact that this is the point at which the brush must be refilled with paint.

This problem could be solved with the use of reservoir brushes, or by restricting the length of brush-strokes to less than 5cm.

Application Of Data

The data collected from this study was implemented in a number of different ways.

Timing Of Brush-Strokes

The painting computer program, developed by *The New Fordist Organization* is able to break down any painting into a series of individual brush-strokes, which are then projected onto a large sheet of paper or canvas, and painted over by untrained volunteers. This procedure allows people who have no previous knowledge or skills in painting to create relatively accurate recreations of existing images through the medium of paint. The time between each brush stroke can be precisely controlled, and one of the ways in which the data collected in this study has been implemented, is in the calculation of the optimum amount of time needed to execute a brush-stroke of a specific length, whilst using a specific size of brush.

The data presented above in Figure 14, was used to place limits on the maximum length of brush-stroke that the program would generate. Now, no brush-stroke is longer than 5cm, to prevent the plateauing that can be seen in the graph.

Also, the information from figures 8-12 have been used to create equations that enable optimum painting efficiency. In creating lines of best-fit for each data-set, an equation was created that describes the relationship between the brush-stroke length and time taken to paint at different brush sizes. These equations were then implemented in the computer program to ensure that each painter works at maximum efficiency.

Below is a table showing the equations for the lines of best-fit, shown in each of the figures 8-12 (x is brush-stroke length in pixels). These equations produce the minimum time needed for each length of brush-stroke.

Brush Size 12:	$f(x) = 3636.16 \times \exp(0.0033584007x)$
Brush Size 10:	$f(x) = 4669.1 \times \exp(0.0033989x)$
Brush Size 8:	$f(x) = 3597.42 \times \exp(0.004005786x)$
Brush Size 6:	$f(x) = 3514.32 \times \exp(0.004653954x)$
Brush Size 4:	$f(x) = 4.178.06 \times \exp(0.004078387x)$

These figures were then averaged together to smooth out the anomalies in the data and give an equation that could be used to estimate the time that a brush-stroke of any length would take to paint, across all brush sizes (it is hoped at a later date to more accurately calculate this using further data and a variable that accounts for brush size, but this serves the current purpose).

Averaging the two fixed variables in the equations, gave a new equation of:

$$f(x) = 3919.012 \times \exp(0.00398921x)$$

This equation was then implemented in the software. As can be seen, there are two values which can be altered in this equation and, in order to fine-tune this equation, each of these values was assigned to a slider on a MIDI controller, so that, whilst painting I could adjust them to find the sweet spot in which I was painting at maximum efficiency.

This resulted in a final equation of:

$$f(x) = 1362 \times \exp(0.002x)$$

This is the equation which is currently implemented in the software. Currently, the software is only dealing with images with a resolution of 480x360 pixels projected onto a 120x90cm area, and this equation is designed for this setup. However, it is hoped that a future implementation of further data will allow a single equation to be implemented which takes into account resolution of image, area of projection and brush size in order to calculate optimum timings for each brush-stroke in a variety of situations.

Predictive Abilities

The computer program goes through two different stage. Firstly it analyzes the image and breaks it into individual brush-strokes, then it uses this information to project where the participant should paint. The data gathered above has meant that, during its analysis, the computer can make several predictions about the second stage of painting.

Time Prediction

Using the equation outlined above, the computer can exactly calculate the amount of time it will take to paint one layer of the image.

Paint Usage

Although unsuccessful in current tests, it is hoped that, eventually, the data presented in Figure 7. and collected during this experiment, will be used to calculate the exact amount of paint needed for each color of paint in an image. All paint used is measured using syringes and the amount used is recorded. It is hoped that this data-set of information can eventually be used to predict paint usage with accuracy.

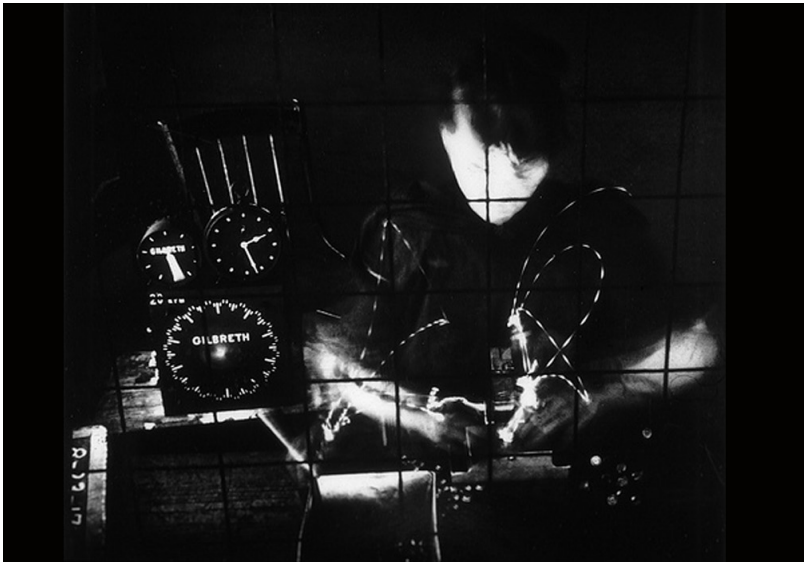
Brush Size (on brush)	Brush Size (cm)	Brush Size (pixels)	Total Length Of Brush-Strokes (pixels)	Total Area Covered (pixels)	Pixels Covered Per 1ml of Paint	Area covered (cm^2)	Area covered per 1ml of paint (cm^2)
12	1.5	6	16516	99096	4954.8	6193.5	309.68
10	1.25	5	13428	67140	3357	4196.25	209.81
8	1	4	15851	63404	3170.2	3962.75	198.14
6	0.75	3	19509	58527	2926.35	3657.94	182.9
4	0.5	2	30713	61426	3071.3	3839.13	191.96

Fig 7. Total Area (in pixels) Covered By 20ml of Paint At Each Brush Size

The Biomechanics Of Painting

From analyzing the data presented in Figure 4. it appears that the necessity to refill the brush with paint after 2.5-5cm have been painted is contributing to a loss in efficiency. This hunch was confirmed in studies carried out using the chronocyclegraph Motion Study technique of Frank Gilbreth.

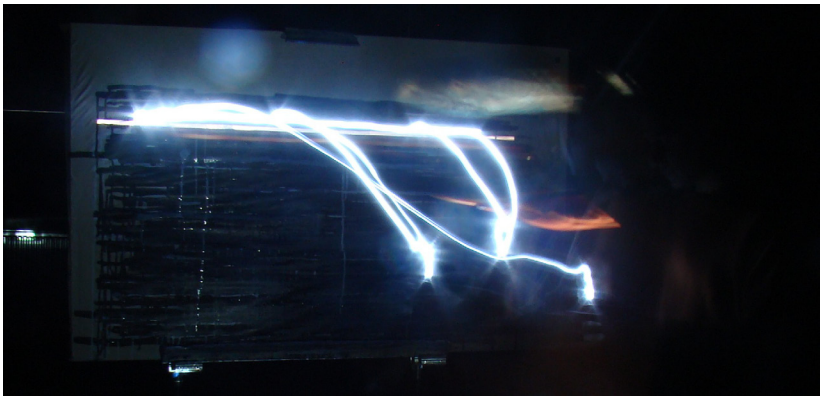
Gilbreth was a Taylorist who, with his chronocyclegraph technique, used long-exposure photography as a way of capturing the movements produced during the performance of an action. By attaching a small, strobing light to the hand of the worker, and placing them in a dark room, the photograph would record, not only the light-trails outlining the motions of the worker, but the clustering of



strobing in the movement would also indicate its speed.

Fig 5. Chronocyclegraph by Frank Gilbreth

We applied this procedure to some preliminary studies of the motion of painting long brush-strokes. Whilst performing the experiments outlined earlier, we also set up a camera to record 10-30 second

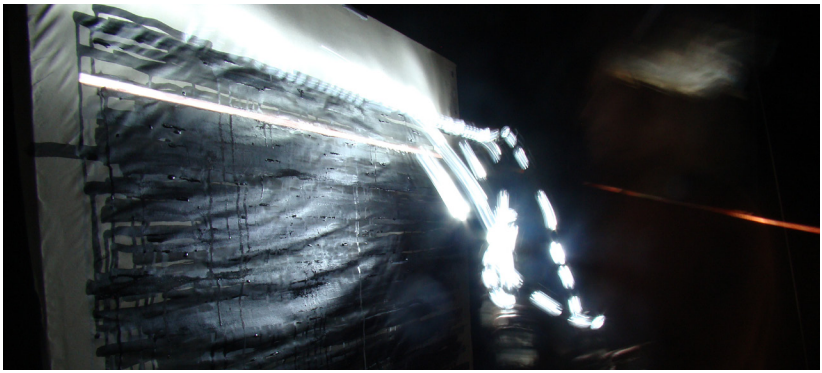


exposures of the process of painting.

Fig 6. Long-exposure photograph of a long brush-stroke (approx. 375px)

The figure above (figure 6) does not use the strobing technique described above, but instead reveals the paths taken to paint a long brush-stroke. A small light was attached to near the brush-end of the paint-brush and a long brush-stroke, near the top of the paper was painted. The painting action starts from the furthest right of the three lowest points of the trails, and the brush-stroke painted is the long, horizontal, continuous line 2/3 up the picture. Each of the other two lowest points of the trails show the points of brush refilling. As can be seen, the actions of refilling comprise almost half of the overall movement.

The following figure reveals the changes in speed that occur. Here, a light strobing at a speed of approximately 200ms was used. Spread out points of light indicate a fast movement, whilst close



clustering indicates a slow movement:

Figure 7. Chronocyclegraph of long brush-stroke.

In Figure 7 we can see another long, high up brush-stroke being executed. What is revealed by this image is that the refilling action is relatively quick, compared to the speed of painting the line itself.

What can be concluded from this is that the act of refilling greatly impedes the efficiency of painting. The next stage of our research will involve the testing of reservoir brushes to see if these can increase the efficiency of movement in painting.

An Investigation Into The Relationship Between Different Ratios Of Black And White Paint And Their RGB Values

Introduction

As well as doing tests into the efficiency of painting biomechanics, *The New Fordist Organization* has also looked into the relationship between RGB values and the ratios between mixtures of black and white acrylic paint. This experiment involved the production of a color-palette, created by taking 0.5ml of black paint and adding white paint to it in 0.5ml increments until it became completely white. This palette was then scanned into a computer and color-analyzed using GIMP to get the RGB values for each ratio. This data was then collated into a table and graph.

Equipment

Xenos brand acrylic white and black paint

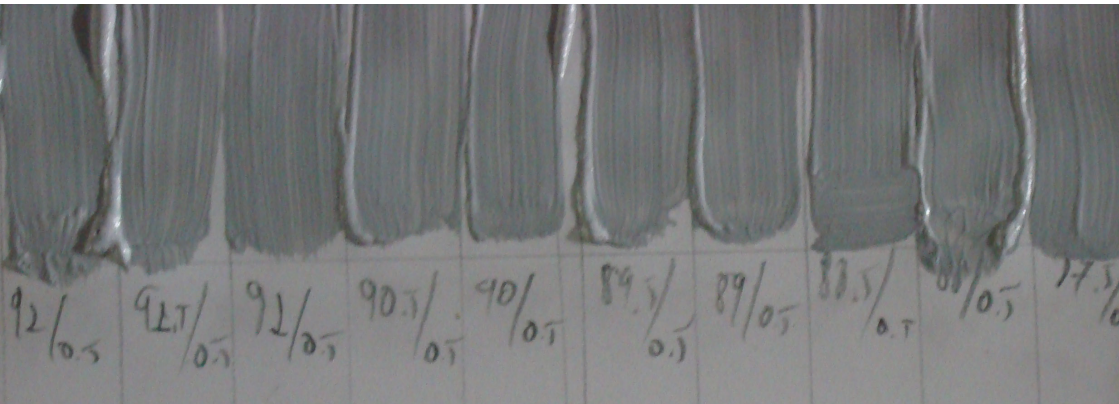
Fabriano Accademia Drawing paper (100% E.C.F. pulp) 160gm^2

Xenos brand pig hair oil brushes

Methodology

1. 0.5ml of black acrylic paint was placed into a cup, and a 2cm x 2cm square on a piece of paper (Fabriano Accademia Drawing paper (100% E.C.F. pulp) 160gm^2) was filled with this color.

2. Then, another 0.5ml of white acrylic paint was added and mixed until the color was uniform. 3.

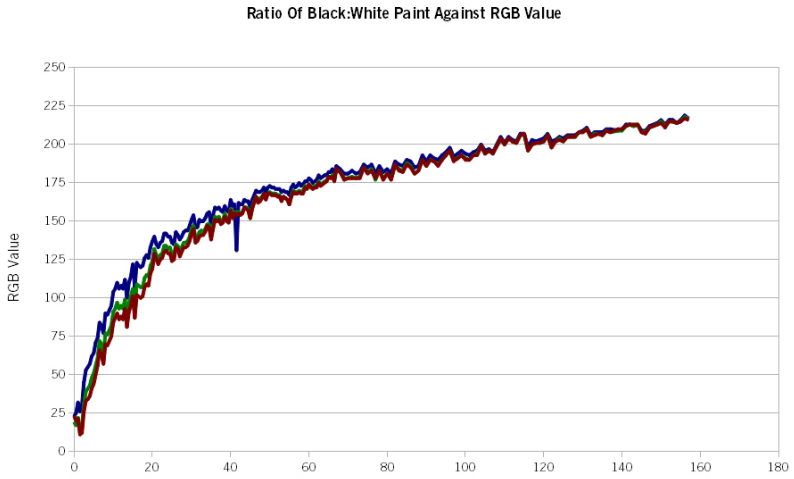


This mixture was then painted onto a 2cm x 5cm rectangle.4. Steps 2 and 3 were then repeated 314 times, until a ratio of 157:0.5ml (314:1) white to black had been reached.

A ratio of 314:1 did not produce pure white but, as can be seen from the data below, the reduction in speed of change made continuing redundant.

5. When all the squares had been painted, the entire palette was scanned into a computer and analyzed using GIMP, which averaged 100x100 pixel blocks of each color. These value were then typed into the table below.

Fig 8. Ratio of White: Black Against RGB Value



Analysis

In Figure 8, a distinct plateauing can be seen, adding credence to the commonsense idea that, after going past the half-way point of RGB values it makes more sense to start mixing from white to black instead.

It is hoped, in the future, to do further tests as to how the transition from black to white works, but in the meantime, this data will be used and tested to ascertain if it is accurate for RGB values lower than 125 125 125. This data will be built into the computer program, so that it will calculate the ratio of white:black paint needed for achieving specific RGB values.

dp

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Section 3: Works

03.1. New Fordist Choreography

Authors: David Pocknee; Jeremiah Runnels

Still form documentation video of New Fordist Coreography Test (03)

New Fordist Choreography is a technique to allow people untrained in dancing to create a synchronized dance performance.

By breaking down movement into a set of simple commands (step forwards, step backwards, step left, step right, turn left, turn right) and delivering these over headphones, speed and spatial positioning can be controlled and complex choreographies can be realized.

First, a computer program is run, in which start, end and intermediary positions of the performers are set. Second, the program is run, and the speed of each performer and the probability of them performing certain actions is manipulated in real-time, through the use of a MIDI controller. As this is happening, the computer calculates the instructions that need to be given to each performer and writes these into a set of mp3 files, one for each performer.

These mp3 files are then given to the performers, and loaded onto portable devices for playing them.

All performers start their mp3 players simultaneously and move as they are instructed. This relocation of skill to the choreographer running the program means that no performer need have previous dance training nor any knowledge of the holistic nature of the piece.

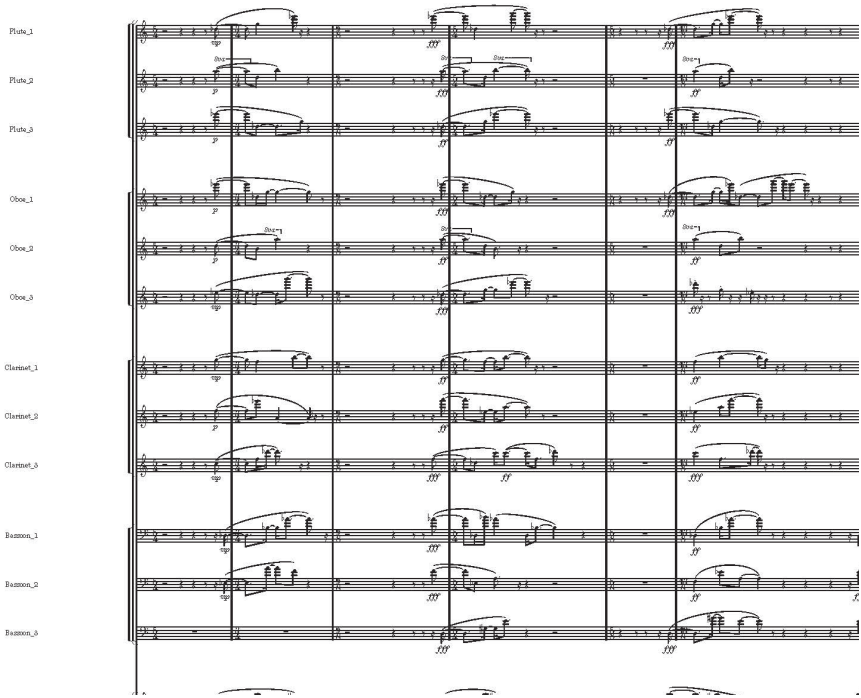
03.2. New Fordist Orchestral Composing

Authors: David Pocknee; Jeremiah Runnels

New Fordist Orchestral Composing is a process whereby a MIDI controller is used to create orchestral works.

The controller manipulates the live synthesized MIDI sound of an orchestra. Each slider, button or knob controls a different musical parameter.

As the synthesized version of the piece is heard and manipulated, the program simultaneously notates all the sounds heard and records the synthesized MIDI sounds.
When the piece is finished, the notation file is then rendered as a .xml or lilypond file and cleaned up in a music notation program, before being exported as a .pdf.

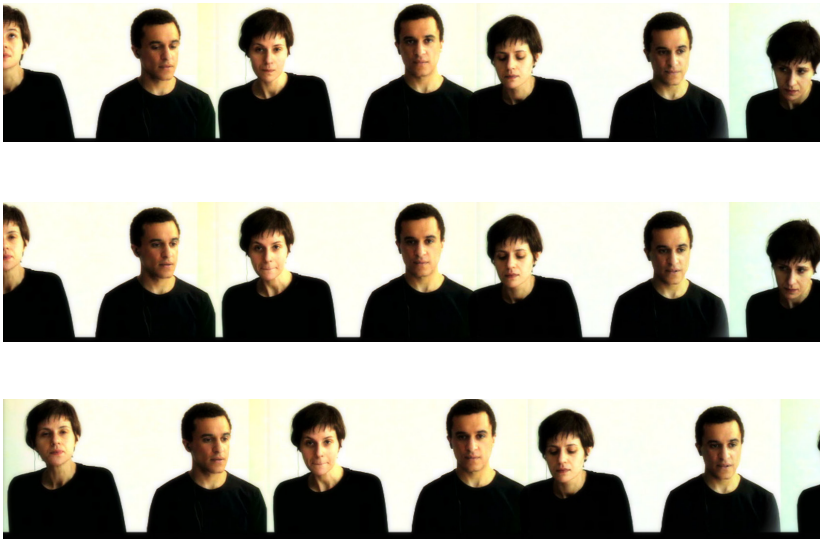


A detail from 016201 3d, a musical score composed using The New Fordist Orchestral Composition

A small sample from a score produced using The New Fordist Composing

03.3. New Fordist Speech Reconstuction

Author: David Pocknee



Digital stills from Mechanisation , Test 2

New Fordist Speech Reconstruction takes an audio recording of a person speaking and re-constructs it using seven or more people.

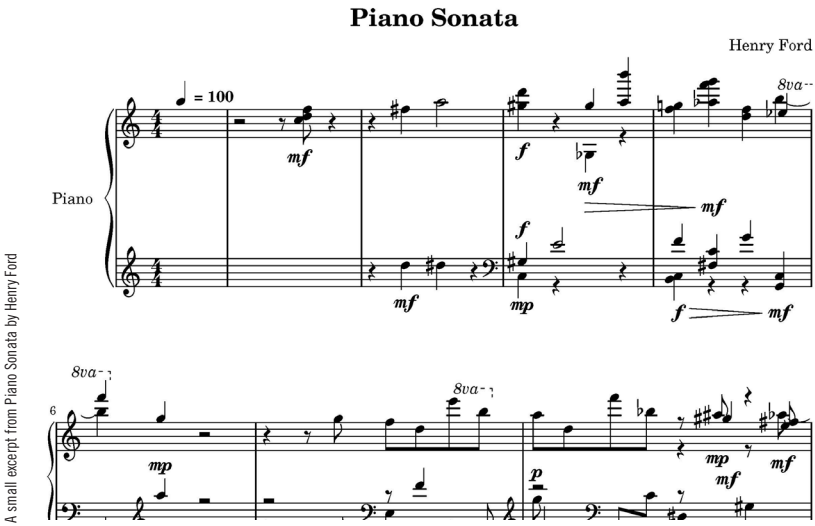
The process works by splitting down the audio into small chunks of 250ms or less and sending these chunks to the headphones of the performers in sequence.
The performer then hears the short sound sample twice, with a short gap of silence in between.

The first time, they listen to the sample in order to learn it, and the second time they repeat it at the same time as it is played.

Due to the fact that the audio samples are extremely small and devoid of context, the player is forced to mimic the sound rather than its syntax or meaning. In other circumstances, when performers are asked to repeat a text from a recording, the rhythmic and melodic aspects of speech are subjugated and displaced by the primacy of meaning. Through this technique the manner, speed and nature of speech is recreated, rather than its meaning, which is already embedded in the sound itself.

03.4. New Fordist Piano Quantization

Author: David Pocknee



A small excerpt from Piano Sonata by Henry Ford

New Fordist Piano Quantization is a live performance by a MIDI piano player and laptop player, in which the performance by the pianist is manipulated through the forcing of it into metrical grids, which are then used by the computer to transcribe the performance into conventional musical notation. Quantization is the process of placing continuous data into discrete grids. Although temporal quantization already occurs in programs such as Sibelius, Finale, Cubase and Logic, this is the first system in which the act of quantization becomes performable, rather than something which is arbitrarily imposed onto the information after the fact. Through using a MIDI controller, the laptop performer is able to react to the playing style and content of the pianist, creating a dynamic improvisatory relationship in which the gridding of the information leaves its mark upon the music itself. This process of live quantization is set up so that both performers only hear the music post-grid, i.e. exactly as it will be notated. This leads to a different style of playing in which notation and performance become more clearly aligned. The laptop performer also has a variety of grids to choose from and can work both with the pianist (by imposing complex notational grids when moments of complexity occur) or against them (setting up a moment of tension by imposing an extremely slow grid over fast pianism).

03.5. New Fordist Acting

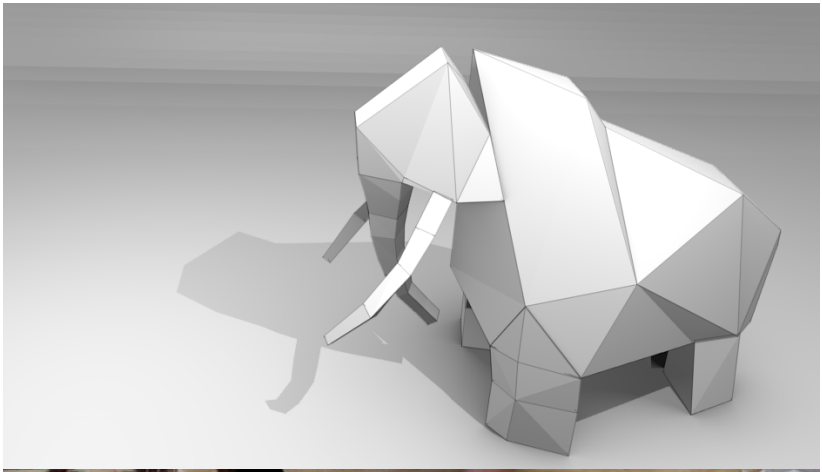
Author: David Pocknee

Digital still from Unconditioned (Experession Study) By David Pocknee

"A work of art captured entirely by technological reproduction, indeed (like film) proceeding from it, can have no more direct opposite than live theatre. Every more detailed examination confirms this. Expert observers long since acknowledged that in film 'it happens almost invariably that the greatest effects are achieved when the least "acting" is done [...]. The ultimate development being [according to Arnheim, writing in 1932] to treat the actor as a prop that is selected for character and [...] put to use in the right place.' ... An actor working in the theatre enters into a part. Very often, the screen actor is not allowed to. The latter's performance is not a single entity; it consists of many individual performances...Possibly, following a knock at the door, an actor is asked to start in surprise. His reaction may turn out to be unsatisfactory. In which case the director may resort to arranging, one day when the actor happens to be back in the studio, for a gun to be fired behind him without warning. The shock registered by the actor at that moment may be captured and later edited into the film. Nothing shows more graphically that art has escaped from the realm of 'beautiful pretence', which for so long was deemed the only habitat in which it might thrive."
Walter Benjamin, *The Work Of Art In The Age Of Mechanical Reproduction* (London, 2008), 19-20

03.6. New Fordist Sculpture

Author: Ana S. Lemnaru



3D model of Toy For Beuys

Documentation of ensembling the sculpture draft prototype

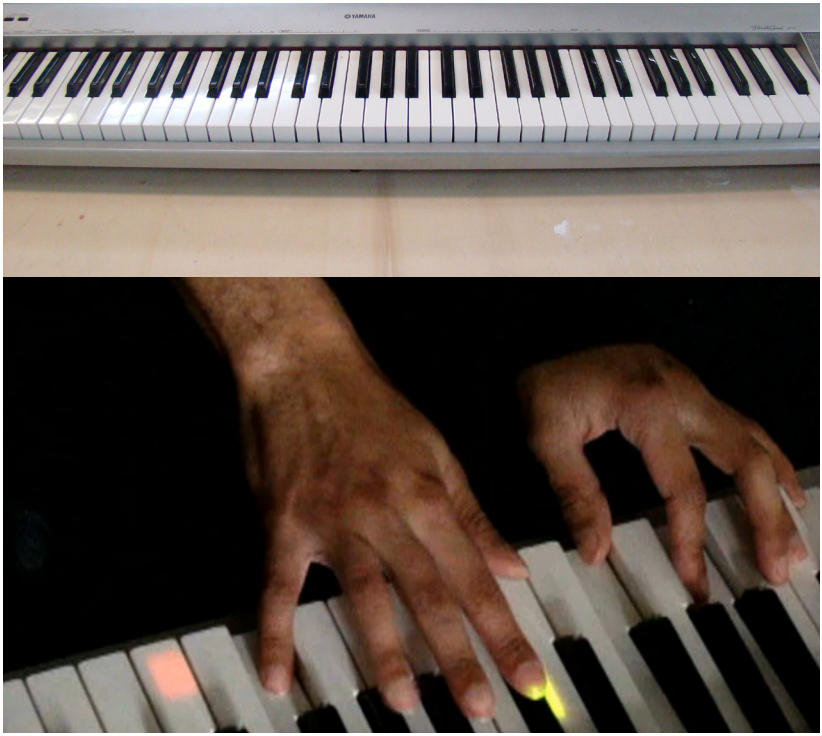
An easy-to-use construction technique, involving the conversion of a three dimensional form created in Blender (a 3D modelling software) to a flat vector shape, that can be printed, cut and folded in order to be assembled back together in real space.

Shapes that have a high complexity level can be divided into component parts. Each part is marked with a code name, making it easily recognizable. Similarly, each of the neighboring edges are marked with a corresponding number, so the assembly process can be done with a great deal of ease.

The low cost materials and easy construction recommend it for amateur sculptors, prototyping and even the creation of self standing works.

03.7. New Fordist Piano Projection

Author: David Pocknee



Still from The New Fordist Piano Projection Tutorial

New Fordist Piano Projection uses a projector placed above a keyboard as to indicate to untrained performers what notes they should play, and when.
Any music, recorded as a MIDI file and whose pitches fall within the range of the piano, can be used for this program.
A projector is placed above the piano keyboard and aligned using the settings within the program.
Once it is in place, the program is run, and small red and green squares are projected onto the keys which need to be pushed down, disappearing when they must be released.
The performer must press or release the keys as quickly as possible, following the square's appearance or disappearance.
The level of brightness of each of these squares corresponds to the force used to depress the particular key.

03.8. New Fordist Painting

Author: David Pocknee

Picture taken durring the painting of Henry Ford's portrait, using the New Fordist Painting Technique

New Fordist Painting is an easy-to-use technique for creating a painting. By analyzing an image and deconstructing it into individual brush strokes, the New Fordist Painting application reduces all the steps that would take hours of preparation and training to a couple of simple gestures.

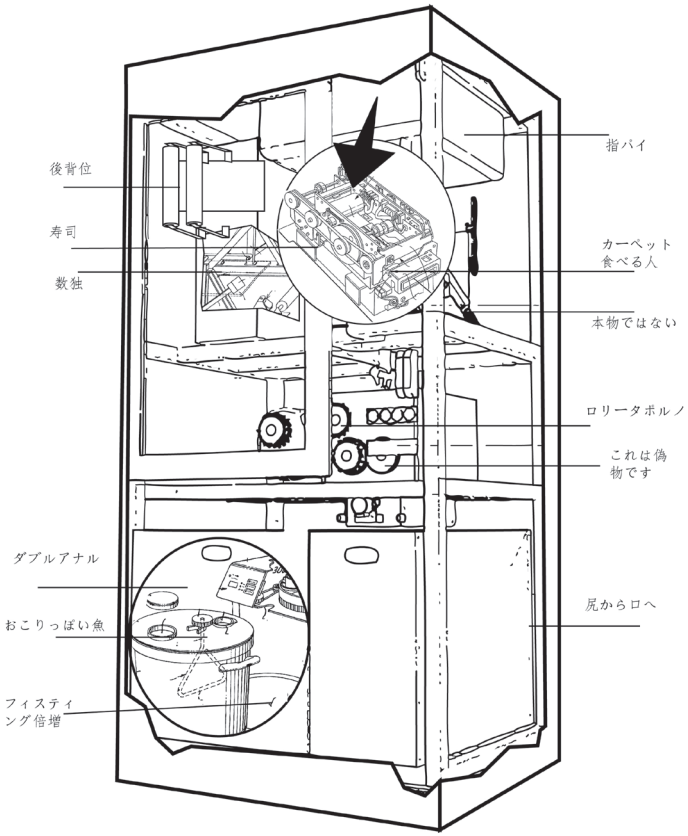
The number of layers of color in the painting should be determined and reduced if necessary, using the color reduction tool built into the software. Then, other variables can be set as well: brush size, maximum stroke length, angle and variation.
At this point, the analysis can begin. Once the analysis is completed, the results can be saved into a text file. The time needed to complete the painting is displayed in the program, as is the amount of paint needed.

When the live paint begins, the result of the analysis will be displayed by a projector on the canvas: a flashing rectangle will appear on the screen, showing the area that needs to be painted.

03.9. Free As In Beer

Author: Andy Ingamells

VENDING MACHINE TECHNICAL SKETCH



Please make patterns with stickers on the paper strip provided, then feed the strip into the vending machine. In return for your composition you will receive a cup of beer. You can make as many compositions as you like, and will receive a cup of beer for each composition.

Four colors indicate four musical parameters; dots are short notes and lines are long notes. The top of the paper is the highest note and the bottom of the paper is the lowest note. The four musical parameters will be chosen by the instrumentalists when they play the piece.

Thank you.

03.10. The Art of Production

musical scores, sound recordings and photographs

Author: Robert Blatt

Pictures taken durring Robert's recording of the work process 25062013

From 21 - 25 May 2013, Robert Blatt recorded sounds of The New Fordist Organization working at Vrije Academie Den Haag. Spectral analyses were conducted on these recordings, and the resulting data was algorithmically transformed into musical scores through a computer program he has developed as a method for automating the process of composition. The sound projected in the installation consists of these field recordings and their sinusoidal resynthesis. The displayed photographs document the recording process. The work functions as a method of production which transforms and externalizes the energy of labor.

03.11. Waiting Work

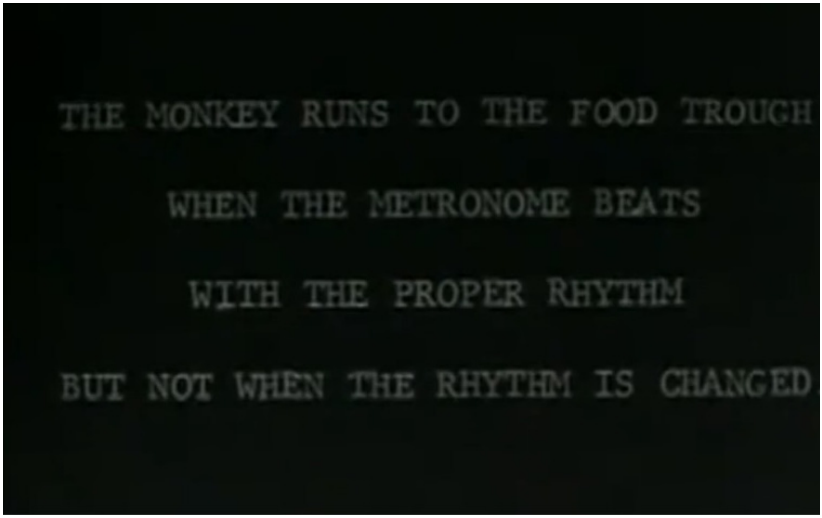
Author: Jeremiah Runnels

Video Still from one of Jeremiah's working experiments 06052013

My piece is about work. My idea was to take work for granted. Idleness as pure labor.

03.12. “Musical Training Is Conditioned In A Monkey”

Author: Miguel Peres dos Santos



Digital Still, 2013

“Musical Training Is Conditioned In A Monkey” is a video installation that alludes to the text “Dehumanization”. The working process began therefore by a study on The New Fordist Organization theoretical framework. Departing from that analysis an attempt is made to propose another perspective upon the basic principles of Ford’s methodology and the consequence of implementing those same principles. The dissertation then worked as a conceptual departure point upon which the creative processes developed further. There were four main fields of work in the practice developed by Peres dos Santos in this specific project: theoretical, educational, curatorial and artistic.

The theoretical aspect is in the aforementioned text and needs therefore no further explanation. A contribution was then made to the educational program that The New Fordist Organization planned on giving for students of the Royal Academy and Royal Conservatoire in The Hague, as well as to Leiden University College in the form of a workshop. Assistance was then provided to the actual setup of the exhibition and the opening events; and last but not least a small video work was developed departing from a found footage of an experiment on conditioning made by Pavlov on a monkey and a small child. The entire process tried to project a counter-discourse as it was intended in the theoretical framework.

03.13. Accordion Books (#1,2)

Author: Leo Svirsky

Declaration

I, Leo Svirsky, will work for The New Fordist Organization for a period of exactly five days (excluding the exhibition) for an exact sum of one-hundred-and-fifty euros.
Each day I will work from 10:00 to 17:00. with a thirty minute lunch break.
During each day I will compose and record (without re-takes or erasures twelve new pieces for the accordion.
Each piece will fit onto one A4 page with twelve musical staves.

The New Fordist Organization

Contract

This agreement is made the _____ day of _____, _____ (year)
by and between:
Name: _____ (Artist)
Address: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
and
Name: _____ (The New Fordist Organisation/ Curator)
Address: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
The parties agree as follows:

The Project:
The New Fordist Organization is commissioning a number of music pieces created by the Artist. Artistic content is left at the liberty of the Artist as long as it adheres to the conceptual framework of the New Fordist Organization as described by the New Fordist Manifesto (see http://aces.ricercata.org/index.php?nfos=manifesto). The Curator will

electric lamp and music stand.

Section 4: Artists

Robert Blatt (1984, USA)
is a composer, sound artist and guitarist. He writes for acoustic and electroacoustic forces, using traditional instruments, loudspeakers and unconventional sound sources. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, he works frequently with installation and performance art, and draws from such diverse disciplines as anthropology, science and philosophy.

Andy Ingamells (1988, UK)
is a composer and performer of experimental music. He has performed his own and other people's work in venues such as Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ (Amsterdam), Ikon Gallery (Birmingham), El Niu de la Guatlla (Barcelona), Schlosshof (Göppingen) and Het Veem Theater (Amsterdam). He is a founding member of Ensemble Lös Caballeros, a four-person live-art group whose original repertoire traverses dance, performance art, theatre and music. He graduated from Birmingham Conservatoire in 2011, winning the Composition Prize for his destructive Piano Recital.

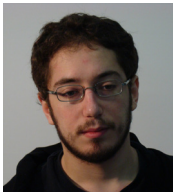
Ana Smaragda Lemnaru (1985, RO)
In 2007 has graduated from The Painting Department, Fine Arts from the National Arts University Bucharest, then Master in Fine Arts in 2009, at the same university. In 2012 has ended the Master of Artistic Research, the Hague.In the past year has presented mostly performance based works in venues such as: Nuitshuis , Villa Kabila, GEMAK, Loos (the Hague NL), Noise Equals Noise (London, UK).

Miguel Peres dos Santos (1976, PT)
is an artistic researcher based in The Hague - The Netherlands. The main focus of his practise on colonial and imperialistic counter-discourse in the recent years, reflects not only his growing interest in

the so called postcolonial theory and the political realm of aesthetics, but it also reveals a very specific intrinsic personal motivation. After studying photography and video at high-school Peres dos Santos developed further his studies in Fine Arts at the University of Lisbon; he then moved to The Netherlands where he got his BA graduation in 2003 and got his MA in Artistic research in 2012 at the University of the Arts in The Hague.

Jeremiah Runnels (1983,USA) was born in the Former Republic of Texas, and he studied for 8 years in the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, doctors expect that he will make a full recovery.

David Pocknee (1986, UK)
is a composer, guitarist and visual artist currently living in The Hague. He studied music and composition in Huddersfield University, England and the Royal Conservatoire, The Hague.
He is a founding member of The New Fordist Organization and The Institute Of Applied Cultural Economics and Sociology (www.acesinstitute.eu) as well as running the daily experimental text score service Text Score A Day (www.twitter.com/textscoreaday). Between 2010-2012 he performed with the Hague-based performance art collective, Acid Police Noise Ensemble (www.acidpolice.com), and previously performed in the experimental, Huddersfield-based Edges Ensemble. He is the editor and founder of Much Too Much Noise (http://issuu.com/much_too_much_noise), an online zine for radical aesthetics.



Leo Svirsky (1988, USA)
is one of the most highly regarded monkeys of its generation. Its work is based on reconciling its upbringing as a new world monkey (with a prehensile tail) with its old-world monkey sensibilities (non-prehensile tails), often suffused with a nostalgia for the golden age of pleistocene megafauna. Its work “fuck you, Jane Goodall” has been performed at zoos all over Europe, Asia, and the Americas, often being compared to seminal works by Vito Acconci and the Viennese Aktionists. Interdisciplinary works include collaborations with zebras, gorillas, giraffes, ocelots, and Magnus Lindberg. It is also the first monkey to have copied the complete works of Charles Dickens on a vintage type-writer. After throwing its feces at Charles Saatchi, it has been represented by Saatchi & Saatchi since the late 90s. It has also appeared alongside many world-famous organ-grinders at the Venice Biennale.

Postscript

A while ago, I participated in a symposium entitled Speculative Art Histories.
Although the idea of re-reading art history through the tinted shades of the hipsterfashionable "speculative realism" was interesting enough, it seemed to me that the idea of "speculative art histories" hinted at an idea more profound than simply jamming the history of art into the virologically contagious lexico-conceptual woodshredder of Deleuzian thought. Instead of the past flattened *Fargo*-like into a snow-staining plane of visceral consistency, my misinterpretation of its title pointed to speculation in the more colloquial sense of "forming a theory or conjecture without firm evidence".

New Fordism is the result of a type of reckless speculation. Its proponents' business cards say not, "F. Droppe, Artist", but "F. Droppe, Speculator In Art Futures". It is the cityslicker tradingfloor mentality wrapped in a bargainbucket of "what-ifs":

What if one were to take the current neo-liberal attitude towards the value of art – an attitude which locates all value in the economic realm –and not question it, running with it to its (il)logical conclusion?

What if one were to do this, not out of a contrived and irritatingly precocious cynicism entirely out of place with our privilege and youthfulness, but from the kind of perverse curiosity that leads people to put CDs into microwaves?

What if this borderline between critique and curiosity left the work in a superpositional state, both archly-ironic Stephen Colbert and scarily sincere Bill O'Reilly simultaneously?

A "what-if" is normally a speculation upon the future, but New Fordism works both ways – using history as a creative discipline to remake the past in its own image – not a journey back in time to kill Hitler, but a presumption that Nazism was the unintentional result of a future timetravel back to prevent the unspeakable evils of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in an alternate timeline. In the documentary Manufacturing Style the Organization has the balls to propose, not just that New Fordist art is about mass-production, factories and biomechanics, but that all art has been for the past hundred years. They ruin the will-they-won't-they sitcomsuspense in favour of a roughfuck series-ender.

In poststructuralism, the idea of the singular, objective Truth is submitted to morphological and pluralistic bastardizations into "truth", "Truth" and multiple truths. A creative and speculative historiography is the phantom limb of this formulation: multiple untruths. Great manifestos thrive not on their objective Truth, but on their power to delusionally spur others to creative actions, fired by the fervor of the true believer. New Fordism replaces this mirage of certainty with a mixture of truths and blatant untruths that make possible a creativity unthinkable without them.

A few paradoxes are OK, but New Fordism brings them mothflocking to a weldinglight that cut-and-shuts concepts into a precipitous behemoth who lurches unsteadily overhead like a drunken *Transformer*. Antonio Gramsci welded to Henry Ford welded to Frederick Taylor welded to Ivan Pavlov into an awkward theoretical megazord. It is with full knowledge of these deficiencies, perhaps even celebrating the points of friction and the ability of their nonsense to destabilize demarcations and categorizations – glitched Venn diagrams forcing ambivalent reterrotorializations – that we *Run, Forest, Run!* through the absurdities dictated by the process and its backwards-engineered philosophy.

A well constructed lie will always trump the truth – and, in this case, a rickety one will do.

F. Droppe
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