

FREE ASSOCIATION

Means in Common

By

16beaver group

Appearing in the order of:

Rene Gabri

Pedro Lasch

Ayreen Anastas

Martin Lucas

Paige Sarlin

Benj Gerdes

Jesal Kapadia

Dear Fellow Drifters,

It seems the days, months, years are not long enough. We meet, speak, hope, consider, propose, disappoint, reassemble, contradict, separate, entertain, frown, struggle, laugh, to find a common trajectory. How many years and how many ways we have tried to put two and two together, and in different cities we have attempted to map out or assemble a picture of a predicament, the predicament we-many find our-them-selves in (con-dividing). What took place in 1989 and what was the nature of that recon-figuration, dissolution, recombination which followed.

1968 ----- 1979 ----- 1989 ----- 1999 ----- 2009

The questions we asked were as diverse as the means employed, people involved - examples included:

Subjectivation (+/-)

Food Cultivation - Production - Distribution - Security
Universities - Culture - Creativity - Commodity
Life-Knowledge subject to laws of War, Property, Profit, Speculation
Monetary Policies - Financialization - Pyramid Schemes
Fascism - Double Movements - Continental Dis/Re-integration
Spatial Practices - Planning - (Uneven)Development Schemes - Exclusions
Strategies of Domination - Capture - Control - Surveillance - Prisons
Tactics of Resistance - Protest - Refusal - Disruption - Critique (+/-)
Artistic Devices - Counter-Cartography - Détournement - Resonance
Recombination: fractal, segments, connective, jigsaw, undifferentiated
Recomposition: round bodies, flows, conjunctive, poetic, becoming other

What do we mean, when we say the word 'fascism,' how to understand the neo-conservative and militarist agendas in relation to the neoliberal one? What do we mean, when we use the word 'autonomy' - and how do we understand autonomy within a context of cooperation or collectivity?

We gingerly examined the emergence of new devices, tools of subjectivation, instilling values, the constructivist aspect of the counter-revolution - the response to the cries for emancipation and social justice of the 60's - the use of economic crisis to consolidate power - the neo-liberal recombination in the mid 70's, Chile, New York city - each site an experiment - the steady sculpting of living force - instruments old and new - debts, permissions, allowances, injunctions, state violence - fashioning the flexible personality, within limits, scripted spaces - not just codes, but the overcoding of bodies, spaces, time.

We attempted to diversify and dilate our image of society, moving away from a micro-marco dichotomy, towards a more nuanced, scalar view, which could see the multiple levels at which a society or a world, is constructed, reproduces itself and refashions its own image, the scales at which reality -- what we understand as reality - takes shape. And in this sense, the scales at which one could act, find agency.

And if reality is a regime,
... if there are mechanisms in place to control appearances, to code them, attribute, apportion, manage the value placed upon them,
... then, where to construct
to imagine ensembles
invent assemblages
machines (desiring?) which could
liberate desires ----> and is there a common project there?

|
unconscious as productive
rather than a stage / theatrical

If crisis is the dominant paradigm of governance today, and used freely by the most reactionary thinkers, how to relate to this word, and make sense of our own use of various concepts of crisis?

For example, the crisis of recomposition, the crisis of the left, the crisis of the fall of a historical subject, the crisis of ...

In the ever greater fractalized experience of life-work-play-fantasy-dream, all is separate and yet indistinguishable, merged in a haze ---> separating of human activity into fragments of ability, compatibility, availability. Within this haze, is there a possibility of a project of recomposition? A good subjectivation? An idea of class? A new protagonist of history?

And I recall the early reading discussions we organized at 16 Beaver considering various efforts at conceptualizing community, each of which attempted to redeem the common, while avoiding the inherent pitfalls of a community that would make its work the fulfillment of the community.

	Imagined	
	Unworked	
The	Inoperative	Community
	Unavowable	
	Terrible	
	Coming	

In these inquiries, we found all the fears and attempts at avoiding the totalizing / totalitarian results of the 20th century's "common" projects. How to maintain a relation to the call of the common (inherent in our being-with others in the world or our being-called x, or y, or z in language), while taking our lessons from historical errors? Is the idea of common project viable today or is the very notion to be abandoned?

Maybe already these notes appear too illegible to respond to - and - I am mixing up scales. Or maybe they are not questions, rather an outline of notes attempting to produce or instigate a next step.

A question I want to ask is one that has been central to our work together since the space started: How to put our activities and work directly in contact with our thoughts, political aspirations, doubts, positions today? And to do so, not in a mode which would be simply illustrative, but embodied and imbedded. What to do with our analysis of these last decades? Does one need to give it form to make it shareable with others and how? How does one live or practice this analysis (in common)? Do we need to place this analysis in the service of ideological struggle? Or are we with Deleuze and Guattari in their assertions that ideological struggles, only mask organizations of repressive power (unity of desire + economic infrastructure). And if their assessment is correct, how to combat these organizations of repressive power? Especially, when many people often earn their income by working for and sustaining these organizations. The university (the entire mechanisms of debt, collusion with industry, military, real estate development, the encroaching systematic embedding of neoliberal values within an educational framework) is only one of the more obvious cases that comes to mind. When to find our common lines of flight from such organizations? When to struggle to reterritorialize them?

I hope I'm not just re-staging old debates and if I am, how would we go about re-distributing these categories of thought, organization, and action to make them more useful for the struggles we are confronted with? I will stop here abruptly. I wanted this letter to be much shorter.

Thinking about our next steps,

Rene

Brooklyn, January 2010

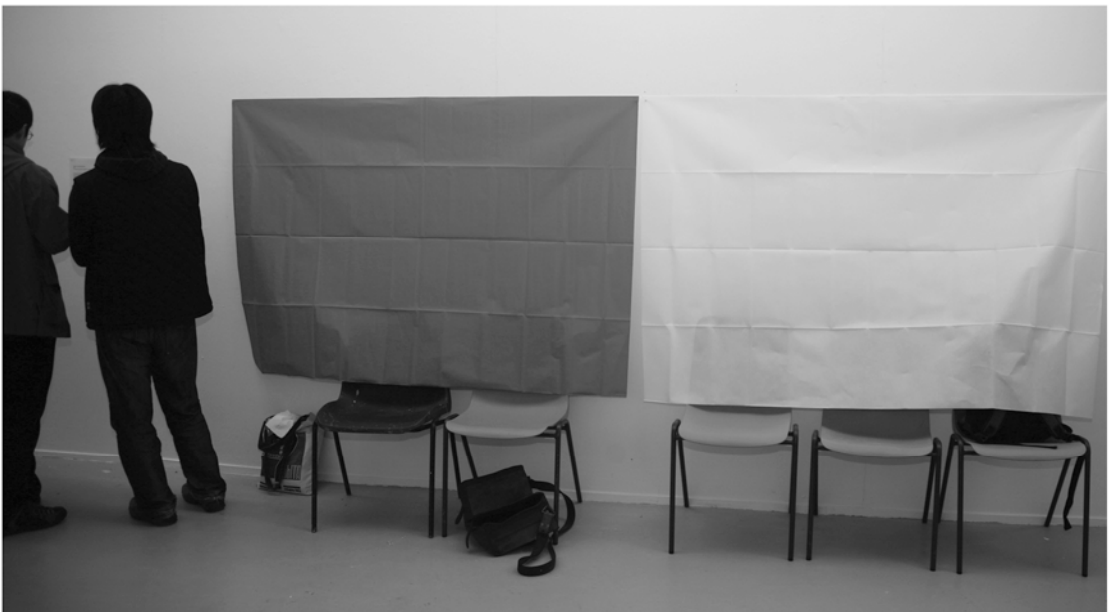
Veiled Conversation Series, begun 2009

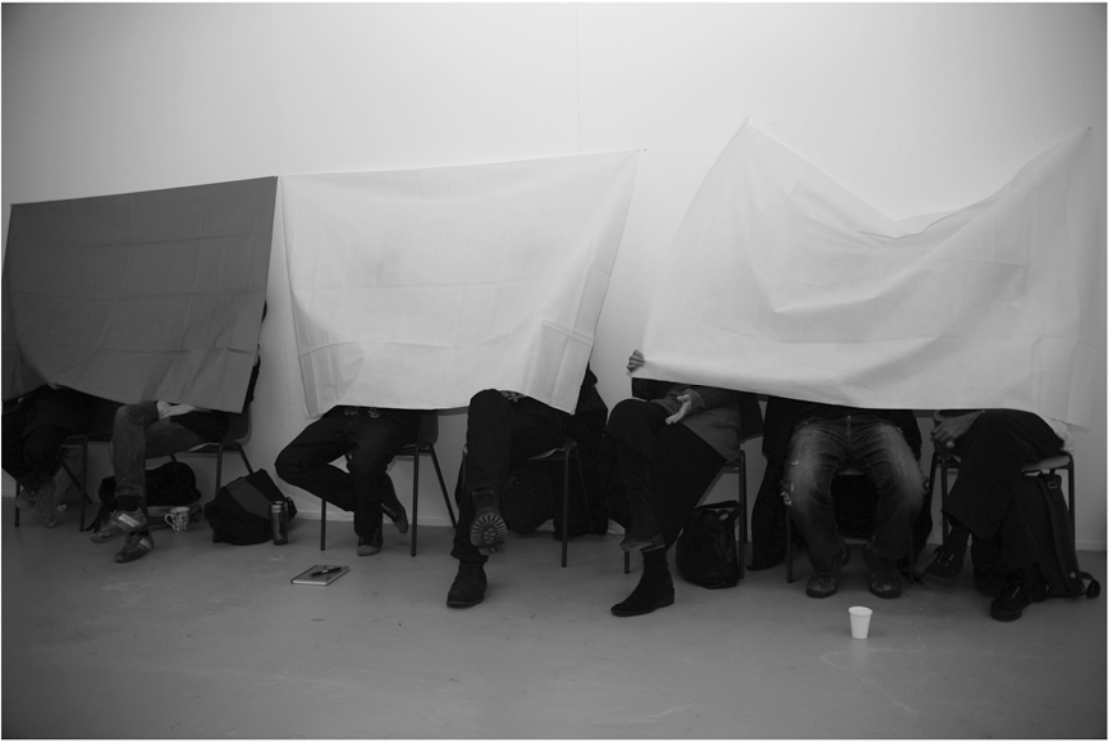
Tablecloths, chairs, and list of suggested topics for conversation.

Duration and other conditions adaptable to context or number of participants

Pedro Lasch (16 Beaver)

As a public respondent to the contributions of Michael Hardt and Gigi Roggero during *The Common and the Forms of the Commune* conference last year I pointed out that both talks ended at the place where artists and activists often like to start: the thinking and rethinking of the commons through its praxis and embodiments. In other words, I was proposing that we direct Hardt's ideas on property and Roggero's notions of labor toward a discussion of the tools and organizational modes of the common. The work I am presenting here is a specific proposal for collective experimentation. The method proposed is that of a standard workshop or conversation disrupted, however, with an unconventional device. The overarching idea is the political theory and practice of veiling. A few years ago I produced a related work for this same journal. Entitled *Media Defacements (Naturalization Series)* it focused on the closely related topics of masking and political agency, as well as technological and journalistic mediation. This time I am proposing the veil as a tool for the generation of the necessary conditions for specific political conversations that may happen anywhere, but must be immediate. We could bridge the two projects with the image of the mask or the 'common visage' worn by the multitude. In a March 7, 2006 review of *V for Vendetta* for the 'Village Voice' movie critic J. Hoberman wrote: "If *The Matrix* betrayed the Wachowskis' acquaintance with Jean Baudrillard, *V for Vendetta* suggests they've been perusing political philosopher Antonio Negri—both the old ultra-left Negri of *Domination and Sabotage* and the new Michael Hardt—collaborating Negri of *Empire and Multitude*." And that takes us to the first topics for veiled conversations opening this contribution.





Veiled Conversation #9

Suggested Topics:

- a) In your neighborhood or life, what are the relationships between popular culture and the political consciousness of the multitude?**
- b) What are the merits of covert action in the production of the commons?**



Veiled Conversation #15

Suggested Topics:

- a) Talk about the apparent paradox between the individualism of liberal democracies and the premise of anonymity in democratic voting habits**
- b) What are specific purposes and methods of sensory isolation as used in US prisons and detention centers?**



Veiled Conversation #34

Suggested Topics:

- a) Do you know any relevant social theories taking into account the importance of non-visual perception?
- b) What is the community of the veil? Can it be secular?

Dear Rosa,

Indeed, who needs direct repression when one can convince the chicken to walk freely into the slaughterhouse?

I was happily surprised to get your letter this morning. The sun is shining and the snow has not yet melted. My train is heading to Philadelphia. This moment of return, your return, means a lot to me. I want to seize it or at least start writing before this moment passes.

I do not have your letter with me, but remember many of your questions: Is the idea of communism still pertinent today, can it still be used as a tool of analysis and political practice? How does our predicament today look from the perspective of the communist idea? Is it possible that the main victim of this ongoing crisis will not be capitalism but the Left itself, insofar as its inability to offer a viable global alternative was again made visible to everyone?

Indeed, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and well into the 90s, it seemed that liberal democracy and Mr. Fukuyama's utopia had won out. Then abruptly, September 11 marked the end of the Clinton era and of that dream. It also marked a new era with walls emerging everywhere, Palestine and Israel, the European Union, the US-Mexico border, and moreover within the nation-states themselves.

This collapse of the liberal-democratic political utopia did not challenge nor change the economic utopia of global market capitalism. This had to happen later, with the 2008 financial meltdown. The second death or the end of the economic face of Mr. Fukuyama's dream.

Will this moment of meltdown be a sobering moment, then, the awakening from a dream?

Indeed this moment opens the field for ideological interpretation and a "discursive" ideological competition. It really depends how it gets occupied. Which story imposes itself in this empty field. Unfortunately, since 2008, this field has not been occupied by radical emancipatory politics. It has been occupied by further wars, increased poverty in the poor countries, racist populism and greater divisions between the rich and the poor in all societies.

Our era constantly proclaims itself to be post-ideological, yet this denial shows more than anything, that we are embedded in ideology. Ideology is a field of struggle, including the struggle for appropriating past traditions. From Martin Luther King, to Che Guevara to the Black Panthers to Ulrike Meinhof and the Red Army Faction group. We cannot let them fall in the ideological hands of the enemy, who will render them harmless fashionable or meaningless. Fall in the sense of the "invisible" ideological battlefield.

The 60s revolts added to the standard anti-capitalist critique of socio-economic exploitation the dimension of cultural-critique: the alienation of everyday life, the commodification of consumption, the inauthentic mass society, sexual oppression, etc.

In the 70s, the establishment incorporated the 60s critique to render the real core of the revolt harmless. The demands for rights, were given, but in the guise of "permissions". One is allowed to do more without actually achieving any changes in the distribution of power. Divorce, abortion, gay marriage, and so on, are all permissions disguised as rights.

"I have a dream" yet no one knows what this dream was or is or can be. Maybe Paul knows it when he says: "There are no Greeks or Jews, no men or women ...," i.e. "There are only Christians and the enemies of Christianity!" Or, in our language today, one would say: there are only those who fight for emancipation and their reactionary opponents; the people and the enemies of the people.

The enemy of our enemy is not our friend, unless we share the same horizon towards the universalist emancipatory project based upon the axiom of equality. And in order to approach many of today's problems adequately (starvation, energy crisis, shortages in water supplies, etc..) it will be necessary to invent new forms of large-scale collective action; neither the usual forms of state intervention nor the local self-organization will be sufficient. If we do not manage to resolve these problems soon enough, a new form of world apartheid will emerge, separating the parts of the world enjoying food, energy and water, from "outside" chaotic parts, suffering scarcity, starvation and unending war.

To begin from the beginning over and over again. Everything should be re-thought, beginning from the zero point. This is what Alain calls "the communist hypothesis":

The communist hypothesis remains the right hypothesis, as I have said, and I do not see any other. If this hypothesis should have to be abandoned, then it is not worth doing anything in the order of collective action. Without the perspective of communism, without this Idea, nothing in the historical and political future is of such a kind as to interest the philosopher.

Meanwhile, one should maintain the precise reference to a set of social antagonisms which generate the need for communism: communism not as ideal, but as a movement which acts in the face of such antagonisms that exist in today's global capitalism. To cut the long story short, one could locate four such antagonisms: the threat of an *ecological catastrophe*; the ill-suited notion of *private property* in relation to so-called "intellectual property"; the *new techno-scientific developments* and its ethical implications; and the *new forms of apartheid*, walls and slums. While this last concerns the divide that separates the Included from the Excluded, the first three concern the "commons" or what Antonio and Michael call the shared substance of our social being: *the commons of culture* language and our means of communication but also other shared infrastructures of electricity and public transportations; *the commons of external nature* rain forests and natural habitat; and *the commons of internal nature* the new biotechnologies and so on.

While Marx describes the agent of history, the proletariat as the ones who have "nothing to lose but their chains", we are in danger of losing *everything*: the threat is that we may be reduced to abstract subjects devoid of all substantial content, dispossessed of our symbolic substance, genetically modified, vegetating in a Tarkovskian environment.

Our ethical and political challenge is to recognize ourselves as this new figure of the proletariat of "substanceless subjectivity" and act accordingly. A chance for radical emancipatory renewal.

Since early your comrade,

Ayreen

Brooklyn, January 2010

The vernacular of work

My shift at the Park Slope Food Coop in Brooklyn, New York - Receiving Squad B - a job for the multitude. The job description -- all of the labor connected with running a food store and ancillary services for an internally fairly democratic co-operative organization. While there are perhaps a dozen paid employees, basically the division of labor assumes much of the work will be organized so anyone can do it.

Common Work

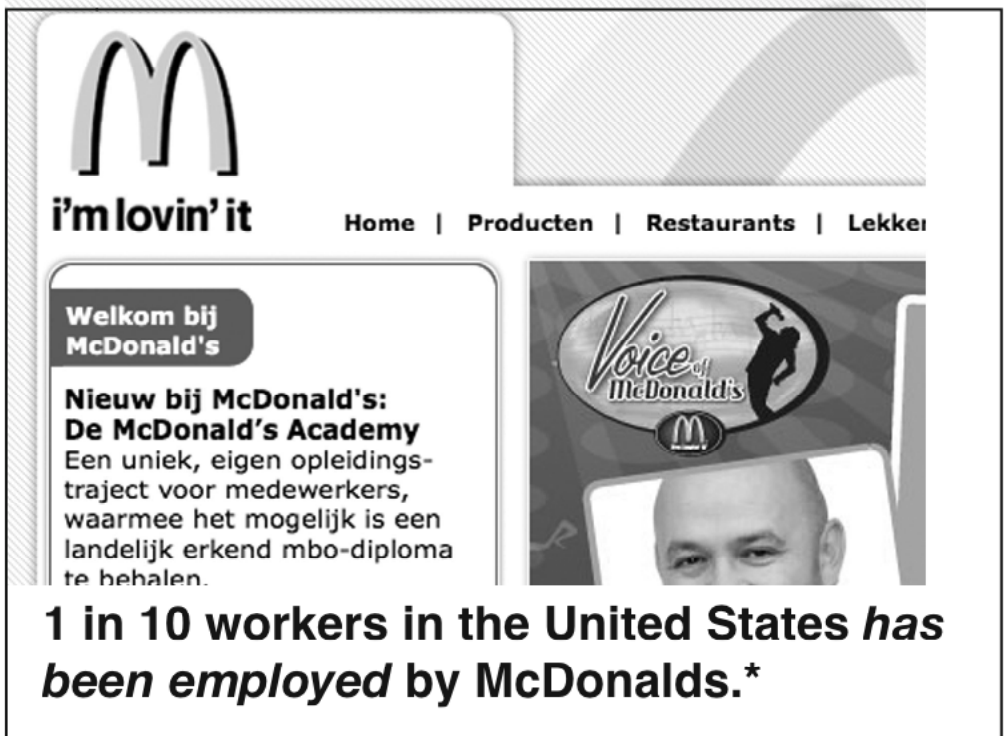


Over the thirty-five-odd years since the Coop was founded the work has evolved to optimally accommodate the possibilities of unskilled but willing labor. There are signs near relevant locations, how to deal with specific vegetables, how to price a chicken, etc. And people fill you in. Every ‘customer’ is an employee, a source of “how it is done.”

The distribution of work is a combination of need and individual initiative. Some people do the same thing every shift because it appeals to them. Others do whatever comes along, from actually pulling food off of trucks to putting vegetables out for sale to various forms of office work. There is one store-wide intercom system used for all types of communication including pleas for workers to deal with a specific task, but also incoming phone calls, customer queries, children needing parents, etc.

The shared understanding that constitute the commons is one that is built into institutional culture... a vernacular work space, realistic (people moan and groan about the work and the institution) but a shared space of labor.

The franchise as vernacular exploitation



The image is a screenshot of the Dutch McDonald's website. At the top left is the golden arches logo with the slogan "i'm lovin' it" below it. To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with the items "Home", "Producten", "Restaurants", and "Lekker". Below the navigation menu, there are two main content areas. The left area has a dark header that says "Welkom bij McDonald's" and a main heading "Nieuw bij McDonald's: De McDonald's Academy". Below this heading is a paragraph of text: "Een uniek, eigen opleidings-traject voor medewerkers, waarmee het mogelijk is een landelijk erkend mbo-diploma te behalen." The right area features a graphic with the text "Voice of McDonald's" and a silhouette of a person, with a small golden arches logo below it. Below the graphic is a partial view of a man's face. At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a bold statement: "1 in 10 workers in the United States has been employed by McDonalds.*"

Here is organized precarity. Here, in the realm of vernacular labor, is a situation where people are flexible, can be brought in and out of the labor market and perform in highly specific ways at very short notice, part of an extremely elaborate and successful chain of global profit extraction.

* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McDonald's>. Another source quoted suggests the number is 1 in 8.

The CIA 'torture manual' can be understood as an attempt to extend the state of exception or emergency into the realm of the 'normal' using the form of the franchise.

Insects

15 DOJ

(TUE) MAY 10 2005

May 2005

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

"You would like to place Zubaydah in a cramped confinement box with an insect. You have informed us that he appears to have a fear of insects."



U.S. Dep
Office of

"You plan to inform Zubaydah that you are going to place a stinging insect into the box, but you will actually place a harmless insect, such as a caterpillar into the box. If you do so, ensure you are outside the predicate."

Office of the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General

Washington, DC

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN A. RIZZO, SENIOR DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Re: Application of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2340-2340A to the *Com* in the Interrogation of High Value al Q

In our Memorandum for John A. Rizzo, Senior Deputy Intelligence Agency, from Steven G. Bradbury, Principal Deputy Office of Legal Counsel, Re: Application of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2340-2340A, to certain interrogation techniques that the CIA might use on a Qaeda operative. There, we considered each technique in light of the application of the statute to the use of these same techniques

Dear Franco,

thank you for your well wishes for a good second decade. We wish the same to you. I haven't forgotten about you. None of us have.

My memories of our conversations have become part of the food that keeps me going, recollections of a shared experience that keep me tied to my political commitments amidst the difficulties of teaching and school, amidst many emotional and financial challenges. Your story of the professor who cannot die and must keep teaching returns to me often as I resent and submit to the relentless imperative to produce without ceasing in the academy and beyond. We all must keep on; but I go on sustained by recurring refrains and the promise of more thoughts, more exchanges, more activity.

The 16beaver store-house is chock-filled with material for shared reverie and contemplation. Lines of history, lines of flight: different communists, various communisms, some common thoughts, lots of thinking in a common space, even more thinking at a distance, and some measure of common sense.

10 years of discussions and meals preceded your arrival into our space, and there have been just six months of events since you returned to Bologna. 10 years have passed since the fall of the wall, since the visible emergence of the counter-globalization movement in Seattle and all the work that followed on towards Genoa, and then Afghanistan, the Iraq war and the economic crisis. We share these points on our timeline. We've each taken these turns seriously and we turn to Felix and Paolo (and Karl Polanyi) to help us make sense of the changes that preceded us, the currents that run under our feet. At 16beaver, we've taken to studying the transformations of capitalism and the organization of art and labor, of the category and experience of subjectivity and various institutional formations (the state, transnationals, the academy) under neoliberalism, and the shapes that resistance has taken, the shape of shared concern and activity, explorations of what ideas can and have done, how cultural production can intervene in the changing of how we think, feel, and look.

We've enjoyed the benefits of what somewhat regular encounters can do. Like Felix's ritournelles, we've thought again and again about the tension between what we try to do individually to eek out our existences-- and our shared endeavor, our attempts at social and political change, at aesthetic transformation.

The reading that inaugurated my experience at 16beaver was Karl Marx's description of the worker released from alienated labor--inhabiting a world where one could be a fisherman in the morning and a critic at night. I derived great pleasure from the thinking together that happened in the space of 16beaver, even as it was frustrating to speak across such different experiences and alliances.

I often return to that first reading from The German Ideology when I am prompted to write about 16beaver. In that passage, Marx and Engels define communism as a release from the imposition of divisions of labor. In contrast to atomization, specialization and fixity, the social situation of communism would enable a kind of fluidity of identity and tasks, of the relation between "who or what" we are and "what" we do. Like the ideal neo-liberal subject, we'd float between tasks we wanted to do. For you and your Italian comrades, the only release from this is a refusal of work, a refusal that could be truly communal, not individuated, but social, a choice for a shared form of development and life.

Thinking about the "flow" of conversation and endeavors at 16beaver, I am struck by the way in which our time together led to the manifestation of common interests.

As Marx wrote, the communal interest isn't abstract --- it's the product of a profound mutual interdependence. Usually this interdependence is hidden and threatening; borne of scarcity, there is never enough for anyone. But as we go forward and try to work more (organize more, write more, do more projects based on the vocabulary, skills, and needs we have acquired and unearthed), it's clear that l6beaver has produced in me a need for and a sense of the social that isn't as impoverished as it is in other contexts. Released from pre-conceived uses and necessities, the "interest" that we've built in common is not "objective," not "above" us-- but rather a subjective power that is always shifting.

It isn't the "variety" that defines this endeavor, not multiplicity, nor is it merely a "release" from utility. Rather there is a real need that has been produced and answered through a precarious regularity, contingent on our abilities and resources. The fragile balance teeters between being just enough to keep us working and not nearly enough to be satisfying.

Discussion at l6beaver often feels unfinished. But my confidence in its continuity has grown. I trust the shared sense of when to pause. I know that the project of discussing our cultural, political and economic conditions is truly unending. It has proven impossible to exhaust or halt the thinking and working through that each event affords.

I believe that the desire for this practice of sharing, of communal interest, is common; the numbers of people who come through our space is proof enough. We have produced a site in which our desire begets more desire. But I wonder at the distance between our grasp and our reach. What are the effects of this practice, for individuals and the common-- both as a model and as a singular alternative?

There is no doubt that the work we've done together has resulted in the reduction of our individual estrangements. We've enjoyed the ground space, the time-space, the thought-space to imagine, but how far have we gotten in the sort of thinking that might help us to begin to build structures and organizations that might liberate larger swathes of folks?

Some of us have shouldered more responsibility than others, some of us have worried more and written less. I myself have often chopped my way through arguments, literally stirring onions while the debate raged on. But it seems clear that the experience of being able to reclaim our needs and abilities is essential to the task of making this kind of communism a possibility for a larger and larger number of people. The question of our relation to our physical space has become more tentative recently. We're not the only ones. With the pressures of the recession/depression, we don't have many boxes to move, but we have lots of chairs. We will need help planning a change. Perhaps it's time to play at a different kind of building?

In a world where everything is reified, abstracted from its site of production and the personal and social aspect of its meaning and value--the ephemeral quality of our time together is almost too precious. If it hadn't been repeated time and time again, in Lower Manhattan and Zagreb, here, there and everywhere, I'd be more despondent than I am. But I am certain we'll meet again. I desire to extend our collaboration and discussion; I still want us to make a film.

Why don't you come to Detroit for the US Social Forum in June? You won't have to give a talk; I promise not to ask you any questions.

With gratitude and affection,

Paige

Providence, December 2009



It's on us

Gift economy? Should we strive to together be an economy? Certainly we could make a functional one, but that was never the point. Should I measure my time and labor as gifts? Parse them out like rations to my friends and comrades? I take at the same time I give and once given it's not gone but still kicking and always simply what I feel I must do to create a truly inhabitable subjectivity. Maybe it's a time-and-space bank but that word "bank" even has its limits, a parking lot for I.O.U.s. What I take make is not a static thing but necessary to live.



It's up to you

Private security in shoppers' paradise. Blanks with weapons. Closest to my sympathy and furthest from my views. This is the dilemma: how do we create structures antagonistic to capital and the state and yet not completely separated from the present? Who is invited to join the prefigurative moment and who guards private property as the children of the ruling class dance to abolish it? It's a stupid dance to push back and try to link arms at the same time, but better to get tripped up now than keep punching timecards, ballots, air.



It's late again

The kid waits for Amtrak to arrive at an empty station. To say structure is to talk necessarily of scale. To say “movement”=we push ourselves somewhere. He parks his bike and says “transportation”=they will carry us. But the train is late and the ideas even later. His back-to-the-land parents don't want to talk infrastructure. The kid is pissed, “No more small-scale utopianism!” They scold, “Some day you'll understand what it feels like to be beat down and broken and find pleasure in simple things.” “That and the meth lab next door,” says the kid.



It still isn't

Enough with the easy answers and the finding hope buried within the cereal boxes of hopeless things. Entrepreneurialism is about building a brand that may or may not prove profitable in financializing a set of previously disorganized relationships. Self-organization is not for sale, but a membrane which can both produce and resist. Self organization is a (slow) virus—owned by no one and increasingly not optional—entrepreneurship is the real killer: the latest hype in the dressing up of a violent history. It never ends well.

A half-yes and a half-no

These days I've been doing dishes and washing clothes for our neighbors next door when their helper doesn't show up. They don't care much about keeping their underwear too clean. I see how dirty they are – I have to scrub hard to get them clean.

The same goes for the house they live in. Now, you see, our house is more than a hundred years old, yet our floor shines like new. That's how clean we keep our place. But their building is a new type of construction and everything is falling from everywhere. They don't repair it, not even from the outside, and let me tell you – they only want to buy more and more, and keep things pretty from the inside. I've learnt enough...what food they eat, where they shop, what they bring home, what kind of a world they live in, and I tell you... we're doing quite okay over here. Everything's fine with us.

The world is like this – it will talk if you are single, it will talk if you are not single, and it will also talk if you are with others...only you know what's worth enduring, what's worth doing.

I'm fine with the way things are, I've seen enough. I do my work, and I don't seek anything new.

We meet again, as we have met for years at this same place, same time. We always have exactly the same conversation. Who knows where we'll be tomorrow, since there's no contract, no promise; only a practice. Year after year.

Things haven't changed. They're the same as usual. I too do the same work everyday. It's the same routine.

We are the same you know, just like others. Like copies of each other, but with a difference. Single, singular in nature, together, in this house.

Ah, yes, this space. This building might break down and we might have to vacate at some point. Builders will build a new building, a new space, and we don't know if that space will be for us.

I've been thinking a lot about the way it is here...or used to be. How we grew up with so many people around us. Three generations, and sometimes even four, living together in the same household. Did you know that just fifty years ago twenty-five people lived here? In this very house that is kept so clean. Where did they all go? Can you imagine all the work? Somehow it got done.

What's new? Look at you and look at me. We never asked too many questions. We thought we could create more sharing by sharing.

And what if we don't want to share? Is there anything to share, when everything is common? Where does the gift begin?

In the passages. Where one drifts.

It's a strange feeling, year after year, coming back to a different order. And since one cannot do the work completely alone, we'll see each other again, drink chai, and shake our heads in a half-yes and a half-no.

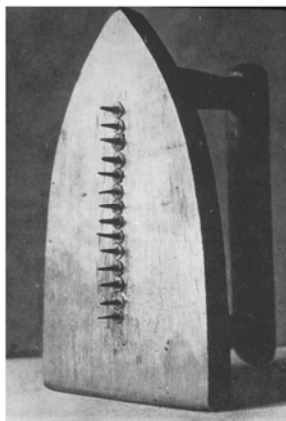


Image: From the series *Ditto or the same as what has been said*, 2009, featuring Man Ray's *Gift, Paris 1921* & Vandana Shiva's *Navdanya Organic Seed Bank, India, 1991*