

# RE-BUS

CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN THE  
20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES:  
ART COLLECTIVES,  
INSTITUTIONS, CULTURE  
INDUSTRY

SPECIAL  
ISSUE

VOLUME 1

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## EDITORIAL STATEMENT FOR VOLUME 1

For the first volume of the *re-bus* Special Issue “Cultural Production in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries: Art Collectives, Institutions, Culture Industry” the editorial team has put together four articles that launch a fundamental inquiry into the definition of the art collective and its strained relationship with institutions at large. Implicated in this relationship are distinct matters that run from economic strategies to concrete political statements and demands, leading artists, whether as part of a collective or a wider cultural movement, to adopt tactical measures that consistently bring to bear processes of institutionalisation. Thus, these articles highlight issues of what it means to conceive of production as an extension of collaboration and its opposition to conventional artistic collectivities (L. Mayhew), of the radical endeavour of the mid-century avant-garde and its enduringly profound negation of institutional power (whether academic or artistic) (M. Lang), of autonomy and the pressures of the art market (D. Mantoan), or the measures taken by artists to make concrete a modernising project through commercialisation and its support of art’s delimitation into a professional field (A. Fast). In short, the authors of these articles prompt a relational conception of the collective/movement that is very close to the institutional, whether it is held in contempt, seen as part of a positive element in artistic production, or simply, pragmatically utilised to further the artists’ ideas.

**Ana Varas Ibarra & David Murrieta Flores**

**re-bus Issue 8 Co-editors**

**With special thanks to Christopher Collier**

## Diverging Collectives: Artist-Run Spaces versus Warehouse Shows

*Comparative models of art production and cooperation among young British artists*

Diego Mantoan

### Abstract

The paper addresses the case of artist-run spaces and warehouse shows in the United Kingdom between the 1980s and 1990s, a time when autonomous group shows and independent artist collectives sprawled particularly thanks to the engagement of a new generation of artists, among whom were found later celebrities such as Damien Hirst and Douglas Gordon. It will be argued that both artist-run spaces and warehouse shows were feasible solutions for young authors against art market barriers and economic crisis, although they held structural and organisational differences that would affect aesthetic outcomes and present art history with a shift in the model of the art collective.

### 1. A Tale of Two Cities and their Artists

The increasing centrality of exhibitions in the late twentieth century – particularly group shows and solo retrospectives intended as a principal tool to display an artist's oeuvre – have had a lasting impact on the way practitioners understand artistic production and cooperation.<sup>1</sup> As far as early-career artists today are concerned, participating in a collective show or joining an artist-run space has come to offer a unique opportunity to share creative dialogue with their peers; offering mutual support and pooling chances of a breakthrough.

Still in art school during the 1980s, a whole generation of UK artists indeed resorted to organising independent exhibitions or running a communal venue as tools against art market

barriers and the lingering British economic crisis.<sup>2</sup> Although it probably did not revolutionise art history, the ways they found to cooperate brought about a shift in the way today's art collectives operate. It particularly affected the practice of cultural production, presenting aspiring artists with feasible answers to the dire circumstances of their career outset. The crucial role of autonomous shows or independent venues as a means to foster communal chances of early recognition can hardly be denied. However, it is important to attempt to pinpoint constitutional differences between the various forms and organisations of artist collectives, typologies which can be well observed in the late twentieth century UK.

Two main types of artistic cooperation will be considered, namely warehouse shows and artist-run spaces. The geographic extent and high number of artist-initiated projects or venues in the UK during this period suggest that they were in fact a common and effective means of exhibition. Their main use was apparently contrasting the market-driven art system, which was perceived to have stopped offering opportunities to aspiring artists due to a prolonged crisis.<sup>3</sup> Although warehouse shows and artist-run spaces blossomed simultaneously, the two forms of cultural production differ from one another in temporal scope, specific objectives and cooperative practices. To elucidate this, a set of diverging examples will be analysed. The specific cases examined have the wider relevance of having paved the way for the emergence of a new generation of practitioners commonly referred to as the Young British Artists (YBAs).<sup>4</sup>

The temporal scope of the research only covers the years 1988 to 1992, because the events taking place during this short period were later proved ground-breaking in terms of the development of successful strategies for overcoming entry barriers to the local art system. The geographic scope is concentrated on the cases of London and Glasgow, the latter having risen to prominence as the only true counterpart to the English capital's art scene according to several

commentators.<sup>5</sup> With respects to London, the centre of attention is the group of Goldsmiths graduates revolving around the art celebrity Damien Hirst, whilst the Scottish city's climax is represented by the independent gallery Transmission, led amongst others by future Turner Prize winner Douglas Gordon.

Utilising a variety of sources from this period – including exhibition catalogues and specialised magazines, reviews and interviews, a rich art historical bibliography as well as artist papers – the paper will follow the initiation and growth of warehouse shows in London, and the concurrent rise of artist-run venues in Glasgow, as well as in Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Belfast. The genesis and subsequent effects of these two experiences will be explored with regard to their inner dynamics, exterior appearance and impact on artistic practices. In fact, a divergent response to similar challenges may confirm the proposed diversity of organisational approach and artistic production, further suggesting a structural difference between warehouse shows and artist-run spaces.

## 2. The 'Mother' of Warehouse Shows

London is presently amongst the most prominent cities within the international art world and can be said to dominate the art scene of the entire European continent, as far as the art market is concerned.<sup>6</sup> Looking back to the 1980s however, the English capital was then somewhat marginal and parochial as far as the contemporary art scene was concerned. Secluded from the strong axis that connected New York to Cologne, young art students and aspiring artists of the time could look at just a few landmark institutions in their city to catch up with international trends. Amongst those were Anthony d'Offay and Nicholas Logsdail, the latter patron of Lisson Gallery, who had established themselves as leading London dealers for over two decades and

were associated with edgy or sophisticated styles, such as minimalism and conceptual art.<sup>7</sup> By the late 1980s, in their respective galleries, they would house exhibitions showcasing international art stars such as Gerhard Richter or home-grown celebrities like Julian Opie, although with a rather traditional mode of display.<sup>8</sup>

A completely different approach to the exhibition of contemporary art was provided by the Saatchi Gallery, planted in the elegant borough of Saint John's Wood, and which represented an early attempt to reconvert an industrial building into an art facility. This venue was all about the character of advertisement tycoon Charles Saatchi, acting simultaneously as an engaged private collector and a determined art dealer, who used to buy everything he liked in a bulk and then tenaciously promoted his own artists stable as an investment.

Towards the end of the 1980s he had abandoned any enthusiasm for neo-expressionist painters and shifted towards provocative though blue chip American artists, disclosing his new collection in a two-part exhibition organised between 1987 and 1988. NY Art Now introduced the British audience especially to the works of Jeff Koons, which would have an indelible impact on a whole generation of London art students and young graduates.<sup>9</sup> In the eyes of aspiring artists, the Saatchi Gallery thus reached a point of innovation and sophistication any other British institution could just dream of. Two decades later Damien Hirst himself remembered with colourful language the genuine shock effect that these exhibitions and the enormous space provoked in him, as it proved suitable for sensational installations, completely disrupting the equilibrium of a dull local art scene:

Saatchi was just there at the perfect point with a huge fucking space. [...] And then Saatchi did the New York Show. I remember walking in and going, "Hey, my eyes!" The whiteness of it! It just blew me away. And it was so not British. And that just totally inspired all the students. We wanted to show at the Saatchi Gallery immediately. And then we started making work really to fit in there. And that's when I realized we wouldn't fit into the art world the way it was. So I just went and got a warehouse, and we did that show.<sup>10</sup>

Hirst states that the direct impact of Saatchi's new gallery drove him towards the organisation of Freeze in the Summer of 1988, the first warehouse show ever to be held in London's Surrey Docks. Indeed, many aspiring artists suddenly hoped to attract the tycoon's attention, so for instance by mimicking his exhibition space or by deliberately adapting to the style of the works he seemed to like.<sup>11</sup> The influence this venue and the collector's recent artistic choices had on young art students can hardly be overstated. Indeed, various observers such as the curator and critic Gregor Muir, who was in art school at the time, confirm this impression:

It would be difficult to underestimate the impact of the Saatchi Gallery and its effect on all those who attended exhibitions such as NY Art Now [...]. The Saatchi Gallery was everything that the boring institutions were not. It provided an excellent space for the display of fresh talent while being so awesome that it literally took your breath away.<sup>12</sup>

The kind of work presented and its peculiar mode of display in this huge space inspired especially Goldsmiths students, who had been encouraged by teachers like Jon Thompson and Michael Craig-Martin to abandon medium specificity, instead advocating a revised version of conceptual art. Jeff Koons' works displayed for NY Art Now, like the basketballs floating in a vitrine (*Three Ball Total Equilibrium Tank*, 1985), were in fact the incarnation of these principles, looking minimal and cool, provocative and irresistible. Such works taught young practitioners like Hirst the relevance of a dramatic presentation, considered as both an artistic value and an effective way of self-promotion, as he expressed in his own words later on:

I remember realising that you can't just have a studio and paint, and put the paintings in a corner and wait to be discovered. [...] And I just wanted things that were irresistible, things that you couldn't ignore, that you couldn't avoid and you couldn't challenge. [...] Saatchi was doing that in advertising, I remember thinking, 'I want to make art that does what that does'. [...] Once the gallery had opened, I was making art for there.<sup>13</sup>

Indeed, the second part of NY Art Now had not yet closed when three Goldsmiths students set out to imitate the trends and reproduce the display circumstances seen at Saatchi's exhibition. In early 1988 Damien Hirst encountered Angus Fairhurst and Abigail Lane at an autonomously

organised group show called Progress by Degree. It was organised in the rooms of Bloomsbury Gallery, a few yards off Russell Square, where they showed early works together with college peer Mat Collishaw.<sup>14</sup> After this experience the trio set out to plan a much more structured event for the summer, which they wanted to be a truly professional group show with marketing efforts eventually exceeding the attempt to achieve a unitary curatorial approach.<sup>15</sup> News that the three bachelor students intended to curate an independent group exhibition, soon after the pretty successful Goldsmiths graduate show,<sup>16</sup> caused rumours about the prospective contributors, as well as broad press and art world interest in the chosen venue, a disused London Port Authority building on Surrey Docks.<sup>17</sup> Titled Freeze,<sup>18</sup> Hirst's activity proved essential in organising this ambitious three-part exhibition: he provided curatorial guidelines, chose the participating artists, suggested the works to display, found the venue and secured a small endowment from the London Docklands Development Corporation.<sup>19</sup> Thanks to the sponsorship agreement the young students could afford the venue for two months, restore the inner spaces, mount the three shows, send out invitations and produce a stylish catalogue.

From 6 August to 29 September 1988 about twenty Goldsmiths matriculates and graduates displayed their works in three separate groups,<sup>20</sup> after carefully painting and fitting the deserted warehouse, such that the installation would be reminiscent of the Saatchi Gallery. According to commentators, the result was rather brilliant with interiors resembling the aesthetics of a proper Kunsthalle [fig. 1], the catalogue edited in a smart and minimal design and the mailing list for the opening event audaciously drawn up from different London galleries.<sup>21</sup> Working as a receptionist at the d'Offay Gallery, Hirst had gained a sufficient understanding of art system dynamics, thus being aware of proper organisational requirements for the success of an exhibition, beyond simply focussing on displayed works alone.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the level of contributions was surprisingly good for a student show, yet it was the spatial quality of the

venue as well as the entire organisational dynamic that turned out to be absolutely unprecedented.



Fig. 1: Freeze, 1988, installation view with works of Simon Patterson on the rear and Angela Bulloch to the right. Surrey Docks, London.  
[source: <https://southwarknotes.wordpress.com>]

Even in the opinion of an unsympathetic critic such as art historian Julian Stallabrass, the success of Freeze was not mere luck, since the organisers had intentionally sought to mount a professional-looking exhibition with an impressive catalogue and to get people who mattered in the London art world to attend the opening.<sup>23</sup> Michael Craig-Martin providentially assisted the three curators throughout the organisation process and later attracted art heavyweights to the opening, amongst those the recently appointed Tate director Nicholas Serota and the ambitious German dealer Karsten Schubert.<sup>24</sup> In doing so he effectively contributed to the acceptance of this event and supported his pupils, realising artist-run-shows made a good strategy for aspiring artists, carving out an alternative space in the local art scene:

I had always tried to help my students in any way I could, particularly in those first years after art school. I knew from personal experience how difficult it was – I never had things come easy. I did the same with Damien [Hirst] and Freeze. I encouraged people to go and see the work. I would never have done this, if I hadn't

believed the show was of exceptional interest [...]. It amuses me that so many people think what happened was calculated and cleverly manipulated whereas in fact it was a combination of youthful bravado, innocence, fortunate timing, good luck, and, of course, good work.<sup>25</sup>

Although visitors did not queue at the exhibition entrance, Freeze would later prove to be a crucial event for recent art history, which established new standards of practice and a particular care for display conditions amongst aspiring artists. As for the presented pieces, the influence in style and genre these students had been exposed to at Goldsmiths drove them towards a revised version of conceptual art that borrowed a lot from minimalism and sought to look cool or provocative.<sup>26</sup> Many works included in the show – such as Gary Hume's Door Paintings, Angela Bulloch's RGB light bulb installations or Simon Patterson's text pieces<sup>27</sup> already revealed some of the main features pivotal for the generation later labelled the YBAs.

Rather than confronting established styles like neo-expressionism, these young artists tried to catch up with emerging trends, further referencing mass media culture and heading for a shock-effect approach. At this stage, Hirst's curatorial leadership, albeit in constant discussion, had a strong impact on his peers. He took his curatorial role very seriously, setting tight aesthetic restrictions or advising his colleagues about pieces to show. Anya Gallaccio recalls the kind of direction and support provided by the Leeds-born artist, which helped her to adjust to the venue and find maturity in the work she proposed:

I was feeling pretty despondent, but then I started to work on Freeze with Damien [Hirst] and all of a sudden I had a space and a set of parameters, so I had another opportunity. [...] I was showing with Gary [Hume]'s paintings. And he was making door paintings and they hung very low, virtually on the floor. I knew that I couldn't make anything high that would interfere visually with what he'd done. The more restrictions Damien imposed, the clearer my choices became.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the contributors' young ages, the reaction of the art system to this first warehouse show was rather enthusiastic. A lot of personalities dropped by to visit the venue, while most works

on display were sold and several exhibitors even found a dealer's representation.<sup>29</sup> Such an outcome emphasises the ambiguity of Freeze: originally conceived as an opportunity for outcasts, with a distinct oppositional character, it resulted in an attempt to get in touch with the London art establishment.<sup>30</sup> Except for Craig-Martin, Goldsmiths professors were overall struck by the promptness of some dealers in absorbing Freeze contributors, completely sidestepping the long and impoverished apprenticeship that young artists were expected to serve before gaining entrance to a commercial gallery.<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, critics argue that Freeze and later warehouse shows were far from rebellious, on the contrary they appeared to be rather system-friendly and quite conventional regarding the presented artworks.<sup>32</sup> Although cleverly devised as entry strategies, it is important to note that such artist-run shows were, however, very risky. They could have destroyed any of newcomer's career ambitions, hence professional self confidence and bravery were needed to embark in such activities.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, in the advent of 1989 recession, self-organisation became a last resort of material survival for young artists. Self-promotion and an entrepreneurial attitude were basic means to outlive the economic crisis. The only resource left was the real estate crash, which provided low cost venues initiating an era of artist-run spaces and warehouse shows in the UK.

### 3. Rebirth of an Artist-Run Space

The competitive and engaged spirit permeating London's art schools and students was rather at odds with the situation of aspiring artists in the rest of the UK. Far north in Glasgow, for instance, young people who wished to start a career in the visual arts were confronted with a city lacking any art market influence or structured institutions that could support them.<sup>34</sup>

Hence, in order to survive they had to design quite different strategies and would resort uniquely to genuine group solidarity. The professional approach that Goldsmiths students had demonstrated with Freeze was a significant change in attitude that affected young artists around the UK. This rising tide even struck Glasgow, but artists there did not have access to a comparable infrastructure of media contacts or commercial galleries. Despite common social backgrounds and shared thematic issues, London-based and Glaswegian aspiring artists lived worlds apart.<sup>35</sup> The former were almost like entrepreneurs showcasing immediateness and a more opportunistic working ethos, the latter were rather scavengers, their work being more lyrical and reflective.<sup>36</sup>

The most resourceful group among young Glaswegians turned out to be several graduates of the newly founded Environmental Art Department at Glasgow School of Art. Charismatic professor David Harding, who presided over the courses, had introduced them to the principles of public art, contextual engagement, visual democracy, performance and conceptualism.<sup>37</sup> His students were trained in reacting to their environment, trying to make art for non-institutional spaces that would instead speak even to non-expert viewers. Among the first group of department graduates were Christine Borland, Douglas Gordon, Craig Richardson and later also Martin Boyce, Katrina Brown, Roderick Buchanan, Nathan Coley and Elsie Mitchell. They had grown very affectionate and helpful to one another, thus deciding to embark on a joint venture to foster communal chances of survival and progressive emergence.

The artist-run Transmission gallery fulfilled exactly their purpose of giving a chance to the city's young artists, feeding an alternative art scene, apart from art market concerns.<sup>38</sup> The premises were opened in the early 1980s and modelled like Edinburgh's Fruitmarket Gallery, in order to provide the Clydeside area with a venue for newer generation artists and overcome the lack of exhibition opportunities in Glasgow. Resembling a free association, Transmission



was open to all artists residing in the city for just a small entrance fee, while an elected board of directors was responsible for organising exhibitions and inviting outside artists. Interestingly the charter further compelled directors to drop out after serving two years, while the new committee members had to be younger than the previous ones, hence allowing constant renewal at the top.<sup>39</sup>

On the occasion of Transmission's relocation to new premises on King Street, in the summer of 1989, the board was to be newly appointed and it was passed over to the first cohort of graduates of the Environmental Art Department, who even renovated the venue in Merchant City [fig. 2]. The link was made to Douglas Gordon and Craig Richardson, who still as students had staged an early performative work at Transmission in 1987.<sup>40</sup> The new board of directors consisted of Dave Allen, Christine Borland, Billy Clark, Douglas Gordon and Craig Richardson, although Martin Boyce, Katrina Brown, Roderick Buchanan and Elsie Mitchell were soon involved in the gallery activities. These young artists brought about a true change of direction, since they were convinced that Transmission should be used to approach the international art system, rather than remaining in the local or alternative art scene. In fact, they focused on works that would not normally find place in Scotland and carefully avoided the Glasgow-centred obsession of former committees. For this purpose they alternated group exhibitions of young graduates and invitations to older artists with an international scope, who agreed with visual democracy and public art.



Fig. 2: Transmission Gallery, 1989, interior with Douglas Gordon and another committee member refurbishing the space. Transmission Gallery, Glasgow.

© Studio lost but found / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016. Courtesy VG Bild-Kunst

The six directors did not solely use the premises to show their own works or to exchange it with other artist-run spaces around the UK and Europe. Quite the contrary, they exploited the gallery as a chance to get in touch with established artists that could become mentors to the newer generation of Glaswegian artists.<sup>41</sup> While serving on the Transmission board, Gordon, Borland and Richardson indeed approached several older Scottish artists of international renown, such as Alan Johnston and Thomas Lawson, plus an American art star like conceptual artist Lawrence Weiner. Later Turner Prize winner Richard Wright maintains that this committee intentionally used the venue to foster a new leading group in the city and progressively connecting Glasgow to the international art scene:

In the early '90s what really changed, when Douglas Gordon, Christine Borland and Dave Allen were involved, was that there was a much more conscious attempt to engage with an existing art world. [...] That was a really new thing, and I think the model of Transmission being an agent of attraction and a bridgehead into other situations is still in place.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, the new Transmission team consciously tried to create a coherent grouping, both in attitude and possibly also in style, exploring upcoming trends that could appeal to an international audience. Thus the committee members learned to operate together providing mutual support, sharing the gallery as a communal studio and discussing each other's creations. One of the first exhibitions they planned on a joint basis was the Festival of Plagiarism in November 1989 [fig. 3]. Debates among directors immediately led to a studied decision to turn from the kind of neo-expressionism that had granted some fame to the so called New Glasgow Boys a few years earlier. Instead, they intended to follow what art magazines such as *Artforum*, *October*, *Art Monthly* and *Variant* were promoting, since group exhibitions like the widely criticised *Magiciens de la Terre* (Centre Georges Pompidou, 1989) convinced them that future developments in the arts were drifting away from late modernism, in favour of neo-conceptual practices.<sup>43</sup> Christine Borland recalls the way they decided to manage Transmission, in order to disseminate these ideas and attitudes, as well as to overcome obstacles that lay in the way of young artists in a cast away city:

I think the Transmission Gallery is a key part, and it continues to be. It's a gallery, so of course it's structured, but really it's about empowerment of artists; they're working and curating shows, going abroad, having exhibitions, telling people about Transmission in Glasgow, asking people to come over – just spreading the wave, spreading the circle of friends wider and wider. No doubt about it, that's what's kept me going.<sup>44</sup>



Fig. 3: Transmission Gallery, 1989, installation view of the Festival of Plagiarism. Transmission Gallery, Glasgow. © Studio lost but found / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016. Courtesy VG Bild-Kunst

Thomas Lawson, a well known Scottish artist and writer, and Nicola White, a respected curator who ran the important Glaswegian venue Tramway, were amazed by the achievements of the new gallery committee. They were particularly impressed by the competence, which characterised the young Transmission members, as well as by their ability to turn a small artist-run gallery into a showcase for the international art world, rather than clinging to the alternative scene.<sup>45</sup> Gordon, Borland and their peers were committed to build a strong network of relationships amongst the art world, which might in turn offer them new exhibition opportunities. At the climax of their systematic efforts they achieved the possibility to organise two group shows in relevant venues, which would finally draw attention on the so-called Transmission Generation. These were the group shows *Self Conscious State* at Third Eye Centre in Glasgow (1990), [fig. 4],<sup>46</sup> now housing the Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA), and *Guilt by Association* at the Modern Art Museum in Dublin (1992).<sup>47</sup> Richardson's comments on communal approach to artistic practice applied on these occasions reveal the differences between Glaswegians and their London counterparts:

In our case it was the presentation of what we would have termed post-conceptual art by young artists from Scotland that we wanted to address collectively. [...] In

the end the gallery became a type of studio, and the two-week installation period a time for investigation. [...] at the time in Glasgow artists' initiatives were continuing to grow in ambition and self critical success. The identity of a work is different when generated from within a self-generated group. All the competing ideas offered up by the artists in the group supply a context as dynamic as place or site. In this climate works completed and still-planned are always under discussion, responses requested and negotiated.<sup>48</sup>

Borland confirms that they were particularly aware of examples that interested them, in order to find the right artistic current for a successful beginning:

I'd say that most of my friends or artists I hung around with were also working like this. I suppose earlier on we used the language of conceptual art and minimalism more self-consciously.<sup>49</sup>

Apparently, young Goldsmiths students and those at the Glasgow Environmental Art Department rediscovered conceptual art practices simultaneously for almost the same reason, though with slightly different aims and particularly diverse approaches. Referencing a style that seemed post-conceptual and post-minimal was a conscious attempt to catch up with the latest global trends, since London was rather at the fringes of the contemporary art system at the time, Glasgow being completely off the map. In both cities, young artists understood that appropriation of these international paradigms was the best way out of periphery. For this reason, at a first glance, their early artistic production showed a sort of common aesthetic and ideological ground.<sup>50</sup>



Fig. 4: Self Conscious State, 1990, installation view with *List of Names* (1990) by Douglas Gordon to the right. Third Eye Centre (today Centre for Contemporary Arts), Glasgow. © Studio lost but found / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016. Courtesy VG Bild-Kunst

However, while young artists in London oriented their creative stances towards the primacy of the art market, in Glasgow such concerns were completely absent, which resulted in an essential difference between the two cities. Indeed, Glaswegians could resort only to group solidarity, whereas London's art system was well structured and could guarantee success to artists who gained access to local key players. As a consequence, the milieu of aspiring artists was highly competitive in the English capital and congregating with peers appeared to be rather aimed at one's individual interests, more than to create shared projects.<sup>51</sup> Despite a comparable reference to conceptual art and minimalism, in London the target was meta-artistic, hence producing artworks that were generally self-referential and elitist, while in Glasgow social engagement was the main stance, as it would have been pointless to reference the underdeveloped local art system.

#### 4. Warehouse Shows Spreading, Artist-Run Spaces Growing

While artists at Transmission were giving birth to a lively art community around the facility, which focused international interest on Glasgow, various Goldsmiths graduates and Freeze contributors engaged with a new series of warehouse shows that would stress the relevance of London's alternative scene as truly paramount. Indeed, the ferment stirred by events in the English capital between 1990 and 1992 served to the general advantage of an entire generation of newer artists in the UK.<sup>52</sup> Recession was biting and dealers had picked only a few Freeze contributors, hence the majority of aspiring artists kept on producing their own shows to draw attention. To their advantage, however, they simply needed to replicate the process that had proved effective in summer 1988. In fact, all that was necessary to stage a warehouse show was finding an empty industrial building – which the Docklands were overabundant with at the time<sup>53</sup> – negotiate a free rental period, find a few thousand pounds to produce a stylish catalogue, put together some talented friends and send out invitations. This happened to be the exact method applied also to Building One (Peak Freans Factory in Bermondsey, 1990), curated by Hirst, Carl Freedman and Billee Sellman, and East Country Yard Show (South Docks, 1990) by Sarah Lucas and Henry Bond.

Building One became home to three separate group shows: Modern Medicine in March with Hirst still in the curatorial role, Gambler in July, and finally, Market in October, which really was a solo exhibition of Michael Landy. The Building One exhibitions repeated the success of Freeze eventually confirming the potential effectiveness of do-it-yourself shows and ordaining Hirst as a rising star in the local art scene.<sup>54</sup> For the first show he displayed some early *Medicine Cabinets* (1989-90), which were immediately bought in a bulk by Charles Saatchi and his wife Doris.<sup>55</sup> For Gambler the young Leeds artist dropped any curatorial ambition for good and engaged instead in his first spectacular animal installation addressing the lifecycle theme.<sup>56</sup> Titled *A Thousand Years* (1990), it was a large glass case divided in two adjoining parts, where breeding maggots turned into flies, which then entered the second compartment to feed

themselves over a rotting cow's head and finally died by electrocution. In seeing this installation, Saatchi is said to have stayed open mouthed and offered to fund Hirst's next animal installation, which would result in the famous pickled tiger shark called *The Impossibility Of Death In The Mind Of Someone Living* (1991).<sup>57</sup>

In comparison, East Country Yard Show with almost sixty square meters for every exhibitor did not bring much appraisal to its initiator Sarah Lucas, although it counts today as one of the YBA's germinal moments.<sup>58</sup> Passing rather unnoticed, the latter group exhibition's fate proved that warehouse shows did not automatically lead to acceptance into the established art world. On the contrary, their true nature emerged: a quite fatiguing one-shot attempt, which might well miss the target. However, the stack of alternative events organised between 1988 and 1991 finally drew the attention of several experts and critics that progressively backed up this newer generation of artists. Sacha Cradock of *The Guardian*, Sarah Kent of *London Time Out* and Andrew Renton of the weekly review *Blitz* supported the emerging authors. Even columnists Kate Bush, David Batchelor and Adrian Searle on specialised magazines such as *Artscribe* and *Art Monthly* started to take a closer look at these self-initiated exhibitions. An authoritative example of positive critical reception is an article of summer 1990 by Andrew Graham-Dixon in *The Independent*:

Goldsmiths graduates are unembarrassed about promoting themselves and their work: some of the most striking exhibitions in London over the past few months – The East Country Yard Show, or Gambler, both staged in Docklands – have been independently organised and funded by Goldsmiths graduates as showcases for their work. This has given them a reputation for pushiness, yet it should also be said that in terms of ambition, attention to display and sheer bravado there has been little to match such shows in the country's established contemporary art institutions. They were far superior, for instance, to any of the contemporary art shows that have been staged by the Liverpool Tate in its own multi-million-pound dockland site.<sup>59</sup>

Far beyond the influence of sporadic yet effective warehouse shows, as the 1990s recession started to hit hard, the true backbone of the rising art scene in the UK was instead characterised by artist-run spaces. Although several were founded in the previous decade, many more spread across the UK and assumed a crucial role for the survival of newer groups, especially when far off from London. Rather than mere exhibition spaces, such venues acted as catalyst for a thriving community, places of relative freedom, to exchange opinions, mature artistic practices and build a network of relationships. Besides Transmission, influential artist-run spaces of the time include the Collective and New 57 in Edinburgh, Catalyst Arts in Belfast, Locus+ in Newcastle upon Tyne and The International 3 in Manchester, while venues in London included City Racing, Clove near Butler's Wharf, Cubitt near King's Cross, Infanta of Castile, Matt's, Milch Gallery in Bloomsbury and Nosepaint (later Beaconsfield).

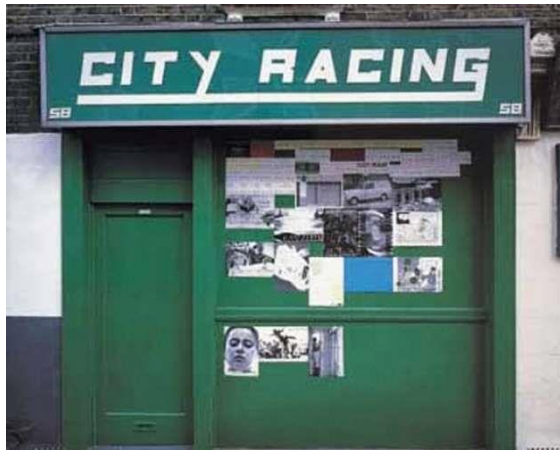


Fig.5: City Racing, 1993(?), front entrance. City Racing, London.  
[source: <http://archivesofheartistled.org/projects/city-racing>]

City Racing [fig. 5] is an interesting example to compare with Transmission, to evaluate the common logic of such alternative venues for rising artists. In fact, the former stayed active in the English capital from 1988 to 1998 housing a significant number of the first ever solo shows

for women artists such as Sarah Lucas, Fiona Banner and Gillian Wearing. Founded by Matt Hale, Paul Noble, John Burgess, Keith Coventry and Peter Owen, the venture was simply the result of their exclusion from available exhibition spaces, hence leading them to open their own premises in a former betting shop:

None of us would have even considered running a gallery on our own but as a collective we found the strength to do it. [...] That we did was because we created opportunities out of the little that we had – a bit like turning our cul-de-sacs into a roundabout!<sup>60</sup>

In the first five years City Racing's founders fought hard to raise financial capital for the gallery activities, but in 1993 they managed to get City Council funding for another five. Started as a place to display their own unrecognized works, the venue resulted in a valuable asset to make durable relationships with local artists and cross-country links with similar ventures. Critic Stuart Morgan has cynically, though effectively, described the logic of artist-run spaces, which fed the alternative art scene or kick-started young artists' careers, when private galleries or public institutions gave them no chance at all:

Setting up as a curator to “curate” friends so that in due course they may “curate” you or you will be able to curate yourself into an exhibition you have curated. In retrospect these were all ways of trying to look like Mother Theresa whilst secretly wanting to be Anthony d'Offay.<sup>61</sup>

Following this pattern, City Racing got in touch with Transmission via Douglas Gordon and from 1992 onwards, the two galleries exchanged shows, as well as exhibitors.<sup>62</sup> The basic difference between the two ventures, however, was their attitude towards such exchange-programs: indeed, they were constitutional for the Glaswegian artists, in order to systematically raise network capital, while their London counterparts embarked in this project accidentally and had Transmission as sole partner venue.<sup>63</sup>



Fig.6: Milch Gallery, (1994), installation view with *Substance Sublimation Units* (1992) by Hamad Butt. Milch Gallery in Bloomsbury, London.  
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Again in 1992, another symbol of the London alternative scene would open up in new premises on Great Russell Street, this time feeding the city's underground milieu. Housing both an exhibition space on the first floor and a nightclub in the basement, Milch Gallery [fig. 6] had an ambiguous character, which was the direct result of its manager's own personality. A Canadian homosexual, Lawren Maben presented as an anarchist skinhead and funded his activities with rave and disco events for the gay-punk scene, as well as from occasional prostitution.<sup>64</sup> After being open for five months between 1989 and 1990, the little group show *A Modest Proposal* (1992),<sup>65</sup> featuring Simon Patterson and Douglas Gordon, celebrated its final reopening. The two artists displayed a collaborative installation composed of pyramids of paint buckets, grouped according to their colour family and named after British, Scottish and American dynasties, which experts considered one of the best London underground events of the year<sup>66</sup>.

Several other rising artists later exhibited at Milch Gallery, such as twin sisters Jane and Louise Wilson, but soon after the premises were sadly shut down following the death of Maben in 1994. Despite the very short activity of this independent venue, its force and eccentricity in

supporting rising London artists was paramount at a time when warehouse shows appeared to have completely exhausted their effectiveness.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, the geographic extent and number of artist-initiated spaces in the UK around the year 1990 suggest they were last resorts in contrast to the market driven art system, which had by then stopped offering opportunities to the younger generation. Although they probably did not constitute a radically new departure in art history, artist-run spaces of the 1990s turned out to be crucial for the young British artists to start a collective path and engage with other like-minded communities around the UK and beyond.

## 5. A Direct Confrontation and Subsequent Conclusions

Almost prophetically, the first official issue of *Frieze* in September-October 1991, a very ambitious London-based magazine that gradually became a key player of today's international art world, provided a first comparison between rising artists in London and Glasgow. The pilot issue cover that summer had displayed a detail of Hirst's *Butterfly Paintings* (1991), immediately showing the editors would take the stance on the newer generations in the capital. The autumn edition instead offered wide coverage and several warm reviews for the comprehensive Glasgow group show *Windfall 91* (1991), organised by Transmission artists with several foreign contributors.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, it was the third station of a cross-national project, which linked various European artist-run initiatives, especially between the UK and Germany.<sup>69</sup> Led by Douglas Gordon, Martin Boyce and Nathan Coley, they occupied the former Seamen's Institute in Clydeside to host a few dozen young artists. As they were mostly Glasgow based, it turned out as a perfect opportunity to crystallise the energy of the new local art milieu.



Fig.7: Windfall 91, 1991, preparatory works for the group exhibition. Seamen's Institute, Glasgow.  
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Despite lacking a common theme, the general trend was informed by neo-conceptual practices and inclined to bypass the gallery system, rather focussing on dead spaces with no commercial purpose. The final result was a number of ideas and installations, rather than completed works, which could, however, effectively represent the unrest and vitality of young artists in Glasgow's rising alternative scene. Even though it emerged as a sort of warehouse show, Windfall 91 was instead the product of a proper artist-run gallery method, which gained much critical appraisal exactly because of this different attitude [fig. 7]. Frieze accorded seven full pages to the group show, including a long interview with the three artists who had curated the event, plus very encouraging opinions of several London dealers and critics. Windfall 91 was described as the Glasgow reaction to the independent initiatives in London of the previous year, namely the Building One exhibitions. The title of Matthew Slotover's leading article was interestingly *Northern Lights*, presenting Glaswegians as the true and only response to the thriving community of the English capital. Comments by James Hall of *The Independent* explicitly praised the Glaswegian approach, freed from art market concerns and much more sincere with

regards to team spirit. Andrew Cross of James Hockey Galleries also unmistakably eulogised the event:

What I liked about the Windfall project is that although the work individually may not have been the best pieces by each artist, the whole event had a freshness, a relaxed attitude which I found very positive. Dare I say it, in some of the most recent initiatives in London there has been an over-emphasis on presentation. Which there wasn't in this case. [...] Up there, there was a greater willingness to all work together.<sup>70</sup>

Furthermore, critics did not seem to care that the rooms of the Seamen's Institute had been left almost in desolate conditions, which marked another difference with London's refurbished and whitewashed warehouse spaces [fig. 8]. This loose attitude towards the venue was in fact a studied decision to cut free from the kind of aesthetics that would recall a commercial gallery, as Douglas Gordon plainly explained:

We were encouraged by events like Building One and the East Country Yard Show, but at the same time, attention was placed on the spaces and the events more than the work. We wanted to get away from that by choosing a bland space.<sup>71</sup>



Fig.8: Windfall 91, 1991, installation view with works by Elsie Mitchell. Seamen's Institute, Glasgow. © Studio lost but found / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016. Courtesy VG Bild-Kunst

Even Stuart Morgan, writing for *Frieze*, appeared to like the Glaswegian approach, proving that in 1991 attentive critics had certainly noticed structural and aesthetic dissimilarities with

the London art scene, despite comparable social background and education.<sup>72</sup> Taking artistic practices into consideration, in Glasgow conceptualism became part of a working method that connected various practitioners into a coherent grouping. Londoners, on the contrary, rather appeared to exploit conceptual art as a way to address trendy high art, hence without being ideologically affected by its methods. As regards the organisational model, autonomous galleries such as Transmission were based on a persistent and communal commitment from initiators, to build a stable point of attraction in the art system, often without paying heed to the art market. London warehouse shows, instead, were played as one-shot opportunities that directly referenced the local establishment and commercial galleries in an attempt to make an immediate big splash. Even beyond geographical limitations, such structural differences between warehouse shows and artist-run spaces necessarily had an effect on the time and efforts spent on artistic research. In fact, autonomous galleries all over the UK generally offered a more conducive environment for artistic research and maturing production due to a relative distance from commercial concerns. London's warehouse shows, on the other hand, were meant to instantly attract dealers and collectors that could foster the contributors' careers, though leaving little time for trial and error.

To understand this duality of attitudes and outcomes, evident in the opposition between London and Glasgow, warehouse shows and artist-run spaces should be brought back to their constitutional features. Indeed, the latter usually arose out of utter interdiction to structured art facilities. Hence, the best way to survive was to bring ideas and works out by keeping together among peers and building a network of international relationships that might later provide official endorsement. In London instead, even at the climax of economic crisis around 1990, there was a structured art market full of dealers and collectors – some parochial and conservative, other newer and cunning. In order to rise into prominence, young artists in the English capital needed to intercept these players thanks to impressive creations that would earn

them immediate public recognition. The fundamental difference between rising artists in London and Glasgow – as well between warehouse shows and artist-run spaces in general – appears then to be what these young practitioners were really looking for: in the first example they directly aimed at dealers and patrons to enter the local art market, while in the second instance they looked for mentors to approach the international art scene.

Despite all these differences, the previous examples have stressed the importance that both warehouse shows and artist-run spaces held for art historical developments in the UK between the 1980s and 1990s, as well as the various ways in which they affected art production by a newer generation of British artists. The years considered above in particular demonstrate an unprecedented burst of vitality and initiative from emerging practitioners across the country, led by a growing competence with regards to art system dynamics, which in turn granted a relative freedom to young artists, helping them to steer their career autonomously. Although different in aims and scope, organisation and outcome – one should not underestimate the relevance that these artist-run spaces and warehouse shows hold as models and catalysts of cooperative artistic practices for today's aspiring artists, as well as for future generations.

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at Venice Biennale, while he later established a career as art archive curator and developer in Germany, working among others for Douglas Gordon (Berlin), Julia Stoschek Collection (Düsseldorf) and Sigmar Polke Estate (Cologne). He is Journal Manager of the scientific magazine *Venezia Arti*, being further member of the scientific committee of Roger Loewig Gesellschaft (Berlin) and of the *Yearbook of Moving Image Studies* (Kiel). His most recently published *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Vernon Press, 2015), which entered the long-list of the Berger Prize 2016 awarded by *The British Art Journal*. In 2016 he has been among speakers at the Centennial of Kunsthalle Bern, as well as at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *Contemporary Art. A very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *High Art Lite. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London and New York: Verso, 2006): 57.

<sup>3</sup> Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 16.

<sup>4</sup> Cfr. Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Cfr. Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *High Art Lite. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London and New York: Verso, 2006): 294-295.

<sup>7</sup> Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 14-15.

<sup>8</sup> Bruno S. Frey, *Arts & economics: analysis & cultural policy* (Berlin: Springer, 2000): 15.

<sup>9</sup> Kate Bush, 'Young British Art: Kate Bush on the YBA sensation', in *ArtForum* (October, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Cit. Damien Hirst in Anthony Haden Guest, 'Damien Hirst – fresh from auctioning more than 200 pieces of his work', in *Interview Magazine* (December, 2008): 155.

<sup>11</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *High Art Lite. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London and New York: Verso, 2006): 57.

<sup>12</sup> Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 19.

<sup>13</sup> Cit. Damien Hirst in Nicholas Serota, 'Nicholas Serota interviews Damien Hirst', in Anna Gallagher (ed.), *Damien Hirst* (London: Tate Publishing, 2012): 92.

<sup>14</sup> On this occasion Damien Hirst displayed an early pan work titled *8 Pans* (1987), which displayed regular cooking pans of different sizes painted with household gloss in bright colours and hung up the wall in a line.

<sup>15</sup> Kate Bush, 'Young British Art: Kate Bush on the YBA sensation', in *ArtForum* (October, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> The traditional graduate exhibition at Goldsmiths, held in June 1988, drew remarkable attention for the first time in a number of years, since the press highlighted several surprisingly good creations on display. Furthermore, before the opening Craig-Martin had invited Karsten Schubert for a preview, who after assisting Nicholas Logsdail at Lisson Gallery had opened his own space in April 1987 and was gaining relevance day by day on the London art market. The German born dealer snapped up three young graduates who appeared most promising and offered them an exhibition later that year: they were two painters, Gary Hume and Ian Davenport, and the installation artist Michael Landy. Cfr. Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 18.

<sup>17</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *Contemporary Art. A very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006): 54.

<sup>18</sup> The name Freeze seems to refer to a type of salad, which Abigail Lane had once left on the kitchen table where the three students held regular meetings. However, it may also derive from the technical meaning of the term, understood as a still image. In fact, the piece by Mat Collishaw they intended to exhibit was truly a still frame from an autopsy seen in a medical encyclopaedia, which they thought might cause broad sensation. Cfr. Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 23.

<sup>19</sup> Jeremy Cooper, *Growing up: the Young British Artists at 50* (Munich: Prestel Publishing, 2012): 24.

<sup>20</sup> Among the contributors were graduates, such as Sarah Lucas and Anya Gallaccio, and several students who were finishing their Bachelors, for instance Fiona Rae, Angela Bulloch, Ian Davenport, Michael Landy and Gary Hume, while most were only at their second BA year as Damien Hirst, Angus Fairhurst, Abigail Lane, Mat Collishaw and Simon Patterson.

<sup>21</sup> Francesco Bonami and Michele Robecchi, *Sarah Lucas* (Milan: Electa, 2007): 8.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Craig Martin, 'Damian Hirst: The Early Years', in Anna Gallagher (ed.), *Damien Hirst* (London: Tate Publishing, 2012): 38.

<sup>23</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *High Art Lite. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London and New York: Verso, 2006): 53.

<sup>24</sup> Cfr. Michael Craig-Martin in Brian Sherwin, 'Interview with Michael Craig-Martin', in *Art Space Talk* (August, 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Cit. Michael Craig-Martin in Brian Sherwin, 'Interview with Michael Craig-Martin', in *Art Space Talk* (August, 2007).

<sup>26</sup> Following sources are useful to analyse the works by Freeze exhibitors:

Francesco Bonami and Michele Robecchi, *Sarah Lucas* (Milan: Electa, 2007): 8-9.

Jeremy Cooper, *Growing up: the Young British Artists at 50* (Munich: Prestel Publishing, 2012): 25-26.

Rebecca Fortnum, *Contemporary British Women Artists: In Their Own Words* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007): 2-3.

Jessica Lack, 'Artist of the week no 1: Mat Collishaw', in *The Guardian* (23 July 2008).

Tom Morton, 'Definitely, Maybe', in *Frieze*, no. 98 (April, 2006).

Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 21-22.

Nicholas Serota, 'Nicholas Serota interviews Damien Hirst', in Anna Gallagher (ed.), *Damien Hirst* (London: Tate Publishing, 2012): 93.

Alastair Sooke, 'Gary Hume: the doors that unhinged the establishment', in *The Telegraph* (14 June 2008).

Leon Watson, 'Spot the difference: Damien Hirst painted only five of the 300 'spot paintings' in his latest collection', in *The Daily Mail* (13 January 2012).

<sup>27</sup> Gary Hume displayed *Mint Green Doors I-III* (1988), three pieces belonging to a series he had started that same year, which replicated the exact pattern of hospital doors and were painted in household gloss on medium density fibreboard. Hirst's then partner, Angela Bulloch participated with a light installation consisting of large coloured light bulbs stuck on the wall and lit at casual intervals that anticipated her *RGB Spheres Series* she would become famous for in the next decade. Besides some whitewashed canvasses named after celebrities – such as *John John* (1988) and *Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton* (1988) – Simon Patterson displayed a mural text piece titled *The Last Supper Arranged According to the Flat Back Four Formation (Jesus Christ in Goal)* (1988), which showed the apostles names written in typewriter typeface and organized as a football team. Cfr. Diego Mantoan, *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2015).

<sup>28</sup> Anya Gallaccio in Rebecca Fortnum, *Contemporary British Women Artists: In Their Own Words* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007): 2. Acting on site, in fact, introduced the young sculptor to a different set of variables and she eventually decided to pour a lead mould into a rectangular structure on the floor, which was then left to cool down naturally leaving a stirred and monochrome surface that resembled Jackson Pollock's dripping method. Cfr. Diego Mantoan, *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2015).

<sup>29</sup> Angela Bulloch found the support of Maureen Paley, the American founder of Interim Art Gallery, while German dealer Karsten Schubert picked Gary Hume, Michael Landy and Anya Gallaccio. The real big splash was made by painters Ian Davenport and Fiona Rae, who were chosen by a much more established and traditional gallery such as Waddington, eventually ending up as Turner Prize nominees in 1991.

<sup>30</sup> Kate Bush, 'Young British Art: Kate Bush on the YBA sensation', in *ArtForum* (October, 2004).

<sup>31</sup> The teaching staff even felt obliged to summon a school assembly in the aftermath of Freeze, in order to reprimand students and persuade them an art career needed a long apprenticeship, rather than premature self-promotion. Cfr. Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 25.

<sup>32</sup> Matthew Collings, *Blimey! From Bohemia to Britpop: the London artworld from Francis Bacon to Damien Hirst* (London: 21 Publishing Ltd): 31.

Julian Stallabrass, *High Art Lite. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London and New York: Verso, 2006): 53.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Craig Martin, 'Damian Hirst: The Early Years', in Anna Gallagher (ed.), *Damien Hirst* (London: Tate Publishing, 2012): 39.

<sup>34</sup> Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luth Press, 2010): 131.

<sup>35</sup> Family background and working attitude among art students across the nation can be said to have been analogous at the time, since higher education underwent the same demographic and structural transformation in the 1980s all over the UK. One may notice an enrolment boom throughout the decade, which led many women as well as working class students into art schools, while art education was gradually shifting towards non medium-specificity. Cfr. Diego Mantoan, *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2015).

<sup>36</sup> Charlotte Higgins, 'Glasgow's Turner connection. Why does Glasgow keep producing so many Turner prize winners? Could it be all down to this man?', in *The Guardian* (17 October 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Diego Mantoan, *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2015): 83-111.

<sup>38</sup> Following sources are useful to analyse the origin and development of Transmission: Thomas Lawson (ed.), *Guilt by Association* (Dublin: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1992). Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luth Press, 2010): 117-139.

Craig Richardson, *Scottish Art since 1960: Historical Reflections and Contemporary Overviews* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011): 133-156.

Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991).

<sup>39</sup> Cfr. Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991).

<sup>40</sup> Under the collective name of Puberty Institution, Gordon and Richardson were allowed to present the installation and enactment titled *Antehyperaesthesia* (1987), which exploited British performance art – for instance Stuart Brisley, Alistair MacLennan, Gilbert and George – and Italian arte povera, however playing on a kind of physical coldness that tried to shift nostalgic gloom towards meditation on illness and destitution. Craig Richardson, *Scottish Art since 1960: Historical Reflections and Contemporary Overviews* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011): 146.

<sup>41</sup> Cfr. Diego Mantoan, *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2015): 159.

<sup>42</sup> Cit. Richard Wright in Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luth Press, 2010): 138-139.

<sup>43</sup> Cit. Craig Richardson in Thomas Lawson (ed.), *Guilt by Association* (Dublin: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1992): 9.

<sup>44</sup> Cit. Christine Borland in Anne Barclay Morgan, 'Memorial for Anonymus: An Interview with Christine Borland', in *Sculpture Magazine*, Vol.18, No. 8 (October, 1999).

<sup>45</sup> Richard White in Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luth Press, 2010): 118-119.

<sup>46</sup> Following sources are useful to analyse the group exhibition *Guilt by Association*:

Thomas Lawson (ed.), *Guilt by Association* (Dublin: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1992). Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luth Press, 2010): 150.

Craig Richardson, *Scottish Art since 1960: Historical Reflections and Contemporary Overviews* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011): 156.

Ross Sinclair, 'Museum keys', in Douglas Gordon (ed.), *Déjà-vu: questions & answers. Volume 1. 1992-1996* (MARC, Paris): 40-43.

<sup>47</sup> Following sources are useful to analyse the group exhibition *Self Conscious State*: Graham Fagen, 'The exact vague history', in Douglas Gordon (ed.), *Déjà-vu: questions & answers. Volume 3. 1999-2000* (MARC, Paris): 75.

Rebecca Fortnum, *Contemporary British Women Artists: In Their Own Words* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007): 10-11.

(Harding, 2001a),

Thomas Lawson (ed.), *Guilt by Association* (Dublin: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1992): 9.

Thomas Lawson, 'Unrelating Jet Lag and Iron-Hard Jets', in Richard Cork, Rose Finn-Kelcey and Thomas Lawson, *The British Art Show 4* (London: The South Bank Centre, 1995): 57.

Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luth Press, 2010): 140-141.

- Stéphanie Moisdon-Trembley, 'Attraction-répulsion', in Douglas Gordon (ed.), *Déjà-vu: questions & answers. Volume 1. 1992-1996* (MARC, Paris): 121.
- Craig Richardson, *Scottish Art since 1960: Historical Reflections and Contemporary Overviews* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011): 148-149.
- Simon Sheikh, 'Art is merely an excuse for communicating', in Douglas Gordon (ed.), *Déjà-vu: questions & answers. Volume 1. 1992-1996* (MARC, Paris): 16.
- <sup>48</sup> Cit. Craig Richardson in Thomas Lawson (ed.), *Guilt by Association* (Dublin: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1992): 9.
- <sup>49</sup> Cit. Christine Borland in Rebecca Fortnum, *Contemporary British Women Artists: In Their Own Words* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007): 11.
- <sup>50</sup> Craig Richardson, *Scottish Art since 1960: Historical Reflections and Contemporary Overviews* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011): 147.
- <sup>51</sup> Charlotte Higgins, 'Glasgow's Turner connection. Why does Glasgow keep producing so many Turner prize winners? Could it be all down to this man?', in *The Guardian* (17 October 2011).
- <sup>52</sup> Dan Fox, 'Then and Now, British Art and the 1990s', in *Frieze*, Issue 159 (November-December, 2013).
- <sup>53</sup> Following source is useful to analyse the geographic and historic background of the warehouse shows in the former Docklands: <http://southwarknotes.wordpress.com/art-and-regeneration/art-empty-southwark-industrial-buildings/>.
- <sup>54</sup> Dan Fox, 'Then and Now, British Art and the 1990s', in *Frieze*, Issue 159 (November-December, 2013).
- <sup>55</sup> These are the first works Hirst declared to be ever content with and which directly referred to the particular installation mode of Jeff Koon's vitrine hoovers. They consist of small white cabinets – either open or shut in glass cases – with shelves full of various pharmaceutical bottles, boxes and containers placed in absolute random order to fit Hirst's own aesthetic choices. Serota, 2011, p.93
- <sup>56</sup> Jamie Anderson, Martin Kupp and Jörg Reckhenrich, 'The Shark is Dead: How to Build Yourself a New Market', in *Business Strategy Review* (London: London Business School, Winter 2009): 42.
- <sup>57</sup> Don Thompson, *The 12 Million Dollars Stuffed Shark: The Curious Economics of Contemporary Art* (London: Aurum Press): 68-69.
- <sup>58</sup> David Lillington, 'The East Country Yard Show', in *Time Out* (18 June 1990): 35.
- <sup>59</sup> Andrew Graham-Dixon, 'The Midas Touch? Graduates of Goldsmiths School of Art dominate the current British art scene', in *The Independent* (31 July 1990): 13.
- <sup>60</sup> Matt Hale, Paul Noble, John Burgess, Keith Coventry and Peter Owen, 2002, *City Racing: The Life and Times of an Artist-Run Gallery* (London: Black Dog Publishing): 1.
- <sup>61</sup> Stuart Morgan, Art au Lait!, in *Art Monthly*, No. 156 (May 1992).
- <sup>62</sup> The link was created through Gordon over some German friends from the *Windfall* Project that managed the *Galerie Gruppe Grün* in Bremen, where he had exhibited with Simon Patterson in 1992. Ross Sinclair and Roderick Buchanan then took over contacts with City Racing leading to a number of exchange shows which included Glaswegian artists such as Annette Heyer, Andrew Lockhart, Julie Roberts and Sinclair himself in early 1992, then Richard Wright in October 1992, Dave Allen and Buchanan in March 1994 and Jonathan Monk in 1996.
- <sup>63</sup> Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luta Press, 2010): 161.
- <sup>64</sup> Diego Mantoan, *The Road To Parnassus. Artist Strategies in Contemporary Art* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2015): 264.
- <sup>65</sup> Following sources are useful to analyse the group exhibition A Modest Proposal:

- Kari J. Brandtzaeg, *Glasgow: A presentation of the art scene in the 90's* (Glasgow: ForArt). (Dingle, 2010),
- Robert Dingle, 'Interview with Simon Patterson', in Robert Dingle (ed.), *The Gathering: Building the Arts Council Collection* (Yorkshire Sculpture Park: Longside Gallery, 2010).
- Gregor Muir, *Lucky Kunst. The rise and fall of Young British Art* (London: Artum Press, 2011): 118.
- Hans Ulrich Obrist, '(P)ars pro toto', in Douglas Gordon (ed.), *Déjà-vu: questions & answers. Volume 1. 1992-1996* (MARC, Paris): 173.
- Ross Sinclair, *It doesn't matter who I am, I just want to talk to you. The sociable art of Douglas Gordon* (Glasgow: Tramway 1993): 14-15.
- <sup>66</sup> The work is titled *Framework for Colour Co-ordination for Building Purposes (House of Windsor & House of Stuart)* (1992).
- <sup>67</sup> Stuart Morgan, Art au Lait!, in *Art Monthly*, No. 156 (May 1992).
- <sup>68</sup> Following sources are useful to analyse the group exhibition *Windfall 91*: Thomas Lawson (ed.), *Guilt by Association* (Dublin: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1992): 8.
- Sarah Lowndes, *Social Sculpture: The Rise of the Glasgow Art Scene* (Glasgow: Luta Press, 2010): 63, 146.
- Ross Sinclair, *It doesn't matter who I am, I just want to talk to you. The sociable art of Douglas Gordon* (Glasgow: Tramway 1993): 18.
- Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991): 36-46.
- <sup>69</sup> The first group exhibition of the series had been prompted by Scottish artist David McMillan and was held in London in 1988, while the second one was staged in Bremen the year after, where Douglas Gordon had participated thanks to his acquaintance with McMillan made while a student at Slade in the capital for his MA.
- <sup>70</sup> Andrew Cross in Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991): 41.
- <sup>71</sup> Douglas Gordon in Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991): 40.
- <sup>72</sup> "A much better question would be to ask why the energy the Scottish artists had to do this is not present in London. It has to be said that the core members of Transmission make very good links with the artists abroad – links which are not made here [in London]." Stuart Morgan in Matthew Slotover, 'Windfall: Northern Lights', in *Frieze*, no. 1 (September, 1991): 41.