The Derry Way

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The vast majority of this hypothetical the £100 million of public funding invested in Capital of Culture was social and high levels of unemployment. While Merseyside was being cities hosting high-proifers from sectarian cultural festivals, Liverpool su of Liverpool’s incarnation as European Capital of Culture. Typically for e competition to become UK City of Culture (or British City of T_h

The Implications of Culture-Led Regeneration

REBECCA GORDON-NESBITT

READERS of Fugitive Papers will no doubt be aware that Derry has been designated UK City of Culture for 2013. As this quadrennial festival is set to continue until Westminster calls time, it is useful to analyse the impact of cultural festivals on host cities and their communities.

The competition to become UK City of Culture (or British City of Culture, as it began life) unambiguously arose from the presumed success of Liverpool’s incarnation as European Capital of Culture. Typically for cities hosting high-profile cultural festivals, Liverpool suffers from sectarian division and high levels of unemployment. While Merseyside was being cut loose from Objective One funding – which is given to regions with a GDP of less than 75 per cent of the EU average – culture was seized upon as the magic bullet that would revive this troubled place. Official discourse allowed no room for failure, and a return of £800 million on the £100 million of public funding invested in Capital of Culture was quickly proclaimed. The vast majority of this hypothetical figure translates as ‘global media coverage value’, by virtue of stories about Liverpool being converted from negative to positive.¹

Projects based on the principles of culture-led regeneration tend to claim one of the following impacts:

- ENVIRONMENTAL
- ECONOMIC
- SOCIAL
- CULTURAL²

In Liverpool, then, the main purported impact of 2008 may be described as cultural, by virtue of the city’s perceived image transformation. But, even those helping the UK’s Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to make the case for culture-led regeneration four years before Liverpool 2008 acknowledged that “Perception and media content analysis is unlikely […] to provide robust evidence of the regenerative effects attributable to the Year of Culture or [lead to] subsequent cultural investment in the city”.³

Liverpool’s measure of its own success in cultural terms suggests a departure from earlier economic claims. Shortly after Glasgow’s stint as European Capital of Culture in 1990, Glasgow City Council, Strathclyde Regional Council and Scottish Enterprise brought in John Myerscough to assess the impact of the year-long event. In 1988, Myerscough had written a report for the Policy Studies Institute, entitled The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain. This was at the height of the “shift from the social and political concerns prevailing during the 1970s to the economic development and urban regeneration policies of the 1980s”,⁴ which saw local governments forced to account for their policies in economic terms. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Myerscough found that Glasgow 1990 yielded a number of economic benefits. Specifically, he claimed that “The initiative generated a positive net economic return to the regional economy of £10.3 – £14.1 million”. He also found that “Extra employment arising from Glasgow 1990 was estimated at 5,350 to 5,580 person years” and that “Gross public sector cost per job was calculated at £7,286 which compares favourably with estimates in other initiatives”.⁵ When we look in greater depth at the kind of jobs created as a result of Capital of Culture, we find them to be of a very particular character, with nine out of ten jobs being in the lower paid service sector, rarely providing the kind transferable skills that people need to remain in the job market in the long term.⁶

Another major impact Myerscough claimed in his report on Glasgow’s year as European Capital of Culture was an increase in tourism, with an estimated 550,000 of the trips that were made to the city during 1990 apparently involving attendance at a cultural event, and overseas markets accounting for 38 percent of trips made that year. Looking into this more closely, Peter Booth and Robin Boyle found that “the first indicative data made available by the tourist board illustrates the marked short-term impact of the Year of Culture”, which led them to the conclusion that there was “little evidence to support the argument that Year of Culture 1990 made a clear contribution to local economic development”.⁷ Nonetheless, Myerscough recommended that the city actively pursue a cultural tourism strategy, promoting Glasgow as a European cultural destination, which has been aggressively followed ever since. This typically involves a focus “on the role of heritage in attracting tourism and tourist income; especially through the promotion of cultural tourism which targets upper income groups”. In turn, this can be seen as part of a wider strategy to promote “economic development, place marketing and place-based competition”.⁸

Festivals are endemic to place-based strategies, with “the most significant impact [said to be] in relation to people’s perception of a place, both within and outside the community”.⁹ and Myerscough’s report sowed the seeds for Liverpool’s subsequent claims of image transformation. Fifteen years after Glasgow 1990, a team of researchers within the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR) at the University of Glasgow attempted to evaluate the ‘symbolic legacy’ of the event. Analysis of local and national media published between 1986 and 2003 showed that:

In most if not all of these publications, the praise concentrates on the city’s image transformation from grim industrial centre to attractive creative hub, including the growth in leisure and business tourism that resulted partly from this image transformation. This suggests a predominance of the economic rationale to justify Glasgow’s success and a trend towards overlooking its wider social and cultural implications.¹⁰

According to this analysis, transformation of the perceived image of Glasgow lay at the heart of any economic impact at the expense of pressing social concerns. This reflects a broader trend of diminishing cultural access in favour of political consensus, public-private partnerships and spectacular projects, simultaneously undermining the political and communicative potential of culture and neglecting social concerns. The manifest focus on image transformation and economic impacts has been aided and abetted by the local authority and city marketing board, with Glasgow being rebranded as ‘Scotland with style’. And, while media reports around the image of Glasgow showed improvements, considerations of quality of life and the widening gap between rich and poor received negative coverage. In 2008, the World Health Organization published damning data about male
life expectancy in the city, showing that men in wealthier areas can expect to live to the ripe old age of 82, while those in the more impoverished parts of the city tend to live to an average of 54, eight years fewer than their counterparts in India. In the wake of 1990, reportage on the improved image of Glasgow took over, while concerns about social inclusion and inequality fell away. The CCPR report concluded that:

Overall, the analysis of press coverage shows that Glasgow’s image, tourism and economic renaissance are presented as the main legacies of 1990, while access and participation in culture, arts funding, cultural infrastructure and internationalism have progressively diminished in current debates and thus lost currency as possible legacies.

As we see here, there is a genuine risk that the creation of a sustainable, participatory and outward-looking cultural field is sidelined in the rush to maximise economic impacts. Since 1990, the modicum of support that had been given to home-grown artists has diminished, with many individual artists and groups reporting frustrations at the lack of improvements in their working conditions. At the same time, targets for visitor numbers were imposed upon arts organisations, and considerations of artistic quality and creative freedom, social value and sustainability were de-prioritised in favour of an emphasis on consumption over production.

For many years, there was no tangible cultural policy in Glasgow, and little understanding of the needs of different art forms within a rich cultural ecology. This became particularly apparent in 2003 when Glasgow City Council’s Cultural and Leisure Services Department supported a lottery bid by Scottish Ballet which would have seen this national company taking over Tramway, a flagship 1990 venue, to use as its headquarters. In turn, this entailed the loss of one of the major visual arts venues in the city, which prompted an unprecedented protest by Glasgow’s artists, supported by left-leaning politicians. In the end, a kind of compromise was reached, and Scottish Ballet was compelled to build an annexe on Tramway to house its facilities, but suspicions remained about the city’s attitude to culture.

More recently, cultural policy in Glasgow has been hijacked through the city council’s willing devolution of its cultural and leisure facilities to an arm’s length company. This company — which began life as Culture and Sport Glasgow and swiftly re-branded to become Glasgow Life (lining the pockets of one of the company’s directors in the process) — has pursued a deliberate policy of prioritising festivals to attract visitors to a municipal centre now populated with designer clothes shops and expensive restaurants. At the same time, Glasgow Life has attempted to close community centres in the parts of the city with the lowest life expectancy. In summary, then, the net effect of Glasgow hosting European Capital of Culture has been the creation of a tranche of low paid, precarious jobs, the withdrawal of funding for grassroots culture and critically engaged creative practice and strategic disinvestment in the less tourist-friendly parts of the city, combined measures which continue to have serious social repercussions.

Turning our attention to Derry, we find that the regeneration strategy devised for the city, known as the One Plan (which includes UK City of Culture as one of its eleven objectives), combines at least three of the impacts that are typically claimed for culture-led regeneration projects – the economic (through tourism and job creation), the social (through the formation of integrated and settled communities) and the cultural (through considerations of sustainability). However, there is a risk that Glasgow’s narrow focus on economic impact and Liverpool’s subsequent obsession with image will be repeated in Derry. Firstly, all of the 2,800 jobs, specified by the Northern Ireland Executive’s Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) as a necessary by-product of 2013, are in the tourism sector. Secondly, in relation to concerns about sustainability, one CCPR researcher has noted that:

[...].]
Assuming control of the marketing function of City of Culture, Sharon O’Connor, the Town Clerk and Chief Executive of Derry City Council, insisted that a focus on specific cultural events should be sidelined in favour of “place/destination marketing”.1 In addition to this, when we look at the budget for City of Culture, the areas that seem disproportionately low are those for individual artists and community-based projects (respectively securing 1.2 and 1.3 per cent of the total programming budget). And, instead of implementing concrete measures to address the persistent inequalities in the city,2 DCAL targets in this area have become diluted into the nebulous specification that “Significant improvements will be delivered in community relations, perceptions of the City, equality and social cohesion”.3 While the Culture Company – set up by Derry City Council to administer City of Culture – insists it is focusing its efforts on an artistic and community-based programme rather than paying heed to impact measures,4 these combined approaches amount to a familiar de-prioritisation of social impacts.

In Britain, the advent of New Labour appeared to witness a renewed focus on social concerns, through agendas like social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal. In 2004, DCMS produced a document, entitled Culture at the Heart of Regeneration,5 which was underwritten by an understanding that indicators of regeneration would be found in “reduced levels of crime, increased health and well-being, increased educational attainment, reduced unemployment, greater community cohesion, greater environmental quality and quality of life”.6 In thinking about social impacts in relation to City of Culture, it is important to remember that the original bid document and the subsequent One Plan made a clear commitment to addressing inequalities in housing, education, employment and health. In the rush to extract the maximum economic benefits from City of Culture, there is a genuine danger that the potential will fall by the wayside. We can see this logic at work in DCAL’s suggestion that tourism “will be constrained unless we can show potential visitors that we have a stable, attractive place that is safe to visit”.7 While this statement seems geared towards appealing the fears of nervous visitors from outside the city, it turns conventional wisdom on its head. Surely the attainment of a systemic and lasting peace depends on addressing the material conditions that gave rise to decades of conflict, rather than implicating culture in perpetuating the persistent cracks.

In an essay entitled ‘On Bullshit in Cultural Policy Practice and Research’, Eleanora Bel ore and Oliver Bennett, ‘Rethinking the Social Impacts of Culture at the Heart of Regeneration’ (2013), available at: [http://www.shiftyparadigms.org]. It is also informed by a Civic Conversation, co-hosted in Derry by CCA and Void on 16 May.

[Endnotes]

1 This text builds on an earlier analysis of City of Culture, undertaken during a period spent as Researcher-in-Residence at the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) in Derry, available at: [http://www.shifyparadigms.org]. It is also informed by a Civic Conversation, co-hosted in Derry by CCA and Void on 16 May.

2 Department for Culture, Media and Sport, UK City of Culture Working Group Report, June 2009, p.9.


8 Peter Booth and Robin Boyle, ‘Seeing Glasgow, See Culture’ in Franco Bianchini and Michael Parkinson (Eds.), Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The Western European Experience (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

9 Andy Pratt, ‘Creative Cities: Tensions within and between social, cultural and economic development’, City, Culture and Society, issue 1, 2010, p. 15.


13 Garcia, op cit., p. 856.


17 Email sent by Sharon O’Connor to Susie McCullough at the Northern Ireland Tourist Board on 3 July 2012, delivered by Derry City Council under the Freedom of Information Act.

18 Unemployment in Derry is estimated to be as high as 40 percent, with the poorest parts of the city, notably centred on Catholic areas, continuing to experience high levels of deprivation in housing, education and health. See Mike Noble, et al, The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2001 (Belfast: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2001).


20 This point was made by Shona McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Culture Company at the aforementioned Civic Conversation.

21 Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Culture at the Heart of Regeneration (London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2004), p. 28.

22 Evans and Shaw, op cit., p. 2.

23 DCAL, Assessment of Need carried out in relation to the funding of City of Culture, p. 12, released under the Freedom of Information Act.


29 See the Cultural Partnership Forum website: [http://cfnews.info/]

IMAGE: Artists Toby Paterson, Stephanie Smith, Edward Stewart, Jacqueline Donachie and Roderick Buchanan with Tommy Sheridan (then leader of the Scottish Socialist Party), protesting the potential loss of Traymaw in Glasgow as a visual arts venue, 2003. Courtesy of Rebecca Gordon-Nebşit.
Cake in the Good Room

MIRIAM DE BÚRCA

Quite often the most profound way we learn to appreciate the true impact something has is by the vacuum it leaves behind in the wake of its departure. The power of culture is not understood as much through its presence or non-existence as it is through its loss. It is our natural inclination to seek out a substitute when something critical to our wellbeing is missing. We try to fill the void and compensate for this ‘loss’ by finding sustenance in other ways. Although it is often considered a luxury and not an economic priority, the need for culture is inherently embedded in us. When it is lacking we begin to experience a craving for it; there is no question that our mental and physical health begins to wane when we are unable to access it. Like a calcium-deficient child that scratches at the plaster beside the bed at night and eats it; she feels a powerful craving and instinct tells her to eat the wall.

If one were to break society down into forms of nourishment, one could say education is comparable to a protein; it is a source of fuel that is important for high-intensity, durational undertakings, but especially important for our recovery following a period of prolonged deprivation. Communication is like fibre; it helps to prevent the cramping and stagnation of the mind and allows for new ways of thinking to be absorbed more easily, keeping what is beneficial and expelling the rest. Money is the fat that comes of education and productive communication; with just the right amount we can slide over the rough without being worn down completely, and its surplus lubricates our lives with indulgences that are only thinkable once the bare essentials of survival have been met. Similarly, you could call culture the vitamins and minerals of society; to be deficient is something many of us are in one way or another, but we can carry on for long periods not realising that that is why we are experiencing various physical or psychical problems. Take potassium, a mineral we associate with bananas and potatoes – its absence can be deadly. To be deficient in it can cause the heart to miss beats, lose rhythm and eventually cease altogether.

Adequate exposure to the arts is healthy for society. They expand the mind, challenge conventions, provoke curiosity and arouse an appetite for new ideas and experiences; they have the capacity to transform the dynamics of an area, prompting numerous creative luci, engendering enough momentum for artistic collectives to subsist; and they can help to improve the quality of life for not only local people but all those who get involved and engage with them. But once the significance of the arts community’s endeavours has begun to attract public notice, the attention of the business sector is caught and the floodgates to a new arena of investment begin to open. The arts will, over a steadily cumulative pace, manage to entice an influx of visitors to an area by stirring their curiosity and cultural appetite, but corporate investment can step in and accelerate this process with force-fed gentrification that assumes an aesthetic geared at solvent young professionals and the middle classes. Paradoxically, at this point the balance usually tips and many of the artists and artisans have to pack their bags and move elsewhere as they can no longer afford the rents, having inadvertently catalysted an economic boom in the area. The space the artists leave vacant is then filled by an ethos motivated not by creativity as a self-perpetuating pursuit in itself, but by commercial enterprise as a means for extracting profit from saturated ‘creativity consumers’. And so the alchemical flame flickers and dies.

It is not a nostalgic hankering for the ‘good of’ days that is causing people to express discontent; it seems to come from a genuine hunger for meaning. Cultural malnutrition causes all kinds of deprivation-related conditions like disorientation, despondency, depression, inertia, amnesia. Perhaps the most destabilising of all is that of memory loss. When our historical connection to the land has been gradually resculpted and supplanted over time, our memory becomes distorted, fogged by the smoke screen of political agendas. If a generation is unable to convey to the next generation valuable cultural wisdoms and traditions that have naturally followed on from predecessors, there is a break in the continuity of cultural inheritance, its hiatus hindering its rightful owners from gaining confidence in their existential worth.

The ‘good room’ is kept for the reception of special guests. The best furniture, valuable ornaments, artworks, framed photographs and certificates of family members’ achievements adorn it for visitors to admire. This room displays all the accoutrements of aspiration; neat and clean furniture implies a well-run household; precious artefacts signify a degree of affluence; evidence of accomplishment in the family asserts continued prosperity into the future. Guests are served tea and cake with the good china set (brought out only for such occasions) and received and addressed with the best face forward. The good room is usually found to the front of the house, away from informal human activity and domestic detritus towards the back, where family members live and eat and make mess and talk and swear and shout and cry and laugh and argue. For the majority of the time the good room is unused and free of human disorder. The artefacts are reproductions of real works of art, clear plastic...
As we speak, the county of Fermanagh is being turned into something of a ‘good room’. The cushions are being plumped, the furniture re-upholstered, the ornaments dusted; the special guests are soon to arrive. Eight of the great world leaders have made Fermanagh their chosen destination to meet for the G8 summit of 2013 where they will discuss various pressing global problems. Food and nutrition are high up on the agenda. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been found from somewhere to finance improvements in anticipation of their arrival. For instance, after years of the locals’ car suspensions wearing away to nothing on the badly subsiding, potholed roads, tarmac has now been laid down to smoothen the way for the G8 leaders. A large consignment of exterior paint has been allocated to brighten up the badly subsiding, potholed roads, tarmac has now been laid down to smoothen the way for the G8 leaders. A large consignment of exterior paint has been allocated to brighten up the outward face of towns and villages across the country. Unyielding vestiges of PSNI high-security police stations have been toned-down to appear almost welcoming.

Not even pretending to make any lasting improvements to the quality of local people’s lives, they cast a veil over any evidence that might betray socio-economic depression. Placed along belts of wasteland, in Lisnaskea for example, screens serve to blinker people driving past.

Not even pretending to make any lasting improvements to the quality of local people’s lives, they cast a veil over any evidence that might betray socio-economic depression. Placed along belts of wasteland, in Lisnaskea for example, screens serve to blinker people driving past.

These wastelands are not particularly offensive in appearance, but are an implicating marker of abandonment. The fabric on the screens is semi-opaque; its purpose therefore is defeated since you can still see what is being obscured (but only if you want to). There are other, less transparent screens that are being used to hide wasteland, as well as to soften the appearance of stark security structures along the roadside. These screens have been printed with the main tourist attractions of the area, advertising places to go and see, many of which are buildings of British colonial heritage. The contrast between images of these vast edifices of power and wealth repeated again and again along the road, and the unseen, dysfunctional nightmares that many are experiencing in the background, has not gone unnoticed.

So, screens are erected in the hope that they will succeed in deflecting the (mind’s) eye with representations of places the VIPs are encouraged to go see elsewhere, and buildings are newly painted to give the impression of cleanliness and order. But as well as the fresh lick of paint hiding the gradual decay of vacant main street buildings, there is another feature that surpasses all of the other efforts to make a good impression on the special guests: superimposed onto the crumbling façades are trompe l’œil simulations of prospering shops. Photographs of shop fronts and windows have been printed to scale onto plastic material and tacked over the boards that seal up the window frames. What was once a sweet shop in Newtownbutler called Rafters is now Flo’s, a haberdashery with Art Deco stained glass windows. Across the road is a shabby chic antique store with Georgian sash windows and venetian blinds; Further along the road to Enniskillen, in Maguire’s Bridge, is an old-fashioned Victorian style bakery specialising in scrumptious cakes.

There are many for whom the likelihood of ever being part of a privileged class, with a lifestyle fed by the goods that these window displays promise, is about as realistic as being part of a community of cheese-makers on the moon. This hyperreal, facile form of gentrification is nothing if not confirmation for those who, while living in times of economic, social and cultural poverty, are entitled to no more than a simulacrum of prosperity simulating itself. Perhaps the greatest, two-dimensional affront of all is to be found on Main Street in Newtownbutler. Located beside the Lucky House takeaway, what had once upon a time been a shop called AC Fashions is now an expensive lifestyle store dealing in hard leather sofas, and art.

Already in the 1980s the French theorist Jean Baudrillard believed society to be at a stage of pure simulation; he felt we were so far down the road towards hyperrealism that we could no longer distinguish between the real and representation, that our world was rapidly becoming one of simulations of simulacra, and we were increasingly alienated from reality and being denied our instinctual nourishment of non-political, non-profit, socially intelligent cultural practices. On Main Street in Newtownbutler, Baudrillard’s theories are made manifest as our brave new world of cultural simulation has finally begun to eat itself.

(Endnotes)

1 See Impartial Reporter article, ‘Wrecked G8 hoardings will not be replaced’, published 18th April, 2013.
2 This building has been for sale for some time now but recently the words ‘For Sale’ have been cut off the top of the For Sale sign.

IMAGE: Miriam de Búrca

After AC Fashions (2013)

Courtesy of the artist.
J ust up the steps outside the underground, ready to endure the shrill blast of wind on Hungerford Bridge, I am passing by some homeless people when above them, painted in white, is graffiti that reads Revolution is the Opium of the Intellectuals. I continue my way to the Hayward Gallery in evening twilight, indignant to say the least.

That was 1989. I smirk at the recollection. I recently stumbled upon what I had presumed to be the origins of this graffiti, hence the return. It was taken from Lindsay Anderson's O Lucky Man! (1973). It appears towards the end of the film when the happy-go-lucky Mike is released from prison with his new found humanitarian zeal. This was after having been haplessly done over by various forms of state and corporate greed. Against the backdrop of the graffiti, Mike's attempts to help some down-and-outs are thwarted when he is attacked by them. Only when he makes a choice informed by his experiences – not to smile when demanded by the film director – is he freed from narrative servitude. He can now join and be embraced by the partying crowd of actors, musicians and film crew involved in constructing the preceding fiction. Alan Price's title tune reinforces the key theme: the lucky man is he who reasons to live in friendship, uncovers the joy of knowledge and revels in the chance pleasures of life.

There is a familiar narrative device at play here. It is one where the central character has an endearing comic blindness that reveals to his audience a reality just out of his grasp. The veil slowly recedes and so the main character is finally aligned with the viewer. Its literary form can be found in Voltaire's Candide, to take one example from many. Here, the naïve Candide slowly recognizes the fallacy of Panglossian optimism when challenged by numerous disasters, reaching a more informed understanding of his existence. Thus we are allied with Candide and his circle as they retreat to cultivate their garden – just as Voltaire advocated his colleagues to leave society in order to write. Once again, a reasoned resolution is found in seeking shelter from the unforgiving realities of worldly circumstance in pursuit of the good life and an acceptance of an individual's limitations. It appears that this enduring narrative format can encompass, among others, the pastoral retreat and the pleasures of 1960s counterculture.

So what am I to make of that indignant student, and he of me, for that matter? Surely my present self, having the clear upper hand in this regard, is not going to reduce ourselves to a familiar narrative format of estrangement and resolve? I would like to see myself as a less conventional fiction than that. The smirk goes some way to registering the irony of an idealistic youth instinctively rebutting a challenge in the hope that an aesthetic pursuit can go unquestioned. What lingers now, even when weariness marks my attitude towards the emancipatory rhetoric driving much critical theory, is that the smirk is not wholly explaining itself. There is something shifting in the attitude towards a quote which will not go away.

The graffiti itself takes inspiration from Raymond Aron's The Opium of the Intellectuals (1955). Aron draws on Karl Marx's 'religion is the opium of the people' and Simon Weil's claim that Marxism is an 'inferior' form of religion where its convictions become the 'opium of the people'. I am going to leave Aron's book for another day since the aim here is to get to grips with the initial encounter with the graffiti. The graffiti nonetheless can be seen as a riff upon this base. It has the sense that an adherence to the Judaeo-Christian creeds and the emancipatory drive of the intellectual are both delusions evading an enduring human or material predicament. It is not quite hopelessness that the riff offers but a grim realism confronting leftist rhetoric. I am reminded of Richard Wollheim's defence of Sigmund Freud against those revolutionaries and virtuous believers who sought to recruit his ideas for their cause (I have always presumed Wollheim aimed this at Marcuse among others). Freud, Wollheim argued, despised such pious optimism. Freud recognized the untameable character of the human condition and so disagreed with the socialist notion that the fundamental problems of human society are due to society rather than human nature. While we may be swayed by reasoned arguments, our relative comforts are all too capable of muffling those demands. Freud might have found value in the pursuit of knowledge and subsequent grounds for action, but this was not a recipe for fresh hope. The human subject is to be forever fractured, forever in tension and conflict. We are to be forever making deals and concessions in our desire for civility. And in the process, we are to be forever seeking to repress instinctual pleasures in the hope of avoiding real pain and suffering. The sense of permanence is striking here.

To be fair to Marx, the 'religion …' quote has all too often been misconstrued. Here it is in its immediate context:

Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religious is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulsless conditions. It is the opium of the people.3

One senses a rich sympathy for this form of solace but ultimately, for Marx, it is illusory. Interestingly, Marx drew upon the narrative of estrangement and resolve to make this clear: 'religion is … the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself, or has already lost himself again'.

The debate hovers around the notion of ideology. The classic Marxist view takes ideology as a form of false consciousness. It contributes to the production of alienated or estranged individuals by masking their own oppression within the 'real' conditions of class struggle. True social conditions can be uncovered by inquiry governed by the rigours of historical and dialectical materialism. Through collective action, an individual can thus be liberated from these imposed illusions upheld by powerful social forces.
IMAGE: © John Duncan from *Boom Town* (2002) [http://www.johnduncan.info]
Contemporary critical theory retains the libertarian impulse at the heart of this dynamic. Slavoj Žižek, for example, argues that despite a prevalent氰化物, our actions and convictions still bind us to practices of domination. Ideology, through social structures, generates deep convictions in the rectitude of the system before we are aware of it. The truths claims of the classic Marxist view are reworked by recourse to Lacan's notion of the Real – as that void we can only sense via its mediation through the Symbolic. While no privileged objective perspective is secured, attention to the fundamental antagonism between the realms of the Real and the Symbolic can at least counter prevailing ideologies in circulation. In this way, an ongoing ideological critique can be maintained.

Žižek's *In Defence of Lost Causes* goes further than this. He calls for a new emancipatory terror to counter first a politics of fear governing the domain of ecology, and second a fatalism underlying the liberal-democratic belief that capitalism is the only show in town. Žižek summons the monstrous to dramatize his point. Biogenetic developments are collapsing the nature/man couple by which we have come to know ourselves (’it is nature itself which melts into air’).1 Žižek pictures the catastrophe of unforeseen results as a central feature of the ‘ecology of fear’:

>This ecology of fear has every chance of developing into the predominant form of ideology of global capitalism, a new opium of the masses replacing declining religion: it takes over the old religion's fundamental function, that of having an unquestionable authority which can impose limits.2

Žižek finds scientific assessments of dangers and risks on this new terrain unverifiable. He draws on the groundlessness of our own existence, and given the spectre of looming catastrophe, calls for a 'Leap of Faith' in advocating a new terror. It is one propped by a vision of divine violence able to overwhelm the violence necessary to maintain and expand the scope of global capitalism.

One senses a找准的 crisis in Žižek's delivery since his target is ultimately the complacency of liberal critical thought towards the question of political violence and the sense that there is now no ‘realistic’ revolutionary perspective available. ‘But does this not give us a strange freedom, a freedom to experiment’, he asks, noting that a radical alternative will not arrive on its own accord.3 Žižek recognizes a history of failed attempts as a resource for possible future action, citing, more than once, the value of Beckett's endurance through failure (’Try again. Fail again. Fail better.’). The idea of revolution is, at least, kept alive as a sounding board from a history of failed attempts as a resource for possible future action, citing, more recently, the history of non-violent resistance in the Palestinian territories. Weizman outlines the tactic of ‘walking through walls’. The tactic is to state outright what is often left unspoken, to challenge the narrative that there is now no ‘realistic’ revolutionary perspective available. ‘But does this not give us a strange freedom, a freedom to experiment’?

Raymond Williams cites Carlyle in his work *Modern Tragedy* (1966). For Williams, tragedy and revolution are often characterized as opposites. Revolution embodies an optimistic and naïve will to change radically social conditions and end the suffering which tragedy is seen to symbolize.3 The tragic perspective, by contrast, recognizes the delusion and folly of it all and is resigned to its inevitability. Withdrawal and passivity is the common option.

Williams proposes that tragedy should instead be seen as a valuable element in an active response to social disorder. Williams is an advocate of radical social change through rational argument, consensus and non-violence. All too often, he finds the suffering at the heart of revolutionary upheaval to be suppressed as the event or period in question is transformed into historical narrative. The successful revolution, Williams writes, is ‘not tragedy but epic’.4 Williams insists on the primacy of suffering in the midst of the confusion and violent disorder of revolution's upheaval. Violence and disorder, however, are seen in the grander social and historical context in which revolution is but only the crisis of that present. In other words, as with Žižek (or Walter Benjamin for that matter), violence is not peculiar to the revolutionary moment but an ever-present feature of the existing order. Revolution will thus remain necessary so long as ‘the full violence of humanity of all class of men is in practice denied’.5 And further still, Williams recognizes that the long struggle against human alienation will produce its own new forms of alienation to which one should be continuously alert. It is in this sense that revolution – as the ‘actual suffering of real men’ – is viewed in a tragic perspective. Williams concludes:

*We have to see the evil and the suffering, in the factual disorder that makes revolution necessary, and in the unordered struggle against the disorder. We have to recognize this suffering in a close and immediate experience, and not cover it with names.*

Williams' tragic perspective makes clear that ‘what we learn in suffering is again revolution.’6

Williams' take is impressive, not least for its challenge to the 'Revolution is the Opium …' quote. There is a weight that exposes the delusions of emancipatory zeal. What remains is an impulse to counter an expance of tragic dimensions. This can only be achieved by working through its complexities. The tragic, for Williams, is not quite fatalism, not quite helplessness, but the presence of both is looming. From this perspective, the 'Revolution …' quote appears, at best, too jaded. Williams' momentum seems closer to that grim realism initially ascribed to the quote, while the quote itself now seems trapped in its insistence of revolution as a frozen delusion. At worst, the quote is flat wrong in that its opposite is true. The idea of revolution is far from the intellectual's palliative or escape. Instead, it embodies a stark realization that it is an inevitable commitment where one will be pitted against its other. The spectre of violence haunts the chaos and disorder of revolution whether principles of non-violence are adhered to or not. From this perspective, it may well be revolution (the tragic) we seek to avoid and the lure of escape and retreat is the true opiate.

Still, when the quote is placed before the academic gamership of Žižek and the prolonged referral of Deleuze, its mood lifts significantly and regains authority. Moreover, if one considers the kind of fervour accompanying claims for the impact of the internet on the Occupy Movement and the Arab Spring, to take some recent examples, one senses how misguided optimism for a globalized
emancipation further strengthens the ‘Revolution …’ quote. It would also appear that more resurgent dispositions that see no clear line of resistance to the current impasse fare better in the court of the quote. In this absence of hope, an apocalyptic inertia or indifference threatens to fill the void. A fear of permanent entrapment haunts withdrawal. For Williams to hold the line is a difficult challenge in our circumstance. To destabilize the quote is an achievement in itself.

It is the brute quality of the quote that is discomforting. The smirk has registered a youth avoiding its negative implications so as to visit an art gallery unchallenged. The initial indignation can now be worked through. For what is becoming clear is that an illusion was being preserved then, albeit rather awkwardly, and indeed is being preserved now. My position now is no different to as it was then. It is to hold to an ideal. It is a belief in a fraternity between aesthetics and politics: that dreams, hopes, fantasies and fictions in all their (delusory?) forms, not to mention the efforts to sense possible routes out of our current impasse, are all the imaginative possibilities of the meantime. O Lucky Man! and Candida are fine examples in this regard. They point to the good life in the pastoral retreat and in the revelry of friendship. And a bookish endeavour such as this is no less born of the dynamics of retreat and repose, estrangement and resolve. The cynical judgement of the quote would seek to deny all of this in the name of a grim sobriety. As if we are to be unaware of the daily grind and the politics of the workplace: the negotiations, confrontations and compromises, the balancing between commitment and withdrawal, the shifting alliances, the victories and the defeats. And moreover, these uncertain encounters are intensified by the mindless efficiency and instrumentalism of dominant neoliberal policies in the education and arts sectors (and beyond). Freud’s vision of tension, conflict, concession and repression as enduring and irresistible features of the desire for civility no doubt emerged from comparable troubled times. Importantly though, a desire for a just settlement lies at the heart of these conflicts. Terry Eagleton captures the point well: “It is because the impulse to freedom from oppression, however that goal is culturally framed, seems as obdurate and implacable as the desire to material survival.”

The encounter with the quote was ultimately a threatening one. The idea of ‘revolution’ as the intellectual’s bookish pursuit threatens to tear the delicate seam between aesthetics and politics. It seeks to poison the gap between the idealism fuelling the intellectual’s retreat and the brute fact of everyday politics from which they have the luxury to escape. It seeks to discredit the revolutionary impulses at the heart of the vital cultural practices, be they in the fields of film, literature, music or the visual arts. And part of that ‘revolution’ is a struggle to speak or perform outside of prevailing discourse. The source of intrigue in the quote finally turns out to lie just here in the affront to the notion of the intellectual’s retreat, desires and ideals. It is this that is worth defending. But it is not simply to defend this principle against a chance encounter with a quote all those years ago. It is to recognize that its negative presence can be found at the heart of much critical theory today. I speak of a critical tendency to draw quickly any cultural production into the orbit of its own social and political concerns. In so doing, the realms of aesthetics and politics are collapsing on grounds favouring the latter. It is also to recognize – and here I finally move closer to my own domain of art criticism – of how much visual art can now be produced to work within, or at best, agitate, those more limited critical frameworks of which I speak. It seems easier to write about those artworks carefully tuned to contemporary critical discourse than it is to those images with an eloquence that seems best respected by silence. I will resist the tragic dimension therein when I assert that the value of art criticism lies in tending to the latter.

I recognize some of what has been said in T. J. Clark’s defence of what he calls his “Sight of Death” (2006). Clark’s commitment to study is a better alternative to so much on offer. Clark, long seen as a key example in this regard. In so doing, the realms of aesthetics and politics are intensifying the threat to the democratic order lying in the destruction of the spatial syntax of the separation between ‘public and private’ and between ‘retreat and exclusion’. George Steiner, in an essay explaining why he writes so little of his political views, speaks of his hopes for ‘some safeguard for the mutinous privacies of that “party of one”’. Describing himself as a Platonic anarchist, he concedes ‘it is not a winning ticket.’ It is on similar grounds I make a case for that bookish realm with its deep connection to that revolutionary impulse, the pleasures of discourse and, indeed, the pastoral retreat, secure in the knowledge that I am not alone. I sense some epicurean philosophy awaits me for my summer read. Will I be able to sit beneath a great elm, without apology, and read gently in dappled light? If not, I’ll simply nap.

(Endnotes)

2 Karl Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction, 1843-4.
3 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p.439.
6 Ibid., p.361.
7 See, Claire Colebrook, Gilles Deleuze, Routledge, 2002, p.94.
10 See, Peter Hallward, in ‘Deleuzian Politics?’, op. cit., p.144.
14 Ibid., p.103.
15 Ibid., p.108.
16 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Terry Eagleton, Sweet Violence, op.cit.p.xv.

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BELFAST is filled with artists who create their own opportunities. Over the past thirty-five years or so, artists in the city have formed themselves into small groups to fill the gaps in provision and these have expanded in proportion to the growing number of practitioners. Graduates from the art schools have formed, for example, Queen Street Studios, Catalyst Arts, the Golden Thread Gallery, Bbeyond, Platform, the Engine Room Gallery, Household, Satis House, Pollen …

Studio groups are formed not only to provide spaces to work when entering the real world, but also to continue the climate of mutual support enjoyed as students. In a number of cases space is allocated for a gallery which shows resident artists, but is also given over for a programme of artists from outside the organisation. In this way, artists’ practice is conjoined with curation. The resultant blurring of the distinction between roles, while not unique here, has become increasingly characteristic of Belfast and the north of Ireland.

These initiatives have, for the most part, relied on the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) for their continuation, gaining subsidies for studio rent and/or capital and programme funding for exhibitions. ACNI’s contemporary art policies are generally responsive to the concepts of art practitioners, rather than proactive. It’s our duty to take a critical position towards arts councils, especially the bureaucratic forms of our relationships with them, but this approach, whatever its origins, is to be celebrated as a means towards achieving a certain level of autonomy and self-determined programming. It’s been proved over recent years that those best qualified to facilitate Belfast’s art are those active in its production.

The grandparent of them all is Art & Research Exchange (ARE), in turn a child of Joseph Beuys’ Free International University (FIU). ARE was founded in 1977 by, among others, Belinda Loftus, Alastair MacLennan and Rainer Fasel, with the group’s participation in the NI Workshops of FIU at Kassel. They created the format for future projects, combining exhibitions of artists from the local area and from outside with critical workshops. The project itself continued for a decade, but Circa magazine, which it created in 1981, continued until 2009 (relocating to Dublin in 1992) and remains as an online journal, and is currently being ‘re-imagined’.

Catalyst Arts is this year celebrating its twentieth birthday and it has over those years left a number of legacies, many of which continue today. Influenced by Glasgow’s Transmission Gallery, and the inspiration for Galway’s 126 Gallery, Catalyst has a composition which makes it in many ways the driving force of Belfast’s artistic development. It has maintained a policy of rotating its management personnel, each member remaining in place for a maximum of two years. To date, the gallery has operated under the guidance of more than fifty directors. Those volunteering for directorships are mostly graduates from the art schools, but in recent years Catalyst has attracted people who have studied in other subject areas.

The gallery’s continuing experimentalism, following its objectives, which it has described as those which “only a (possibly troubled) teenager would be brave enough to tackle”.

The philosophy of the troubled teenager can be (1) a good thing, because it can encourage innovation and provocation, and (2) a bad thing, because it can discourage innovation and provocation. Catalyst courageously takes risks, which, as should be expected, don’t always succeed – and are at times frankly disastrous – but it was in Catalyst that one of the best shows in Belfast in recent times was held last year. Fata Morgana was a group show curated by Alysha Kleist (also part of the team of artists/curators who formed and run the Household project), which showed intelligence in selection and professionalism in installation. Other recent shows in the gallery have shown an unfortunate immaturity, in which innovation and provocation are confused with playfulness and flippancy.

This illustrates a somewhat worrying trend in some contemporary art in Belfast, where the priority is ‘fun’. This has led to some puerile activities, often based on audience participation, turning the gallery into a playground which at its worst curtails any opportunities for meaningful critical engagement with the work due to its kitschy characteristics.

Such criticism is commonly made in relation to performance art, and certainly no less in Belfast, which has a large and prolific live art community dominated by the group Bbeyond, organised wholly by its practitioner membership. The group could be seen as a descendant of ARE, sharing as it does two of its founder members, and it is one of the city’s success stories. It has established relationships with artists and artist groups from around the world, carrying out exchange projects. As a result, Bbeyond has a widely recognised place in the international performance art scene.

Inspired by the long and widely-recognised career of Alastair MacLennan, Bbeyond has influenced the development of some important artists - Sandra Johnston, Ann Quail and Leo Devlin spring to mind. Along with the excellence, there is some very poor performance art in Belfast, lazy and intellectually wanting. Performance artists often face the type of unkind criticism reserved for teachers – those who can, make art, those who can’t, make performance art. While such a generalisation is clearly unfair (though at times accurate), it reflects a certain degree of alienation of the medium from the art community as a whole. Performance art audiences tend to be made up of those who practice it and it is often seen by artists in other fields as a satellite activity. This, along with the time restriction of its form, determines the necessity for an artist-led structure.

The most successful and respected offspring of Catalyst has to be The Golden Thread Gallery. Founded in 1998, it was directed for its first three years by ex-Catalyst director Gail Prentice and since then by Peter Richards, who also served his time there. Originally sited on the C rumlin Road, the organisation relocated to the city centre in 2007. The gallery can be described as artist-led, in that Richards is a practicing artist, the
from an organisation, Derry’s Artists for Derry’s Art (DADA), formed activists and succeed in a cooperative venture against the odds. It arose dedicating sufficient project led to my abandoning the post in order to continue demanding role. My term lasted only eighteen months as the inevitable choice in such a activity corrupts his art practice, and vice versa. It is easy to see how this while acting as Director of a high-maintenance gallery. James Merrigan, an artist Richards is something of a rarity, maintaining his role as a prolific artist while acting as Director of a high-maintenance gallery, James Merrigan, at a recent presentation at Belfast’s art school talked about how his writing activity corrupts his art practice, and vice versa. It is easy to see how this corruption can take place, the two activities demanding different forms of critique. The same is often true for artists who dedicate significant time to curatorial practice. I myself experienced this incongruity during my time as Co-Manager of Derry’s Void gallery a few years ago, finding myself in a position where the choice between the two activities was unavoidable. My term lasted only eighteen months as the inevitable choice in such a demanding project led to my abandoning the post in order to continue dedicating sufficient time to making art. The formation of Void was one of those rare moments where artists become activists and succeed in a cooperative venture against the odds. It arose from an organisation, Derry’s Artists for Derry’s Art (DADA), formed administrative and technical staff is made up of artists, but its Board of Directors contains only one artist (me).

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A Curating Committee was formed, made up almost exclusively of artists, with recommendations voted upon, and curatorial responsibility for individual shows being taken by the member who made the original suggestion. This approach was at the time met with suspicion, on the basis that ‘a camel is a horse designed by committee’. The programming of the gallery has been successfully carried out by this group (which has undergone a number of personnel changes over time) for the entirety of its eight-year-plus history.

Void was, then, a child of protest and in its early years continued with a programme and ethos that was challenging and provocative. The exhibition currently showing, by Russian artist Andrei Molodkin, (which is made up of a structure based on a window from Westminster Palace filled with Catholic blood) is curated by DADA and Void campaigner Conor McFeely, and is continuing this ambition to be troublesome.

Or rather, returning to it. Void has, in recent years, paradoxically formed a close relationship with Derry City Council, given a fillip by Derry’s role this year as UK City of Culture. This appears to have had an impact on the gallery’s ethos, becoming somewhat conservative and adopting the City of Culture’s priority of promoting the city and itself.

City of Culture is fundamentally geared towards encouraging civic pride (and, no doubt, corporate investment). Derry has given itself a smugly face as it revels in its sentimental self-congratulation. Even the potential for difficult criticality provided by the Molodkin show is swamped by the nature of Void’s publicity, including its cutey Facebook announcements, complete with multiple exclamation marks.

The focus in Derry for serious and objective critique is now at the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA), the renamed and relocated Context Gallery. CCA combines a progressive and contemporary curatorial approach with critical engagement through research and debate. CCA, in its short life since its metamorphosis under the joint directorship of Aileen Burns and Johan Lundh, has so far proven that cooperative relationships with ACNI, with Derry City Council and even with the City of Culture do not necessitate adopting populist and unchallenging approaches to running a gallery programme. It, like GTG in Belfast, refuses to make life easy, either for itself or for its audience.

CCA is not an artist-led space – its directors are young, ambitious curators with an international mindset. Void is no longer artist-led, but is artist-curated. Catalyst appears to be becoming more an apprenticeship for curators, rather than for artists interested in curating. Golden Thread is curated primarily by one artist. If there’s a conclusion to be drawn, perhaps it’s that, while management structure and the artist activities of those who run the show impact upon the success and integrity of a gallery space, the necessary ingredients are the bloody-minded determination to maintain as high a level of autonomy as possible and to be as troublesome as contemporary art demands.

IMAGE: Derry’s Artists for Derry’s Art (DADA) take to the streets in response to Derry’s City Council’s closure of the Orchard Gallery in March 2003. Photographer unknown: image courtesy of Colin Darke.
ELEPHANTS OF THE FUTURE
Derry and the Promise of Culture

AARON KELLY

DURING the conflict there was always a prevailing view – at governmental, policy, legal and mass media levels – of the North as an irresolvable tribal dispute that was mired in an almost mythically repetitive and reiterative stasis, impervious to the goodwill of liberal democracy. Hence, mainstream political discourse would not only partake in a lexicon of ‘cycles of violence’, ‘tit-for-tat killings’ or ‘things spiralling out of control’, it could also, once self-instantiated as the honourable broker or the liberal centre seeking to manage this turmoil, deliberate an “acceptable level of violence”. Implicit in this concept of an “acceptable level of violence” is that the best the forces of liberal democracy may do with such recalcitrant historical stagnancy is to police, quarantine, and manage it. There was always a large body of cultural representation that was not only complicit in such political discourses of crisis management but also helped to produce and affirm them. In popular culture, the thriller often performed this function on page and on screen. Christopher Newmann’s The Devil’s Own, which also made it onto the big screen, resignedly discloses: “In Ireland, there is no happy endings”.

So there is a consonance between the understanding of Northern Ireland as a fated place, where no substantive change is possible, and the thriller form. The latter must suspend final resolution and seek only to enact move and countermove in a chain of endless violence and retribution where the local erausle of a few bad guys will never fix the bigger picture. The overarching frame can only ever be ongoing and vigilant monitoring and policing.

One such marker of the endurance of each tradition, but which degraded very readily and inexplicable antagonism, it was also, on the other, made consentively reducible to the one, readily explicable narrative of violence. Such a terminal exegesis – a regime of representation whose forms and outcomes are resigned to already knowing what they feign to seek and uncover – even seats itself on more serious literary treatments such as John Hewitt’s Regionalism programme. This project sought to reconceive the North as a regional space (rather than a failed or contested state) in which Protestant, Dissenter, Catholic and other strands might interconnect in shared ways that circumvented any necessary identification with the British or Irish states at a national level. But Hewitt’s mining of these varying cultural histories, even before the Troubles thoroughly intensified, also encountered an ‘exact geology’, which initially may have been intended as markers of the endurance of each tradition, but which degraded very readily into the unstoppable collisions of unyielding, unyielding fault lines. Hence, art is ultimately imprinted by elemental and non-historical forces. Hewitt’s construction of these various traditions as excavations of the North’s diversity rather than its static homogeneity (an entirely laudable aim) actually supersaturates the terrain of different strands that he wishes to make the basis of a pluralistic regionalism, so that each once more adds up to a total historical inevitability without alternative outcomes to its violence. Towards the end of his life and career, he appended ‘Postscript 1984’ to the earlier poem, ‘Ulster Names’, which had sought to map the linguistic entwining of Irish, English and Scots words in place-names, so as to construct a mutually lived landscape that was also a template for future belonging together. However these very locales, in the postscript, become sites of particular marker, wherein representation is made the mere reflection of its referent. It thus forges a fuller sense of Aristotle’s concept as praxis, of art as an intervention that may reshape, contest and reformulate its materials rather than surrender itself to the imitation of an already agreed set of actions in a predesigned form.

In a sense, if only by default, Margaret Scanlan, by deciding the inaccessibility of proper or High Art to the Troubles and thus clearing the ground for popular cultural mediations, justifies the appropriateness of the thriller form to Northern Ireland, so that both embrace one another in predetermined and interwoven fixity: “the aesthetic impulse is as alien to the Shankill Road as the well-shaped plot is to the erratic behaviour of home-made bombs; a private life, in the face of repeated violations, becomes almost as inconceivable as a simple moral judgment or a happy ending”. So the North, wherein history as dynamic, as change, as process, is supposedly impossible, requires an arrested form of representation; a narrative which abjures its own status as narrative (as movement, shaping and action), and instead joins its referent in refractive immobility. This paralysed mimesis is found even in parodic takes on the thriller, such as Colin Bateman’s Dividing Jack, that are designedly intended to play with the genre. Therein Bateman’s hero, Starkey, claims: “you didn’t need a reason to kill people, not here”.

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art must forgo its own active forms and modes before the brute reality of the Troubles. Pastoral can no longer be pastoral but solely an emptied mode that can only list what might have been its raw materials, which were already the signs of a narrative of predestined violence and murder. So form must supplicate itself as passive mimicry, the mere semblance of the Form of Forms, the intractable inexorability that is the Troubles, which may prescribe not only its own self-perpetuating meaning but also the form of any artistic encounter with it.

Of course it would have been remiss of writers and artists to ignore the Troubles. What is in dispute here, however, is not that the Troubles happened or indeed the extent of the terrible violence wrought in its name. It is more an issue of the nature and meaning of the Troubles (in other words, that it might have a political and social content which is subject to change rather than being a mythic repetition of primordial passions) and also as to the role and function of art therein as praxis (as variously, explanation, intervention, endorsement or resistance). Each of these possibilities of art might complicate both a standard response to social turmoil in the North (a certain projection of aesthetic value) and a standard account of violence itself as an arrested representation, a stalled unhistorical narrative. For even the prevailing version of the conflict had to adjust its terms with the onset of the Peace Process, but this shift was primarily undertaken not on the basis of ongoing social, historical and cultural drives but, rather, on the demarcation between the past agreed as simply the one, all-encompassing traumatic thing and the present as equally and self-evidently contained by its own unexplored inevitability. For example, in 1994 when pressing the shift in dispensation, Francine Cunningham asked: “so now that the ceasefire has been announced, what will happen to all the Northern Ireland writers? Where will they go for their material?” Implicit in such a question is the sense that a specifically sectarian as well as a historically fated as well as a simultaneously culture and society. Art and society are made homologous in their agreed identity and formal ontology. And if the past and its artistic forms could only mean the one thing, then, by extension, the present is voided of any meaning other than its own self-evidence. Art is required to accept the consensus of what is, as it perhaps by being formalized as an aesthetic artifice and the future becomes the mirror securing the self-identity of the way of the world in both scenarios. But what if the Troubles were irreducible to that sectarian template of tribal status? What if what was can be reviewed as something which was not homogeneous with itself, but instead harboured heterogeneous possibilities and antagonisms? These heterogeneities would also trouble, as it were, and persist in ways that challenge the present and its present representation. If, the Troubles – and the governing sectarian narrative that would name and formulate them – were in fact to be cast as partial and situated responses (rather than all-exhausting determinants which simply imitate one another’s underlying reality) to profound change rather than status? The dominant narrative would itself be unmasked as praxis rather than passive and already formed imitation, as an effort to delimit and contain change and heterogeneous possibilities under the rubric of the repetition of the same.

The prevalent, arrested form of representation of the conflict accords with Homi K. Bhabha’s account of the insecure vacillation between ‘fixation’ and ‘reactivation’ in the construction of the stereotype by a dominant gaze. This makes it evident that, for example, the ‘cyclical’ form of the Troubles was a episodic culture and society. Art and society are made homologous in their agreed identity and formal ontology. And if the past and its artistic forms could only mean the one thing, then, by extension, the present is voided of any meaning other than its own self-evidence. Art is required to accept the consensus of what is, as it perhaps by being formalized as an aesthetic artifice and the future becomes the mirror securing the self-identity of the way of the world in both scenarios. But what if the Troubles were irreducible to that sectarian template of tribal status? What if what was can be reviewed as something which was not homogeneous with itself, but instead harboured heterogeneous possibilities and antagonisms? These heterogeneities would also trouble, as it were, and persist in ways that challenge the present and its present representation. If, the Troubles – and the governing sectarian narrative that would name and formulate them – were in fact to be cast as partial and situated responses (rather than all-exhausting determinants which simply imitate one another’s underlying reality) to profound change rather than status? The dominant narrative would itself be unmasked as praxis rather than passive and already formed imitation, as an effort to delimit and contain change and heterogeneous possibilities under the rubric of the repetition of the same.

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representations proffered to him or her rather than accepting these a priori as the transparent and agreed constitution and transmission of knowledge.

And if that galvanized and empowered spectatorship occurs with moving images in Elephant, then it is also to be found in photography, supposedly the medium most strictly identical to both itself and its subject matter according to those who would subordinate us to the realm of images. For example, Susan Sontag’s On Photography makes us ‘image-junkies’, who, like the chained souls in Plato’s Allegory of the Cave, are enticed from reality and experience and to photography by “mere images of truth”. Sontag’s cultural history of photography links itself, correctly, to regimes of surveillance and control to the round-up of the Communards in 1871 and to criminal profiles, crime scene forensics and modern policing in general. She then argues that this relation of power, truth and representation in photography became disseminated, in a putatively democratic manner that is actually a spurious, consumerist voyeurism and relativism, at a micro-level so that we could all nominally participate in the authority of this gaze with paradoxically supplanted: “the very reality it captured. ‘In photography is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge – and, therefore, like power’.” However, to Sontag, this relation to the world is actually the antithesis of knowledge, since we are enslaved to and by the medium and its mediation of the referent that provides a degraded interpretative framework on our behalf: “Photography implies that we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it. But this is the opposite of understanding, which starts from not accepting the world as it is. All possibility of understanding is rooted in the ability to say no. Strictly speaking, one never understands anything from a photograph.” Where writing or painting are selective interpretations, for Sontag, photography offers “a narrowly selective transparency”, it becomes a miniature slice of reality rather than that which is or was there. It is at one with its referent in a way that precludes space for interpretation or analysis. And the supreme irony for this line of argument is that this transparent medium ultimately effaces the reality that it apprehends and with which it becomes synonymous.

A comparable sentiment can be found in Roland Barthes’ Camera Lucida. Like Sontag, he distinguishes writing from photography on the basis that the former leaves space for play, reformulation and analysis, while the latter forgoes aesthetic method to become homologous with its object: “The Photograph’s essence is to ratify what it represents […] no writing can give me this certainty.”

Photography becomes, at best, a kind of depleted pseudo-ethnography whose task it is to authenticate the reality of a moment we will never be able to touch once that-which-is becomes captured as that-which-was in the photograph: “the photograph is literally an emanation of the referent”.

It becomes a transparent medium shaped only by the pre-existing form of the thing which it displaces into representation. Its form, such that it assumes one in its compliant mimesis, is already determined by what is or was there. Barthes does propose some capacity for the photograph to be brushed against the grain of this nakedly referential logic. In his classification of photography, Barthes distinguishes between what he terms the studium (the sets of social and cultural expectations which permit us to participate in, identify with, or understand the various figures, faces, objects, gestures) and the punctum (that which might grab us in unexpected ways, make us more sensitive to odd details, struck by one’s juxtapositions or disarming contingencies). So Barthes deliberately names the punctum, literally, as that which pricks, marks, or wounds us, but which also carries with it the sense of punctuation. In other words, it punctuates the grammar of the studium rather than overturning it; the punctum’s ability to arrest or surprise is still contained by a banal set of expectations which it occasionally enlivens but in whose field of reference it still takes place. Barthes also tends to make the punctum operate solely as a solipsistic and individualized matter, so that the heightened moments of perception, when viewing the self-evidence of what-has-been, are reducible to his own “voice of singularity” and “all the élan of an emotion which belonged only to myself”.

So within the wider ‘society of the spectacle’ thesis, photography, of all the regimes of images, is made the sterile forensics of the referent: it merely documents the essence is to ratify what it represents [...]. No writing can give me this certainty”. Barthes does propose some capacity for the photograph to be brushed against the grain of this nakedly referential logic. In his classification of photography, Barthes distinguishes between what he terms the studium (the sets of social and cultural expectations which permit us to participate in, identify with, or understand the various figures, faces, objects, gestures) and the punctum (that which might grab us in unexpected ways, make us more sensitive to odd details, struck by one’s juxtapositions or disarming contingencies). So Barthes deliberately names the punctum, literally, as that which pricks, marks, or wounds us, but which also carries with it the sense of punctuation. In other words, it punctuates the grammar of the studium rather than overturning it; the punctum’s ability to arrest or surprise is still contained by a banal set of expectations which it occasionally enlivens but in whose field of reference it still takes place. Barthes also tends to make the punctum operate solely as a solipsistic and individualized matter, so that the heightened moments of perception, when viewing the self-evidence of what-has-been, are reducible to his own “voice of singularity” and “all the élan of an emotion which belonged only to myself”.

However, the best photographic interventions in this terrain turn the tables on this model. It is not the referent but the form of representation which is exposed as a kind of death, a frozen and fixated gaze which would visit petrification on its objects. The best photography about Northern Ireland contest the realm of images by refusing to allow dominant forms of representation to become the Panopticon that can see everything but itself, and which would make its prisoners assent to viewing and being viewed solely through and by that gaze. For example, Victor Sloan’s Shop, Dungannon, from Moving Windows (1985), very astutely interrogates the studium (which is just as passively or already given and ‘there’ as the referent in Barthes’ classification of photography). The framing through the side window of the car foregrounds the covert transparency of surveillance in mainstream representations of the North, while, most crucially, the camera movement and slow shutter-speed combine to produce the after-image which appears as an explosion to the habitual studium of Troubles reportage. But here the studium is the framing; it loses the objective factness which it supposedly shares with its referent. The punctum, the awareness that an explosion is not an explosion (“ceci n’est pas une pipe-bombe”), Magritte might almost have painted here), does not simply punctuate an agreed studium. The studium becomes its own punctum in the manner in which it exposes itself as a strategy of representational containment, an effect of style and framing, where the only fixed and pre-existing thing is not the referent but the ingrained socio-cultural expectations upon which the studium’s regime of images is based. This regime here discloses its limits; it is simply a visual grammar seeking to place a representation of its referent rather than being identical thereto. If representation is unveiled as contingent, insecure and bound to relations of power and appropriation, then this awareness also destabilizes the status of its referents, which are thereby unmoored and become
open to reinterpretation, reinscription, or redemption. The terrain of the real is not already decided for emancipated spectators.

Sloan’s image therefore undermines Barthes’ claim: “Whatever it grants to vision and whatever its manner, a photograph is always invisible: it is not what we see”. Rather than aligning with the thought of Slavoj Žižek, Doherty’s art makes us aware that the most ideological of all statements is: the facts speak for themselves. As Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev discerns in what she deems the “fallible gaze” of Doherty’s various photographs, installations and films, the photographic and representational apparatus is always ‘evidently’ there. And rather than aligning his work with the standard terminus of the ‘society of the spectacle’ model, that all is mediation and that reality no longer exists other than as a second-order simulation of itself, whose falsity we all passively verify, Doherty’s aesthetic actively impels us to re-engage our world by allowing us to reconsider supposedly settled worldviews as merely dominant ones. If the whole purpose of ideology is to efface itself as ideology – to masquerade as the natural way of things – then, as with the thought of Slavoj Žižek, Doherty’s art makes us aware that the most ideological of all statements is: the facts speak for themselves. But rather than meaning there are no facts, no truth and no reality, this awareness does not leave us passively in thrall to mediations. Instead it makes us more ably informed to evaluate and to analyse the ways in which our societies are mediated, and to intervene and to challenge these meanings and their referents, and thereby to rethink and transform the material basis of our world. In works such as The Walls (1987) a dominant visual regime that offers itself as a total picture is rendered absolute only in its stylised, mediated effort to totalise a field of representation in its own terms so that, by extension, it cannot exhaust the referent it claims and must sit in antagonistic relation to other versions thereof. For once we can evaluate what seems to be the total permeation of reality, then our analysis is already outside of and antagonistic to that mediation, which is therefore not only identical to itself and not to reality. It can neither remain nor freeze those elements which would remain heterogeneous to it, so that the referent remains a space of dispute open to the dynamics of change rather than something we passively accept.

Active and emancipated spectatorship is also furnished by Doherty’s Same Difference (1990) and They’re All the Same (1991). In Same Difference the images are never simply forensic authentications of their referent; they only evidence their own situated placement in relation to that material. And the use of text also helps confound Sontag’s dichotomy between the photograph as passive testimony and writing as active interpretation: “Only that which narrates can make us understand”. By contrast, here the narrative is also unmasked as a representational strategy intertwined with the regime of images seeking to fix rather than just reflect its referent. This does not lead to passive relativism but to the active evaluation of relations of power and representation. So too the voice-over in They’re All the Same self-reflexively highlights things that are opening up a space in which representation is not a priori identical to its referent, but confronted by a difference and heterogeneity that it would exclude in order to sustain its own stylisation and framing. So photography and the regime of images are rigorously made unstable and contestable in these works. And, if photography is unstable in supposedly the most fatalistic of circumstances with the most fixed set of referents, then the latter are opened up to more than just determinism and passive acceptance. These visual engagements with the North during the conflict interrogate the framing or the representation, and, simultaneously, open up a less deterministic history. The motif of surveillance in both Sloan’s and Doherty’s works not only forefronts issues of power, representation and the placement of evidence, it also, at a very pragmatic and quotidian level, serves as a reminder that surveillance, at its most basic, is a gaze that awaits only what it expects. It is only looking for its objects to become typical, to revert to type (as threat, criminal act, predicted behaviour and deviance) so that it might generalise and justify its whole field of representation around its expectation. If surveillance work is often tedious, Sloan and Doherty also self-reflexively make the Panopticonic gaze of surveillance expose itself as a kind of representational monotony, as a gaze that would seek to impose only the recidivist repetition of the Same and to blind itself to anything which is non-identical to that presumed referent. Sloan and Doherty subvert the consensual transparency of the studium in Barthes’ model that is only ever punctuated, given a visual syntax by the punctum, since we, as emancipated spectators, apprehend it as having planted its own evidence. Moreover, the transparency of medium and referent in the Sontag conception of photography is ruptured in Sloan’s and Doherty’s works by this subordinating of the representational and axiomatic continuum wherein the studium founds its evidence (its referent) on the basis of its own self-evidence (its representation). The photograph is never allowed to agree its referent on the grounds of an already agreed frame of representation; the latter is reviewed as the site/sight of a dominance that is contestable.

Hence, the best artworks through the Troubles always contested the idea that they must be ex hypothesis: that is, undertaken according to the template already given. They were always a reminder that art is praxis rather than just a formally consensual conformity to, and imitation of, already agreed sets of action. It is all of this because I feel that this intense vigilance and refusal to accept terms of appropriateness for how art should function is just as necessary now as it was then. For the current dispensation, proclaimedly one of peace and political agreement that is typified by the official grammar of Derry’s year as UK City of Culture, also houses a certain set of stipulations and directives as to what is appropriate for art now and in the future, as well as grounding its new artistic provision on a homogenous and fatalistic narrative of what has been. The official promotional literature, with some merit and some justice, embraces the opportunity to tell ‘Our Story’. Given that the British and Northern Irish states punished Derry for decades for being too Catholic and it was occluded from any meaningful civic participation in these respective polities (or the fact that the city was initially bypassed by the University of Ulster, for which it was the most obvious location), it is entirely understandable that this chance to engage in civic connections within and across Ireland, Britain and the wider world, should be grasped. And “our story” is intentionally an inclusive one that seeks to weave different strands into an agreed narrative “from plantation to peace”. As the Creating A New Story section of the Executive Summary puts it:

As a cultural melting pot we recognize that our cultural and political traditions sometimes approach the past from different places and that the truth itself is lost in translation. The “sum of unreliable parts” ultimately leads us with some prejudices and limits our Cultural Programme to define a new narrative through purposeful culture led inquiry which will allow for alternative views and ideas to be absorbed and considered.

Additionally, the executive aim is to place “culture at the heart of regeneration”. Again, especially for a city that was on the receiving end of the military apparatus.
of the British state as well as its socio-economic sanctioning, this is, on its own terms, an admirable desire. However, there are contradictions and strictures underpinning this template of culture as promise, reconciliation and renewal. The imperative to tell the city’s story – “a story which must be told”, according to the Cultural Programme – is short-circuited by another peremptory narrative request: “In 2013 Derry-Londonderry wants, and needs, to tell a new story”. This need for a new story shapes particular projects such as STORY, BT Porträt of a City, and the public mural competition organized by Culture Company and Tourism Ireland. So Derry must tell its story but equally needs a new story. In this sense, the city can’t be agreed only and insofar as it is placed as the traumatic narrative of the past which will no longer suffice. It is self-consciously formal to the extent that, as a narrative, it makes the past homogenous with itself as sectarian violence. Hence a new story is required to move the city beyond that repeated stasis. So we can only tell a new story if we agree that the past was a bad one. Why else would a new story be necessary? The foundations of the requirement for a new narrative are built upon a view of the conflict that is just as static and arrested as The Dresser Owns or Patriot Gamer. And this contradiction – now we can tell our story, except we can’t and we need a new one – can be mapped onto the supplanting political discourses constituting the Peace Process in its institutional forms. Here there is another bold imperative – let’s make politics work – but this version of politics actually attenuates politics proper in two key ways. Firstly, it depoliticizes politics and purifies its capacity to disagree and dispute (let’s all just agree in our difference and diversity, there is room enough in the devolved assembly for everyone as long as he or she consents to designating him or herself as a constituent of one of two communities). And secondly, it makes politics proper (the facility to dispute and contest) reducible to sectarian murder and violence (so let’s have no more of the past unless it is archived as the conceptual folk park of Two Traditions that both suppress sectarianism and expresses it as kitsch).

If anything, we should have more and not less of the past, but, in this case, a history not at one with its governing and static representation; a history that views the conflict, and political struggle more widely, as something more than sectarianism. Such a history would include an international set of engagements with Civil Rights (it reminds us that You Are Now Entering Free Derry was an act of transatlantic solidarity with protestors in Berkeley, USA, rather than the token of an introverted and tribal Tradition), socialism and class struggle, feminism and anti-sectarianism, anti-imperialism, anti-fascism, anti-racism and so on. To occlude these dynamics of the past (which make the past more than a petrified stasis that simply furnishes the museum exhibits of today’s kitsch), is also to quarantine them from the present and to make it self-evidently homogenous with itself, so that the new dispensation just is what it is. The static, monolithic version of the past cannot explain, for example, why some people today object to the presence of Rathvon in Derry. There is another history hengenticous to, and never bounded by, sectarianism that makes the Troubles part of processes of radicalism and change, which pre-date and inform the present, rather than a reflection of stasis. If art was able to refuse to serve regimes of what was appropriate and permissible during the Troubles (and to contest a prevailing view of that consensus), then it should also seek to confound the agreed identity of the past.

In this sense, the old story can be agreed only and insofar as it is placed as the agreed sphere – it just is what it is. The imperative to tell the city’s story – “a story which must be told”, according to the Cultural Programme – supplants an abstraction for the replete complexity of working-class culture, including the work of George Garrett, a writer and objects of art.

To some, it’s a wall – to others, a blank canvas. To be considered the image needs to cover the following points:

- It must capture what being UK City of Culture means to Derry-Londonderry, celebrating the year of cultural events.
- It must be future facing and positive to mark a new chapter in Derry-Londonderry’s history.
- It should not carry any political symbolism.
- It will become a semi-permanent art piece, so must be relevant for years to come.
- The image can’t be overly complicated with bold shapes and strong colours.
- It should also have a varied colour palette to ensure a clear final image.

The cultural programme makes room for art to be consumed, aply enough by its ‘consumers’ who are repeatedly invoked in the literature. The City of Culture events are in danger of making two peremptory directives about the permissible of art which actually foreclose the possibilities of artworks. Firstly, that culture is the expression of already agreed identities – an expression of the Two Traditions; and, secondly, that it must be consumed, that its recipients are consumers. Before my hostility to consumer art is misunderstood as elitism, let me turn that argument on its head by suggesting that elitism entails a small group of people defining in advance how most people may engage with culture. To prescribe to people that they can encounter art as a member of one of Two Traditions or as a consumer is elitist and parochial. They may respond to art in its own terms. There is democracy in allowing art to take forms that are not predetermined and, perhaps more importantly, in permitting people to make of art what they wish in ways that have not been pre-empted by a cabal. Elitism makes art and the people who encounter it conform to an identity (as a cultural tradition, as a customer); but art also has the capacity to contest and transform identity, to remain non-identical to the way of the world and to unfold other pathways of living and thinking.

Bloody Sunday was, amongst its other murderous violations, an assault on the ownership of public space, the expugration of Derry’s citizens from their own streets. The intense violence done to Derry’s civics helps explain the tenor of Seamus Deane’s Reading in the Dark (1996) which is very much estranged from the streets. Belfast novels like Glenn Patterson’s Fast Lad (1992) or Robert McLiam Wilson’s Europa Street (1996) notably, in presaging and endorsing the ceasefire and Peace Process era, feel able to reconcile antagonisms between their respective characters in a supposedly shared and more public sphere, a new Belfast pulsing with diversity. Deane’s work is much more at odds with this positivism, its recondite enclosure haunting borderlines not only because it creates a particular form of nationalism, but because it highlights a secretive family history but also because of that surrendering of urban civics in Derry itself. If the people of Derry were only visible in their own city through regimes of surveillance and violence, placing them as threats, targets, trespassers in someone else’s polity – as Willie Doherty’s work makes clear, as does Lockie Marcus’ Reading in the Dark (2006) – then we also need to be wary of a new regime that only permits the same citizens visibility and participation in civic life as consumers and customers, or as bearers of Two Traditions. This is still a regime of delimitation which prescribes in advance how people must conform to have access to a particular space. When Glasgow was European Capital of Culture in 1990, Jim Kelman, Alasdair Gray, Tom Devine and other part of the city were opposed the official Merchants’ City gentrification of the city centre area. They claimed that the institutional events excluded rather than included ordinary citizens (or sought their consent in a tokenistic way) and that they also destroyed (rather than regenerated or commemorated) a whole organic history of culture that was already there. When Liverpool became Culture Capital in 2008, part of the economic redevelopment of that city involved the demolition of the Liverpool Life Museum, an act which scattered to the winds a host of important archives of working-class culture, including the work of George Garrett, a writer and activist who taught George Orwell a thing or two about life and literature. Not necessarily things that are comparable be done in the name of culture in Derry. The current way of doing things depends us that a fuller understanding of Aristotle’s concept of mimesis necessitated more than just passive imitation, and also necessitated praxis, the practice to reshape and rethink. Nonetheless, Aristotle’s formal templates for art and their recasting of the world only assume their fullest meaning when they are understood – as they were intended to be – when linked to Plato’s extra-artistic notion of ethos as elaborated in his Republic. Plato notoriously wished to banish the poets precisely because he feared art’s capacity to disorder divine hierarchies of forms and souls, to reform, de-form, un-form rather than accept the Form of Forms. He felt art was permissible only insofar as it served and endorsed the ethos, the organisational principle of his society’s hierarchy. So Aristotle’s formal template for different kinds of art and narrative establishes certain generic rules but it also ties these aesthetic functions to a prescription about art’s adherence to an ethos that sets the limits on the latter’s praxis. But, as Jacques Rancière’s work indicates, art’s praxis was always capable of rebeling not only against its own generic rules but also these extra-artistic constraints, of recasting what was permissible in art at a formal level while simultaneously challenging who had the right to be subjects and objects of art. I have tried to indicate that art during the Troubles had this capacity to challenge and disorder a governing representation of the world of the world; but I also feel that this refusal of art to be identical to a consensus worldview is just as vital today. If Alan Clarke’s Elephant sought to evaluate that which would make itself so self-evident that it was just there, then this imaginative and analytical intelligence and rigour should also be brought to bear on the world only assume their fullest meaning when they are understood – as they were intended to be – when linked to Plato’s extra-artistic notion of ethos as elaborated in his Republic. 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in the name of cultural tradition (art as the expression of Two Communities) and global capitalism (art as the expression of consumers, it is that which gives them their identities and something to consume). These two reifications forget an alternative and heterogeneous history of the North of Ireland irreducible to the narrative of the Troubles as self-justifying tribal entrenchment. They also forget art’s ability to dissent from an agreed version of the present as a regime in which two communities meet to consume and find identity in their kith and kin heritage and acts of consumption. Inverting the idea that art should imitate life, and thus endorse the latter’s prevailing identity and form, Adorno stated:

[...] in a subtle and sublimated sense, reality ought to imitate works of art. By their very presence, artworks signal the existence of the non-existent; their reality testifies to the feasibility of the unreal, the possibility of the possible. More particularly, the longing of art, which posits the possible reality of that which is not, metamorphoses to take the form of remembrance. In remembrance the present is combined with the non-existent in the form of that which was but no longer is."

Put simply, art is able to constellate the past, present and future in new ways which confound the way of the world: by being able to give form to things as yet unformed; to re-form things de-formed by the violence of modernity. So art testifies to the possibility of the possible by the very fact of its being brought into existence: something which did not exist previously now does. And this yearning for the possible, for the future, is also a longing for, and act of, remembrance; a giving new form and expression to things excited from the present by a homogenization of the past. This model is particularly prescient in a context where the present dispensation would make the past simply the one thing in the one form (a traumatic narrative for which there is now an amnesty) and, in so doing, secure both its own self-identity (it is self-evidently a new story) and its sovereignty over the future. Art, during the Troubles and now, has the capacity to recover the past as more than just a homogenous thing and to recuperate and project the present and the future as more than just the inevitable of what is, as processes that can realise the possible. Art as critique can remain non-identical to the self-identity of the world; it can refuse to delimit in advance what is possible, what might be formed. The twin elephants proposing an ethos which would make all things identical to the governing regime of the present are the Two Traditions and consumer capitalist models. We would do well to bring art’s aptitude for critique to bear on these before they become a herd.
GARDEN
OPEN GARDEN
ENCLOSED GARDEN
OUTER GARDEN
GARDEN PATH
WATER GARDEN
GARDEN PARTY
GARDEN DREAMS
LACK OF GARDEN
GARDEN TIME
RELENTANT GARDEN
LONELY GARDEN
GARDEN SHED
PUBLIC GARDEN
GARDEN NATION
PRIVATE GARDEN
PLEASURE GARDEN
GARDEN DESIGN
GARDEN WORLD
SECRET GARDEN
MIRACLE GARDEN
COURTYARD GARDEN
GARDEN RULES
LOST GARDEN
GARDEN UTOPIA
HANGING GARDEN
ROOF GARDEN
ZEN GARDEN
GARDEN FENCE
ROSE GARDEN
GARDEN STYLE
GARDEN FURNITURE
BOTANICAL GARDEN
GARDEN BOOK
VICTORY GARDEN
NEGLIGENCE GARDEN
OVERGROWN GARDEN
GARDEN LIBRARY
COMMUNITY GARDEN
WALLED GARDEN
WILD GARDEN
GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE
GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS
GARDEN