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edited by Caroline Knowles<br>Emma Jackson<br>Britt Hatzius

photograph on front cover by Gwen Jones

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Back in Britain there is the new political dawn in which we wait to see how the Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition and its deficit reduction programme will play out in universities, research centres and in individual lives. Our new MA and PHD graduates especially face an uncertain labour market.

CUCR continues its ongoing research, its interventions and public events. What has become an annual Tate Britain conference, Urban Encounters was a sell-out as last year. Next year it will move to New York. Research and projects in arts and activism, security/inescurities and city-building from Deptford to Jakarta via Cairo where Maliq Simone is working on new urban initiatives are all in process. Alison Rooke is developing important interventions that question ways of using the streets through art practice with local South East London groups. I personally feel the intense rumble of city-building from the vantage-point of the Dalston Junction regeneration building site with its gleaming new East London Line, a clear view of the Olympic site in the making and with the physical and social composition of the neighbourhood visibly transforming on a daily basis.

For more information about the Centre, please refer to our website: www.gold.ac.uk/cucr/
Experiments with Form: Street Training as Public Sociology
Alison Rooke

We can learn a lot by seeing the world through the eyes of children. They have a habit of making us rethink some of the things we take for granted. Last year I had the chance to attend the Association of American Geographers conference in Las Vegas with my partner, who was also attending the conference, our five year old daughter and colleagues from CUCR. Having a five year old with me put a rather different slant on my experience of this city. Las Vegas is most certainly a playground for adults with its sex trade, gambling and drinking culture. Although it may look like a child’s playground with its mock Arthurian castles, roller coasters twirling through the cityscape and circus themed casinos, its public spaces are managed in ways that only allow certain kinds of play. You are free to walk down the strip with a two-foot long Margarita, and have a street tout thrust a leaflet in your hand promising ‘a girl in your room in 20 minutes’. Five-year-old Milly seemed oblivious to this adult world of pleasure, but the architecture of the city appealed to her. However, when she climbed on the plastic pyramid walls of the Luxor Hotel and Casino Complex we were immediately approached by a rather scary looking security guard, walky-talky in hand telling us, in no uncertain terms, to get her down. Our brief explorations of the city involved constant negotiation between Milly’s urge to play and run free, and the very limited ways that children were invited into the city.

This experience was just one rather extreme example of the logics of urban public space. As an urbanist and a parent I am acutely aware of what is perceived by other adults as the proper ways to behave in urban public spaces. This is often challenging when out and about with a confident and energetic child. I get tired of hearing myself saying ‘Milly please get off that wall’, ‘Please don’t climb on that fence’, ‘Can you stop swinging on that gate?’. Usually these requests are a result of own fear of attracting disapproving looks and comments from other adults (particularly other parents who might see me as being negligent or failing to keep the side up) rather than a concern for Milly’s safety (she is pretty sure footed). As an urbanist trained in thinking critically about the use and regulation of public space, Milly constantly, if inadvertently, reminds me how much I have been seeing the city through a very adult lens.

I had the chance to reflect on my attitude when I recently attended a conference on street training at the South London Gallery with a colleague Aida Sánchez de Serdio from the University of Barcelona. This was an event about the work of the artist Lottie Child who has been undertaking a project with South London Gallery and the residents of the nearby Sceaux Gardens Estate. Lottie’s work is concerned with the ways that we can inhabit the public spaces of the city joyfully. Before working on Sceaux Gardens, Lottie walked for 24 hours around Camberwell asking everyone she met, ‘how do I need to behave to be safe?’ and ‘how do I need to behave to be joyful on the streets?’ She found that people had lots to say in response to the first question but no one had a clue about the second. This led her to realise that the experts on behaving joyfully in the public spaces of the city were children and young people. These are the people who use the street for more than just shopping and going to work. Lottie decided to become their apprentice. Her work involved creating situations where children and young people would show her, or they would together work on ‘techniques’ for joyful behaviour in the streets. She then went on to form a group of expert ‘Street Trainers’ from the estate. Since then Lottie and the children have been training and experimenting, such as police officers, planners and other adults who often regulate the use of city space, to engage more joyfully with their surroundings. The group then went on to train Southwark Police and between the groups they experientially explored differences between social and antisocial behaviour.

I want to say three things about this project as it is instructive on several levels. The first is that I was impressed at the spirit of participation this project engendered. It was refreshing to be attending a conference where young people were taking part in the event and the overall project on their own terms. I have been to events in the past when participants in art or community events are seemingly wheeled out as almost ethnographic exhibits, authentic social subjects who are evidence of an organisations’ success in social engagement. This was not the case with this event. It was clear by the ways that the young people inhabited the gallery space, facilitated and led the discussion groups, had their art on the gallery walls, drew on the walls and at one point had a water fight in the gallery that they felt belonged to them. After some group discussion, the young people took us out on to the estate to teach us some ways to be playful and joyful, such as climbing on roofs, squeezing through railings, jumping over fences, jumping over bollard and balancing. They also hosted a tea party in their den under a tree. As my colleague Aida reflected afterwards, this was quite an unusual way of presenting a project. During the walk we were invited to explore the city physically, bodily and performatively. We were encouraged to behave as adults are not supposed to be behaving, realising how awkward we felt was an important part of the pedagogy of the conference. Conversations with the police revealed that they had enjoyed the training but I was also interested in hearing how, through taking part, they had got to know some of the young people who lived on the estate and how they were much less likely to think of them as causing trouble as they realised that they were just legitimately using their own local space. Clearly the work had had an impact prompting some of the adults who are responsible for shaping and regulating public space to think about the difference between creative and antisocial behaviour. On returning to the gallery after our foray into the estate I was pleased to see some of the young people were spontaneously climbing up the front of the Gallery with no walky-talky security guard to be seen. When we returned into the gallery we had a long discussion on the value of the project and, in particular, on what makes the project art rather than just youth work or play. The young people were impressive in their insights into what made this an art project. As one young boy aged around 10 pointed out, this was an art project because, in his eyes, ‘Art is about doing things differently or for a different purpose’. He explained that walking or moving in that way in their neighbourhood in this exploratory way, and teaching adults to do so was a different way of doing the things they usually do, and therefore it could be considered art. Witnessing this dialogue it was striking how confident children were in stating their points of view in front of, and in dialogue with adults. It was refreshing to hear them speak more than the adults. This project realised a spirit of participation which is often merely evoked but not actually realised.

The second thing that is interesting about the project is that it says something about the life span of some of the research we do at CU CR and the kind of impact that it makes. The South London Gallery’s funding proposal that made Lottie’s work possible made a case for the project using research about the Sceaux Gardens estate that was carried out by Ben Gidley, Kalbir Shukra, Karen Wells and myself. The Camberwell Neighbourhood Renewal Advocacy Project (2006) was commissioned by Southwark Alliance (the Local Strategic Partnership). The research focused on two estates in Camberwell where local communities experience multiple forms of deprivation and where indices of social problems are high and more acute than other parts of the borough and, more generally, the country. Social policy interventions and programmes are developed in response to clearly defined needs and hinging on intelligence provided from local partners. The diverse and complex nature of the population in this area did not readily lend itself to conventional data collection. It was difficult to draw conclusions from existing sources since census data is not refined to household level, ignores the transitory nature of the population, and overlooks the hidden factors influencing take-up (and non-take up) of essential services: language difficulties, fear, uncertainty regarding entitlements, and other obstacles associated with immigration status, poverty and social exclusion. Camberwell Neighbourhood Renewal (CNR) developed a project to work intensively with residents on two estates in Camberwell, conduct outreach to establish relationships with some of the ‘hard to reach’ residents of the estate, and conduct research to understand the issues they faced, and advocacy to work with residents and agencies to identify solutions to their problems. CNR commissioned Elephant Angels, a local advocacy project, and ATD Fourth World to reach residents, while CU CR provided research training and support and analysed the findings. The research
report highlighted residents concerns about the estate, their fears of crime and the things that they felt would improve the estates’ communal areas, open spaces as well as their own homes. It also made recommendations about improvements to local services and highlighted the need for an increase in community activity in order to ensure that residents were involved in improving estate security and community development. Shortly afterwards Ben Gidley and I carried out another piece of research, again commissioned by CNR, working with ATD 4th World, who conducted life history interviews into the experiential dimension of living in poverty and the wider structures that bear down on people. We wanted to move beyond simple accounts of private misery; to speak to the failures of governmental policy interventions, and of the cultural and structural forces which trap people in poverty. These interviews showed what it is like to be on the end of government policies, what it takes to navigate the structures and services around which marginalised people have to live their lives. It was an attempt to put sociological imagination to work to translate between the private stories shared with us by the participants and the public issues of deprivation that impact on these stories. The sociologist C Wright Mills (1) defined sociology as translating between peoples’ ‘private troubles’ and society’s ‘public issues’. The idea of Mills gave was unemployment: one person’s loss of a job is a private trouble, but when many people are out of a job, these stories add up to a major public issue. Mills was writing in the 1950s, when sociology had been dominated by either ‘empirical abstraction’ – a focus on facts and figures and quantitative methods – or ‘grand theories’. Mills suggested that, instead, sociologists need to listen carefully to people’s stories in order to understand the detail of lives behind the facts and theories. This approach was important to us, as the literature review had shown that most research on poverty has taken the approach of ’empirical abstraction’ – it is more informed by statistics than by the experiences of those in poverty.

I often have a troublesome feeling after a period of research, which has been very policy focussed and local. This springs from a worry that a report may just end up being left in an anonymous filing cabinet somewhere, that recommendations may be ignored and ultimately nothing will change. Often these fears are unfounded. However, the intervention in itself is a clear need to develop a sociology that engages with the public issues, whether that be policy makers, practitioners or the general public, there is a need to reconsider how we can present our work in ways that can actually be received and understood and engaged with. The Goldsmiths Methods Lab and the Live Sociology programme have been critically engaging with this for some time.

So, going back to Sceaux Gardens, we might ask what is the difference between an ethnographic study of the uses of public space on the estate and Lottie Child’s art work? Of course her collaboration with South London Gallery and the residents of Sceaux Gardens estate could have been written up into a book chapter or journal article (3); however, the intervention in itself is a clear example of an alternative way to make sociological issues apparent and infuse them with vitality. Her work is, after all, concerned with the design and regulation of urban space, the ways that accepted ways of being in public are folded into the self, the rise of what Giddens (4) and Beck (5) describe as ‘risk society’, where the production and management of risk and a preoccupation with safety shapes public and private life, and ultimately Lefebvre’s question of young people’s right to the city; their right to be in the city and their right to shape and change the city. The projects’ playfulness, like clear incisive writing, can be mistaken for simplicity. However, the kind of socially-engaged art practice certainly embodies a sociological imagination: it is concerned with creatively examining the social formations of the city, it probes social relations, addresses public concerns and prompts us to reconsider some of the taken for granted aspects of city living. Furthermore this is a form of art which both reflects and produces social relations as it overlays and temporarily arranges social relations within a micro-political context rather than, strictly speaking, a circumscribed sociological or art-related forum.

Socially engaged arts practice, such as the project described here, is often discussed dissected and critically evaluated through arts discourse, in terms of their relational aesthetics (6), dialogical aesthetics (7) or quality. Often such temporary space- and time-limited projects leave little trace, or are documented fleetingly on websites, being concerned with process and situational contingencies rather than producing art works which can be sold or possessed by a gallery. However, these kinds of projects are worth interrogating for their sociological significance. They have resonances with sociological, and particularly ethnographic practice. They fail or succeed on the artist’s ability to build social relationships, to listen, respond appropriately and to imagine and represent the social competently. In addition, they must also dialectically arrange situations that can fully realise the creative potential of a constituency or situation. At a time when the potential of creativity and cultural processes has become a popular tool in the hands of those who seek to revitalise our cities, and in particular those areas labelled as dangerous or deprived it is worth entering into dialogue with those who are putting sociological ideas to work in such interesting ways.

Acknowledgements:
I would like to thank Aída Sánchez de Serdio and Ben Gidley for their helpful comments on this article.

Notes
South of the Border, East of Dubai

Yazan Khalili

This series of images is part of a photographic project I worked on while living and working in Sharjah City, a neighbouring city to the East of Dubai, in 2009. Although not as well-known as Dubai, it is essential to its prosperity. To a certain extent, it functions as a hotel for many people who work in Dubai but live in Sharjah, mainly the low income migrants.
Marrakech, City of Sonic Contrasts
Karla Berrens

Marrakech is a city of contrasts. One contrast is a result of its geographical division into two main areas: The area of the Medina, the old town, hidden inside the walls that once protected the city from invaders with all the major monuments of that period. Outside the Medina heading West is Gueliz, the more established of the new neighbourhoods. Gueliz has some similarities with parts of Madrid in the summer: outrageous heat and big avenues with little or no shade.

Marrakech is a city that surprises. I had heard many tales about the city, the heat and the inhabitants. Discourses on authenticity and descriptions of how lost we are in our big European cities gave me an embellished idea of a bucolic city, where the past remains trapped in the walls of the Medina.

Gueliz was particularly striking because of the absence of people in the streets. It reminded me of the newly refurbished areas of Barcelona at the north-eastern side of the Diagonal Avenue. It looked like an abandoned phantom set of high buildings, overheated by the sun. In contrast, the Medina seemed to always be busy, engaged in a never ending day. Of course there are lots of tourists, as the Medina is where most of the ‘must see’ monuments are, such as the Medersa Ben Youssef, the Saadian tombs, the Koubba el Badyin, the Shrine of Sidi Ben Salah and the tanneyes district. It is also filled with locals running around, buying and trading anything imaginable, from handmade metal carved lamps to an old shoe without its twin. The areas surrounding Djema-el-Fna square are where the impact of tourism is most obvious. Bartenders quickly dispatch ‘cappuccinos’ and ‘hariras’ at the same time, switching between French, Arabic and even Catalan. Once you get outside of the main tourist area, the Medina shows another face.

The streets in the Medina were paved a long time ago and have not really been repaired since. Outside of the area immediately surrounding Djema el-Fna, the streets are not wide enough to allow for cars to pass. That’s why the method used to transport many goods is a cart pulled by a mule or a man. Local people will often walk in the Medina rather than being pulled in a cart. The last eight years, however, have seen a new method of transport quickly spreading around the Medina that has completely transformed its acoustic landscape: the motorbike. When you are in the streets of the Medina you don’t have to worry about cars, but beware, motorcyclists are extremely fast and their notion of danger is very different from yours. First and foremost they are quick, and you are not. And they have a horn, which you don’t have. Beeping the horn is not done to avoid accidents, beeping the horn is the motorcyclist’s language for ‘I am here, let me through’. People literally press themselves to the sides of the street to allow motorcyclists to pass. What happens when you get a ‘traffic jam’? Carts come from either side, trying hard to manoeuvre and pass each other without any of the goods, people or stalls on both sides of the street getting damaged. It is a manoeuvre that requires if not skill then at least getting used to. What happens if you add several motorcylistes into the equation, impatient and desperately beeping trying to pass? Who goes first? Believe it or not, the motorcyclists, even at the expense of a few scared tourists losing their balance as they try and get out of the way.

Motorcycles as a means of transport for small goods or people (I have seen families of up to four on a motorcycle) keep on marking the dynamics of the Medina. Not only the way in which people move around the Medina but also how they understand that space. The motorcyclists have established themselves as the unconditional masters of the streets. The streets are theirs, and I, without my motorbike, am only a nuisance in their path, somebody who will inevitably end up retreating to one side in order for them to race past. The presence of motorbikes around the Medina has changed spatial dynamics and rhythms. People on foot no longer own the streets, they need to be constantly vigilant, looking out from the corner of their eyes, checking whether a motorbike is about to barge into them. Their patterns of movement are mostly reduced to the sides of the street, creating a ‘motorbike way’ in the middle. Pedestrians have to squeeze between carts and stalls, creating an undulating flow of people along the margins.

Around Ramadan the Medina is a sonically rich experience. Five times a day spreading from the different mosques, one hears the Adhan call for prayer, followed by the Iqama call. Not all mosques start at exactly the same time, so the calls for prayer create a canon effect.

From the Shrine of Sidi Ben Salah going North East you find the Essaouyine street, part of which is covered by a roof made out of wooden canes and corrugated iron. Underneath is a permanent mini market with stalls selling dried fruit, vegetables and traditional sweets. This street often gets packed with local people going about their shopping in the late afternoon. The closer it gets to four o’clock, the more in a hurry they are to get all of the ingredients for the women to cook Iftar. This is the meal after the Maghrib (sunset) which marks the end of a day of fasting. If to this already very packed street you add motorbikes moving around at a crazy speed, highly stressed trying to get somewhere on time, the sound emanating from all this commotion reverberating from the ceilings creates a very intense sonic experience. The street becomes a rich audio hury-burry. At the north of this street is the Moqf square, where several young people offer to take tourists to the tanneries, east wards, situated just outside the boundaries of the Medina. Instead of going to the tanneries, I turn west, heading towards the Marrakech museum. I go to an area with a lot of small mosques scattered around, all of them with their own Adhan and Iqama calls. Ben Youssef is one of the little gems of the Medina, not far from the Medersa.

I continue walking through the old town and meet with Patrick Manach (1) A year ago, after several visits to Marrakech, he had noticed that what was missing from this city was a space where the historical photographs of the old Morocco from 1862 to 1950 could be collected and preserved. He converted an old house into a small museum. I tell Patrick about my interest in soundscapes and how intrigued I am with the Medina’s sonic landscape, particularly around seven o’clock in the evening, the moment just before, during and after the Adhan call for prayer that ends the daily fast. From the roof terrace of the museum I hear the sounds of people running around, getting water, sodas and juices. I hear parents calling their kids to run to the nearest praying space and I smell the cooked Hariras waiting to be served after the prayer. Then I hear the Adhan call coming from the main mosques, joined by the other mosque’s Adhan calls cacophony for a minute or two, calls intertwined, not coordinated; people hurrying, running in the streets: bicycles storming through. A few minutes later the Iqama call: emanating uncoordinated from the different mosques; cacophony again, somehow on an already more established rhythm to the previous one.

Stop.
Total silence.
Stillness.
The streets are empty.

For the first moment in the day there is not a single motorbike grumbling in the streets.
Silence.
It is an uncomfortable silence.
Elongated.
Eternal.

And then the sounds of bottles opening, the clanking of spoons on bowls, the slurping of harira, door shoulders cracking, date stones falling on plates, milk and water poured into glasses, unwrapping of the kitchen foil covering cardines, their skins being torn off and general clutter at the end of a day of fasting.

After a few moments, the sounds of jovial conversations, laughter, people sharing food and with it, the stories of the day. The vigilant look has disappeared from all faces, and it’s back to a warm feeling of being amongst the family, in a big unorganised meal in which any addition is welcome and all food is shared.

The motorbikes slowly retake the streets. The eating and drinking turns the night into another day and it looks as if the Medina never sleeps. I continue to listen and will be lulled by those sounds and smells that have become so familiar until the sunrise call for prayer that marks the start of a new day, another day of fasting.

Notes
(1) Patrick Manach is a French art and cultural expert who together with Hamid Mergani set up the Patrick Manach’s Maison de la Photographie Marrakech in 2009. It houses around 3500 old photographs dating from around 1862 to 1950.
Artisans of Attentiveness

The ordinary virtues of Primo Levi, Studs Terkel and Flemming Røgilds

Les Back

Faussone, the hero of Primo Levi’s novel The Wrench (1), is a difficult man. An itinerant rigger he spent his life travelling the cities of the world operating high-rise cranes. Despite the dramatic nature of his adventures Faussone is not a natural storyteller. The novel’s narrator comments on how tempting it is to interrupt him, put words in his mouth and spoil his stories before they have even been told. He comes to realise: “just as there is an art of storytelling, strictly codified through a thousand trials and errors, so there is also an art of listening, equally ancient and noble, but as far as I know, it has never been given any norm” (2). The quiet patience required to invite the story’s telling makes an important contribution to its content. For as Levi writes “a distracted or hostile audience can unnerve any teacher or lecturer; a friendly public sustains.” The listener’s art for Primo Levi is practiced through abstaining from speech and allowing the speaker to be heard. Listening is active, a form of attention to be trained rather than presumed.

Walter Benjamin (3) lamented in his famous essay on the storyteller the loss of attention to stories and tales which could be ‘woven into the fabric of real life’ as wisdom. The profusion of talk and information inhibit social transactions of understanding. Producing a situation in which our ears become sound proofed, as if covered by panes of glass like the double glazed homes we live in that keep out the noise of the city.

I want to focus on Primo Levi’s craft of listening alongside the work of Studs Terkel and Flemming Røgilds by way of developing an argument about how to hold to the world and pay attention to it. Arguably the most astute witness to the Nazi holocaust, Levi’s commitment to listening resonates with his experience of being a witness and survivor; but it is also an essential part of his skill as a writer. Robert Gordon (4) in his brilliant study of the moral dimensions of Primo Levi’s work suggests that the primal scene of his ethics of listening is the chapter in If This is a Man (5) called the ‘Canto of Ulysses.’ This book is a chronicle of the year he spent as a prisoner in Auschwitz where his trade as chemist was pressed into the service of the regime in the Chemical Kommando. The chapter recounts a moment of reprieve inside the fierce rhythm of the camp.

Jean, the Pikolo of the barrack charged with implementing and coordinating its routines, suggests Primo be his assistant in carrying the daily rations to the barracks. The sunshine and fresh air fills the men with memories of a life before their internment. The walk was just a half a mile but on their return they had to carry a huge pot of soup supported by two poles weighing over a hundred pounds. During the hour journey the two men spoke of their homes in Strasbourg and Turin, the books they read and their families. Dante’s Divine Comedy comes to Levi’s mind and he starts to recount the lines from the Canto of Ulysses. The task of transporting things, neither is it a matter of Pikolo yearning to grasp Dante’s meaning. The two men in that moment furnish the world anew if only for the hour it takes to deliver the soup. The process summoning the lines from Primo’s memory involves both men. Their shared labour enacts a line of communication and communion in midst of the barbarism and inhumanity of the camp. Speaking and listening here is collective, social and ethical.

Studied hearing is a humane disposition practised by Levi inside the camps as a survival strategy but also as a means to remain connected to the past and indeed to the future.

The value of listening is to keep a bridge open in the present between the past and the future. This value is no less important in our time. The listener – as the society’s ear – establishes an ethical link to those who are not heard or who are ignored. Perhaps the exemplar of this in the twentieth century is Studs Terkel who died in 2008. Producing over eighteen books of oral history and radio interviews Terkel became the confident of film stars, great musicians, writers as well as America’s ordinary men and women. Though born in New York he became inextricably linked with the city of Chicago and its people. He took the nickname ‘Studs’ from his admiration of James T Farrell’s Studs Lonigan. He
was an actor, writer and cultural impresario but Terkel’s true gift was as an artful listener and his radio show on Chicago’s WFMF public radio station gave him both a platform to exercise his crafted forms of empathy and an audience eager to hear the fruit of his conversations. For an hour each weekday Terkel interviewed one person or a group of people about their lives live on radio and the show ran for forty-five years. Sociologist Howard Becker, himself close connected to the city of Chicago, told me recently that when Studs Terkel really approved of a comment from one of his guests he would pause for a few seconds and then simply say “yeah...” as if he was appreciating Mahalia Jackson’s voice or a musical phrase by Dizzy Gillespie.

Although an engaging broadcaster Studs Terkel’s gift was his ability to share time. He was an amateur sociologist in the best sense, an enthusiast, rapt in his attention to the voices of people but often ham-fisted in his attempts to record them.

He told Tony Parker: “I don’t know how a tape recorder works. Not even the simplest one that’s ever been invented... I don’t know how to open it, I don’t know how to put in the cassette, which way up it goes, how to close the lid when it’s in, which button to press to get it to start recording, which is the button to press to make it stop. None of it, I don’t know any of it... what am I describing? I’m describing one of my biggest assets. Its name is ineptitude. Why’s it an asset? Well, would you be frightened of a little old guy who wants to tape-record a conversation with you – and he can’t even work his tape recorder?... I am not a Messiah with a microphone, I’m just another human being” (7).

Studs ineptitude was a part of his skill. This charismatic clumsiness enabled him to connect with people and gain their confidence.

The hours of tape recorded interviews that were transcribed verbatim formed the basis of his books that documented a forgotten America like Division Street (1967) and Hard Times (1970), or provided a compendium of unappreciated contribution to the society like Working (1974) or invited Americans to speak about taboos and open not yet public secrets like his book simply entitled Race (1992). Towards the end of his life Terkel was still incredibly prolific and he published four books after turning ninety. This coincided with the demise of his greatest asset – his hearing. After Terkel’s death in 2008 friend and associate Garry Wills reflected: “Bad as this would be for any of us, it was a special blow to Terkel, whose speciality was hearing what others tell about themselves. I have been in cabs with him and wondered at his ability to elicit the driver’s whole life story before we reached our destination” (8). He kept the conversation going with his former interlocutors even when he could no longer hear human voices, an ethos captured aptly in the title of his last book P.S.: Further Thoughts from a Lifetime of Listening (2008).

The work of poet, cultural sociologist and literary traveller Flemming Røgilds contains many of the same characteristics. Like Studs Terkel the thing that pervades all of Røgilds’ work – from South Africa to Berlin to London – is his painstaking attention. I have been interviewed many times by Flemming and even appeared in his books like Charlie Nielsens Rejse: Vandringer i multikulturelle landskaber (2000). The book is narrated by his alter ego Charlie Nielson in the manner of Montesquieus Persian Letters and acts as a guide to the multicultural life of European cities. The first time I encountered him he was carrying his tape recorder in one hand and a large box of matches in the other. As he fumbled to load the cassette into the tape recorder the device seemed to wriggle in his hands as if it had a life of its own. That was over twenty years ago. In those days he was an inveterate pipe smoker. As the spool of his tape recorder went round and round he dug out and filled his pipe by turns. In the interview situation Røgilds has a look of an inviting innocent curiosity like that of a child. Philip Roth(9)
commented that Primo Levi had a similar quality and I think the same might also be said about Studs Terkel.

Røgild's method is to record taped interviews, or dialogues as he calls them, and then he painstakingly transcribes each tape himself, a task taking many months. Each tape is subject to repeated re-listening in order to find the resonance in each of these slices of time. Through such a method he has written books that range from postcolonial London like Nytre, Raciisme og Nye Rædder: En bro mellem sort og hvidv? (1988) to post apartheid South Africa i Elefantuglens Land: Sydafrikanske Stemmer (1991) and the cultural bridges being built between immigrants and young Danes Stemmer f?r et Grænseland: En bro mellem unge indvandrere og danskere? (1995/98). What these books demonstrate is that listening is not something that we can rely upon as an automatic faculty. Hearing needs to be worked for and worked at, an achievement and not a given. There is something in Røgild's method that I think is the very best of what might be called 'tape recorder' craft. The result is a kind of sociological poetry achieved through curating talk, like a collector choosing to assemble meaningfully a compendium of human wisdom and insight.

"You do not interest me, no man can say these words to another without committing a cruelty and offending against justice" writes philosopher Simone Weil (10). This is like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner whose story is cursed because no one will listen to it. Indeed Primo Levi was preoccupied with this fable because of his fear that on returning from Auschwitz people like him would be either ignored or simply disbelieved. Our political debates do not suffer from doubt but from certainty. The temptation is to think of the task of thinking is to live with doubt in the service of understanding, rather than living with certainty in the preservation of ignorance. Name-calling is not thinking. The temptation to dismiss the view of one's opponents as 'drivel' or 'rubbish' is strong but misguided for two reasons. Dismissing racist views as drivel does nothing to evaluate and understand their resonance or reach. It seems to me that the patient attentiveness of these artful listeners is rare today. How much will be needed to refrain from interjection or ventriloquism. The main lesson offered by Primo Levi and also contained in the work of Studs Terkel and Flemming Røgilds is that listening is not merely about communication. What is animated in 'The Canto of Ulysses' is an alternative way to live, achieved through two men hearing each other. This active listening creates another set of social relations and ultimately a new kind of society, if only for an hour. Similarly the books of Studs Terkel and Flemming Røgilds contain not just the voices of the ordinary virtues embodied in the work of Primo Levi; Studs Terkel and Flemming Røgilds is need now more than ever before.

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Notes
(2) Ibid.
(6) Ibid 119-120
The Dogs: London Pride
Francesca Weber-Newth

Crossing the hushed car park and slipping through the turnstiles, this feels illicit. Once inside, the welcome noise of a boozey crowd swallows any anxiety I have about being in the wrong place, at the wrong time. In fact, it seems Saturday night at The Dogs has seized not just my imagination but countless others. Wimbledon greyhound stadium is busy. Groups of punters gather around veneer tables, brows furrowed, one hand scribbling illegible notes, plastic pints in the other. People gather into small packs and flow outwards towards the trackside in waves. I follow.

It will be Tony’s 82nd Birthday next week. I ask whether he’ll be working. No, he says with a grin. He’ll be going out for dinner with his wife. He has worked at the track since he was 13. I get the feeling this is a rare night off, his smile tells me this is London pride.

I look past Tony, whose long navy coat stands with authority, flat-cap signalling his role as slick ambassador, fingertips housing wads of consumer cash, dispensing intermittently to a lucky face. I look towards the neon signs, through the chequered white fencing as flashes of colour speed past. In a blink the race is over and the crowd seek warmth inside, behind the glass.

Inside I am standing at the top of the grandstand, looking over the oval sand racetrack. Beneath me are rows of heads, many grey and balding, others bobbing about with youthful energy. I look at my Racing Guide and try to decipher the numbered columns. I can’t read this language. Instead I am drawn to the race card ‘tips’. ‘Steadily progressive, get job done’. It’s time to place a bet, but choosing between Rockfield Honcho and Insane Booty will be tough.

I am hooked.

Wanno
Lanis Levy

Sitting on the edge of Wandsworth Common, behind imposing Victorian wooden gates (often described as looking like the entrance to a ‘castle’), is HMP Wandsworth, at one time the largest prison in Europe. Housing over 1600 adult male prisoners, Wandsworth remains the largest prison in the United Kingdom and holds both those awaiting trial and those who have been convicted of a criminal (or very occasionally civil) offence. It also contains a large number of foreign national prisoners who are either awaiting extradition to other countries to face criminal charges or being held purely under Immigration Act powers.

Just beyond the razor wire and perimeter wall is the original prison doctor’s residence, a Grade II listed building, which was converted many years ago into the Prison’s Visitors’ Centre, now run by the Prison Advice and Care Trust (pact). On any given day well over one hundred people pass through the Visitors’ Centre before making their way into the Prison itself to visit their friend(s), family or loved one(s). The Visitors’ Centre maintains a unique position within the Prison, both metaphorically and literally, being an essential part of the daily prison regime whilst at the same time firmly declaring itself to be independent of the Prison Service. This independence has allowed the Visitors’ Centre to become something of ‘a place of safety’, somewhere that the men, women and children about to go into the prison can ‘relax’ and prepare themselves for what is about to come. Close relationships can develop quickly in this atmosphere, and in fleeting moments, one can almost forget where you are.
Defining Urban Boundaries
David Killeen

My impression of cities is a large urban mass surrounded by numerous suburbs. Beyond the suburbs the city seems to dissolve into the rural landscape until there is no trace of the urban at all.

When entering into the city by car it gradually evolves around you. When viewing the area from a great height it is hard to distinguish where the boundaries between the urban and the rural exist. As a pilot flying over cities you see the boundary in a new perspective. The erratic patterns of the suburbs on the periphery of the urban form seem to be sprawling into the rural landscape.

I did my flight training in South Florida, where I became familiar with the landscape from the air. But what stood out to me in comparison to other cities is this continuous line that forms the boundary of the urban space, in contrast to the erratic outline between the urban and the rural of other major cities.

The landscape of Southern Florida, in its appearance, can be simplified into a series of three columns, where from East to West you have the sea (Atlantic Ocean), the city, (Fort Lauderdale, Broward County) and the swamp (Everglades). De Certeau talks of travelling in an elevator in the World Trade Centre was like “being lifted out of the city’s grasp”. He continues, “that you are not tethered to the streets and traffic which we are every other time when in the confines of the city”.

Comparing this to photography, the city from the air puts me in the position of the voyeur, as De Certeau describes. To be able to fly over the urban area of Southern Florida has the sensation as if being an aerial flâneur. The idea of the flâneur is someone who (as the French verb interprets) strolls within a certain area. You gain a new perspective when viewing the urban from the air beyond what somebody might view as the urban on the ground. To quote De Certeau “to view and embrace the city within a totalising gaze”.

Speed narrows our awareness of an area when passing through it. Somebody walking through a neighbourhood might get a better perspective of the space than somebody driving through it. The drivers’ awareness of the neighbourhood would be limited to concentrating on what is in front of them. Although when flying you are going at a faster rate of speed in comparison to both driving or walking, the great distance from the ground gives you the illusion of travelling at a slow speed.

The appeal of seeing the urban landscape from above is both intriguing and abstract. Emile E. Kelly describes the view of aerial photography as both abstract and documentary. The feeling of being a voyeur perhaps comes with seeing the city from an alien prespective, as opposed to the familiar view of the city as a pedestrian. Aerial photographer Struan Gray describes it as “aesthetics and intellectual pleasure to be had from a high view point”.

The distinct pattern of Florida

Since the mid 19th century there has been a constant effort to turn the landscape into farmland and later into housing developments. There seems to be a constant desire to try and tame the landscape. The Everglades are considered as a vast, slow moving river. Many attempts to drain the land failed due to either poor planning or hurricanes that hit the region destroying the building progress. In the late forties there was another attempt through a federal government directive. This time it was successful and the drainage scheme began on a massive scale in comparison to previous projects. As a result the network of canals that were built drained a huge amount of land as far as ten miles in from the shoreline, all along the South Eastern Coast of Florida. What separates the Everglades is a single canal running parallel to the shoreline forming a barrier between it and the land drained for commercial uses. Over the past sixty years, urban development has filled in the areas that were drained originally. The defined physical appearance of the city lies in the canal acting as the boundary between the urban and the rural.

Although Florida does have a very distinctive edge or demarcation line between the rural and the urban, the aerial view is where you get the most striking comparison. Plotting a course for a flight you choose a series of checkpoints such as waterways, roads or distinctive visual landmarks. Navigating by visual landmarks is known as piloting and comes under the standard method of flight navigation known as visual flight rules or VFR. You are taught in the early stages of flying, to know the reference points on the ground in the area you’re learning to fly in.

The distinct outline of the boundary between the urban and the rural of Broward County serves as a clear reference point when travelling in or out of the urban. Flight charts or aviation maps will highlight certain landmarks that would only be distinctive to the naked eye from a great height.

While road maps will indicate types of roads, street names and quarters, aviation charts will focus on the pattern of the landscape and where the different airspaces are situated. A landmark merely serves as a specific point of reference for a pilot, indicating their position in relation to other aircrafts flying in the area. It is common practice to specify your height, direction and the type of aircraft you are flying when giving your position on the local radio frequency. Due to the area being an uncontrolled airspace, it is up to the pilots to declare their positions regularly in order to prevent an occurrence of a midair collision.

The areas that are recorded in both sets of map are represented differently in the mindsets of people who live there, commute through or fly over it. Take for example the Area of Coral Springs that is one of the
areas situated at the boundary between the urban and rural of Broward county. A major highway passes through the area known as the Sawgrass Expressway. Seen from above, the road runs parallel to the shoreline and curves round to the East making it an obvious visual landmark for pilots who often refer to it as ‘the bend in the Sawgrass’.

Photographing the Boundary

When plotting my course for this photographic series I wanted to fly across Broward County. Using specific landmarks along the periphery my flight path focused on the dividing line between the urban and the rural to illustrate the vast differences between both. I chose to photograph in portrait format to capture the distinct divide and give a sense of depth, with the horizon as a further boundary. The flights would last for about two hours covering around ninety to a hundred miles. I would either repeat the same journey several times or fly in the opposite direction, depending on the time of the day and taking into account the direction of the sun. Following the landmarks along the periphery makes for quite a defined flight path.

In previous work I have photographed other boundaries or thresholds between one space and another. One photographic series for example I took on a journey following the rough outline of Ireland. The camera was in a fixed position within the car. Recording images through the cropped view of the windscreen, the road dictated where and what the camera could photograph. In this way it is similar to the current piece of photographing the outline of Broward County. Here, the plotting of the course followed the cities’ boundary, dictating the direction of each flight I took whilst in Florida.

Following the Line of Civilization and Wilderness

There is one continuous line that separates two different environments. On one side there is wild, dense vegetation half submerged in water. On the other side is an area that has been planned, prepared, developed, groomed and inhabited. Aerial photography stems from a desire to take flight as a record of a new perspective on viewing the landscape. This landscape has a very particular appearance with its two strikingly diverse environments side by side. It is only until you fly over this border between the urban and the rural that you get a true impression of the boundary. This physical boundary between two environments Ian Borden describes as a “controlled frontier” (5).

The harsh environment of the Everglades dictates how developers build on this site as its hostile character imposes a number of obstacles. From above one can clearly see the separate stages of various housing developments and their protracted construction process. There is no doubt that damage has been done to the Everglades but as an urban space its growth pattern is coherent in contrast to most suburbs that expand as chaotic sprawling. The aerial view gives us a better understanding of the Environment which lies below and lets us “embrace the city in a totalized gaze” (6). The downward gaze is a somewhat privileged view with a voyeuristic sensation of being able to look down at a space of the city as a whole. In the case of Broward County in Southern Florida, the aerial view helps us better understand the constructed space, with its clear divide between two separate environments, the urban and rural.

To see more images from the photographic series ‘Define Urban Boundaries’ and other projects, please visit www.davidkilleen.net

Notes
6 (6) ibid, Deriu, D. (2004:16)
New Orleans is a city with its cards on the table. On every corner is another welcome, another blessing, another devoutly swung street sign lying beneath generous sunshine, a loose patchwork of peoples. To be placed between relentless creativity and recurrent disaster is the city’s bread and butter; and without the assistance of this ‘good cop, bad cop’ routine, New Orleans would be just another freckle on the weathered jawnline of the United States.

The place well exceeds its recommended daily allowance of music, and for this it’s a town to be swallowed whole; no call for plans, only the absolute necessity for knowing where you’re at. Such a silent rule for living in the present, whilst remaining dangerously in socio-economic limbo has long provided New Orleans with a raw musical integrity. Combine these forces with the living memories of its widely celebrated cultural history, and the offering the place serves up become razor sharp.

Air in the town is thick, from the tree-lined mansion sidewalks on St.Charles Avenue, to the shell-shocked sidewalks on St.Charles Avenue, to the shell-shocked sidewalks on St.Charles Avenue, to the shell-shocked sidewalks on St.Charles Avenue. The St.Charles streetcar swings onto Canal, the spine of Downtown, the downtown New Orleans’ Central Business District. The French Quarter and its bohemian allies that lay behind; Frenchmen Street in Faubourg Marigny, and further still, the 9th Ward. Each flank has a blend of the voices that give New Orleans its noise, but on the whole it’s the French Quarter and beyond where the musicians dwell.

The quarter offers a restricted view of America’s most vibrant city, it’s a trailer that leaves many knowing the story without seeing the film. Musicians pour in every morning to take their seats on street corners, blowing reeds and hitting keys, as tourists mill between them and the countless pretty outlets selling beignets and po-boy sandwiches. Musicians are integral to the scene. They are the scene, adopting every expectation of the hoards that come to see them and presenting themselves and their music accordingly. It’s a tough game, and for many it’s a necessity. They don’t park themselves at splendid Jackson Square for the photo opportunities or the smell of coffee and chicory, they do it as a means of survival. Many, like Mario, often spend an entire afternoon or evening dreaming away their way through renditions of ‘When the Saints Go Marching In’ and other celebrated standards.

“You’ve been doing this. I’m young, I’m in my thirties, but I can’t remember when I started coming down here. It’s where the money’s at, man.” Mario chuckles as he looks up from a corner on the porch of Decatur and Bienville. His eyes roam the block in front and pause on a group of tourists. Most are armed with a point and shoot, trigger happy and smiling. “Yeah, I get tired of playing this stuff now and then, it’s not perfect. It’s what brings me down here, and it’s the best music. Ain’t nothin’ else like it. I couldn’t just walk away from what I do. Getting venues ain’t easy all the time, and when the weather’s good... It’s all good. I don’t live far, and February is the month where I really turn it on. The place lights up and it’s full of faces, and I like that. I hear this stuff everyday. They don’t.”

Five ensembles are in earshot of Mario; cornets, trombones, tubas, all sorts; all squeezing out numbers that always get the feet moving, that always get the faces smiling. The quarter has a rhythm, regardless of whether it’s February, where the town bulges with the Mardi Gras masses, regardless of whether it’s November; when things aren’t as tight, and regardless of which musician is playing what out on the street. That rhythm is precisely what keeps the place authentic, at the same time as the tour guides use it as a tag line to hollow the place out. “It’s a mother to what you’re trying to sell your photo. You just take their photo, chuck you a dollar and leave. That’s fine by me. I don’t listen to what they’re saying either; but it kinda takes it away from you, man. It ain’t like playing a bar or a club, where people are paying and making tracks to get to see you. That’s real, but that’s not for everyone all of the time. We all do this. Well, a lot of the people I know you’ll spend a whole day out here before grabbing a bite and heading across to Frenchmen or wherever and setting yourself inside, to play inside. It’s good, on both sides, but different.”

Frenchmen Street received a makeover pretty sharp after Hurricane Katrina, even though the damage that hit was merely a whisper when compared to other parts of town. It received attention from locals who offered to clean out businesses and volunteer in getting the area back on track, back to what it was. The city relies on the French Quarter, it’s what draws the people in, all the new faces. Some faces are never coming back though, faces that were a mainstay of these streets and venues for a while. “Some people just up and left. A few are coming back, but many won’t. Some people just can’t afford it enough, or ain’t got enough money to drag themselves back. A lot of good people up and went, but that’s just how it goes, man. We’re still here, we’re still doing it, putting up with everything that goes with it.”

Bourbon Street lies a few blocks up from Decatur. It’s the most famous street in the whole of New Orleans. Plastic figurines of non-descript sax players leaning against a post under the Bourbon Street sign are sold in their thousands every year; and it’s the place that draws the biggest crowds. Sadly though, Bourbon has betrayed the rest of the town. Lying in shame underneath a canopy of neon lights and strip clubs, it’s now the ultimate platform for binge drinking, and the frightening exploits of many out-towners who have crudely hijacked the town’s nickname of ‘the big easy’ and placed it onto their own barometer of sexual promiscuity. To stay on Bourbon too long is to hang out with Jews, and there aren’t many of the town’s players who would be caught doing what they do on this strip. There is a den that can be forgiven on Bourbon though, and it provides a seat for the horn and harmony tourists who won’t walk further in the dark down toward Frenchmen. Inside is an old piano and a bunch of pews facing the stage, surrounded by photographs and tatty flags from countries all over Europe. Fritzel’s European Jazz Bar hosts music every day of the week, leaving the mechanical bells and radioactive cocktails out on the street and trading them for chipped ivory and some of foot stomping favourites, and it does a grand job of showing Bourbon Street what it’s missing, considering its proximity.

“We help each other out a lot. When I first got here it was slow, (I’m from Virginia originally), but once people start seeing a picture you’ve written. So in general, we just stick to what we know and love. I do a lot. I play bass, and trumpet too, but keys is what I love and what I do most. Jelly Roll Morton... all of what’s from down here really, I suppose.”

A glass of wine gets put on the table to Richard’s left and the rest of the band start to come onto the stage.

“Once you get here, this place is a breeze. You start playing and you find it hard to get out. I love it down here. Don’t think I’d ever leave. There’s too much to do, everything is changing all the time, and all under sunshine for a lot of the year. The music keeps on coming, out of so many people and places, and it just keeps everyone going. It was here before the storm, and it’ll be here through more of those sorts of stories. It’s great to know you can be here, any night, any day, and go out and be guaranteed music!”

Frenchmen Street, Brett

Brett lights his cigarette and hands the lighter back. He gently rests his right arm on the keyboard. Not a sound. “If people want to hit me a drink or a couple of bucks, then that’s fine with me, but really, I just play round here because I can. It’s a nice part of town and you get good
people around here. Not as many tourists as across the way. This is where New Orleansians come.

Frenchmen Street in Faubourg Marigny is the bohemian hangout of New Orleans. It has the wooden facades and quaint colour schemes of the French Quarter; but the gift shops are replaced with music venues and the bodies that drift the streets are those of the achingly hip locals. It hasn’t received as thorough a facelift like the quarter did in the wake of Katrina, which helps this part of town start to lose that movie set feel. The street is small, though it’s easy enough to waste an entire day there, goggling pralines and soaking it all up. It has the atmosphere that makes an out-of-towner lose their guard and feel shame in not being an out and out local.

Outside the bar, an old gentleman leans against the wall coughing hard. His face is as weathered as the road. “Storm messed this place up good, thats for sure. Always been kinda messed up, but not so’s you couldn’t live. Took a long time to see the light, still looking, some of those people. The music here! Well, everybody knows it. You know it, I know it. It’s here, everywhere. These guys are hot, hmm in there, any of them. They all say good, and they’re right. There’s no need for hummimg to yourself around here thinking you ain’t gonna hear anything. Yeah, they’re everywhere, alright. I come down here a lot, I’m without work at the moment. So I come here, hang out. If I had a job I’d be working, that’s for sure, but I ain’t. It gets a little crazy round here at Mardi Gras and all that, but if you keep yourself safe and don’t go wandering off then you’ll have a good time.”

Brett scratches his beard and lets smoke pour out of his nose and all over the piano. People are perched on bar stools, the bar is pretty empty, the place doesn’t really fill until the evenings. When it does though, it gets packed. This bar, and the others on Frenchmen are each gems in the gift shops are replaced with music venues and the bodies that drift the streets are those of the achingly hip locals. It hasn’t received as thorough a facelift like the quarter did in the wake of Katrina, which helps this part of town start to lose that movie set feel. The street is small, though it’s easy enough to waste an entire day there, goggling pralines and soaking it all up. It has the atmosphere that makes an out-of-towner lose their guard and feel shame in not being an out and out local.

“I suppose I don’t do much else here really, I only play a little. But you take it and leave it as much as you want. Anyone can. There are no rules, it’s not like that. Everyone in this town just gets on, and that’s everyone. You know, from people walking down the street and in bars and everywhere. You just do.”

St Claude and the 9th Ward

The magnificence of St.Charles and the hubbub of the French Quarter are far away. Their scent faded about a mile back up St.Claude. From there on in lies the potholed road to the 9th Ward, lined with fast food joints, broken glass and, now and again, the shattered skeletons that were once people’s homes. People walk past smiling, and people play games under the sun, uninterrupted by the lazy gaze of their friends and neighbours.

St.Claude is a chessboard, holding spaces of both desolate ruin and vibrant soul head to head. For some time since the storm it has returned to its day to day blend of grocery stores, cash-only car repairs and loose social gatherings accompanied by the low, dissonant chord of Rule 14L in the American railroad operating rules (1). People talk and laugh on the fences of their neighbourless homes, their coloured front doors and bright white porches pouting onto the sidewalk, embarrasing their peeled and destitute partners next door. There’s not a sense of remembering in the activities that are played outside of these houses, but by them still standing (out), decrepit, there is no room for forgetting.

The road offers more dubious concrete as St.Claude stretches down to the bridge, and making a turn on Alvar the noise level drops and the streets turn silent. Those pouting porches lose their confidence as Alvar progresses, and the winds of Katrina are frozen in time, locked into many of the broken windows and hanging doors that adorn south Alvar. The 9th Ward is a gentle place with the sun in the sky particularly the city side of the bridge, in the upper 9th. Activity is at a minimum and recovery is slow, though when the light dims the story can be told quite differently. Folk tales and news reports alike frame the 9th Ward as a geographal werewolf, one that at night harbours New Orleans’ notoriously cruel and violent side; the senses refute that, the imagination perhaps not.

On the corner of Alvar and North Roman lies a pocket of houses, all different colours, all full of character. They stand out from the rest, quiet rows of vibrant woods that stand together; all housing the same thing. A musician. Turning right onto North Prieur leads to an open plot, not housing musicians but a few diggers and building materials. The houses continue on the left, orderly and colourful.

The Musician’s Village, Upper 9th Ward, Louis

“I’ve been all over. Playing, France, I love France, Germany, Hong Kong, Copenhagen. Anywhere the music takes me. They love their Jazz in Hong Kong.” Louis and his wife are in their home in the musician’s village. The exterior panels of the house are a soft green, and the doorframe a similar yellow. Inside, Louis perches on a stool in the front room, midway through setting up a new home entertainment system. His wife pours a viscous substance into a soda bottle. It runs as lazily as the clocks do.

“I wouldn’t have said that things are changing here, y’know. I mean, I don’t think young players are necessarily pushing the music forward in anyway, and I haven’t heard of anything new in terms of styles, but there’s enough out there, always has been. But it’s tough, and no, I’m not sure whether the kids are doing enough these days. They’ve got a lot more to deal with now than we did back then. There’s the crime and all the things that they can easily get involved with. There’s those pressures, pressures that can easily force people into doing things they don’t want to do. We didn’t have them, I don’t remember.”

Crime in New Orleans is the small print in every tourist guide. The city is reported to have the highest rate of homicide per capita in the United States, and these statistics are increasingly littered with the presence of younger generations. Not for profit groups such as The Roots of Music organised by Derrick Tabb, the snare drummer of the Rebirth brass band, and the Tipitina Foundation are actively working to ensure that some of the children of New Orleans are provided with a musical education and instruments. Something to keep themselves, and the music, alive. They are just two examples from a large body of people who are shielding the city’s print. New Orleans may not be seeking fresh alternatives to the music that has long been integral to America’s tale, though the efforts of those that have, that have lived, and that still breathe its history are a testament to the creativity that goes into continuing such tradition.

Louis walks out onto the porch and takes a seat on the deck. There he stays, as the drone of engines driling and rebuilding fill the air.

Notes
(1) Rule 14L in the American railroad operating rules is applied to the sound sequence ‘short-short-long-short’ given by a train approaching a public grade crossing. A major railroad line separates St Claude at Press street.
Blackpool Illuminations

Text by Hannah Jones
Photography by Gwen Jones

Blackpool Illuminations, Pleasure Beach, fish and chips, slot machines, breeze off the sea, trouser legs rolled up for a paddle and a glance up at the Tower on the way home. The archetypal English seaside resort. But there are other stories too, of industry and identity, of pasts and of aspirations, making and making do, passing through and arriving, observing and being observed.

Night time stories, animal dreams and questions to be asked. Glamour or an attempt at it, tradition or its semblance. An invitation in a blank wall, apparitions of African deserts on a warehouse pavement, a teenage ticker tape parade ready for fame, VIPs with their badges to prove it, out-of-time manufacturing, handkerchiefed ladies and an unshod runner, an unwelcome welcome. Welcome to Blackpool.

The photographs can be viewed in colour at www.gwenjones.co.uk
Trying to get to you or Underneath the Beach, the Hospital

Emma Jackson

I’ve been travelling night and day, I’ve been running all the way.
Baby, trying to get to you’ [playing in my head, but sung by] Elvis Presley

London

And so the journey begins with the 91 bus. I am just coming over the hill onto Hornsey Road and the blizzard starts again. I hope the airport doesn’t close. ‘The Big Freeze’ has been in the news for days now, it has been the coldest winter for years and moving about has become a battle. There’s the woman in Scotland that went out to pick up some sprouts or some such for her Christmas dinner and didn’t get home for weeks. Nothing so dramatic in London, but the weather has meant that I haven’t left my local area for days. Running on a machine in the gym in order to move about a bit, I resolve to go further afield at the weekend. When I return home from the gym I get a message, my dad collapsed on holiday in Tenerife and my sister thinks one of us should go. My other siblings live in the North East. I have easier access to airports. A no frills ticket is booked on Friday night and on Saturday morning I’m on the move.

Luton

At Luton airport I buy a sandwich. I’m not hungry but I eat it anyway. Many flights are cancelled or delayed and people look at the departure boards anxiously. On the next table are a group of people who at first glance appear to be a family. A man who looks a bit like Harold Pinter, a woman of the same age and assorted people in their late twenties/early thirties. They wear glasses and rolleked. But they are not interacting like a family, the first clue is that they all laugh attentively at the older man’s jokes. This doesn’t happen in families. Then I catch onto a familiar vocabulary, upgrades, supervisors, funding applications. Academics on the move. Some have Irish accents. I look at the flight departure board and decide they are Literature PhD students bound for a conference in Dublin. The family on the next table eat their picnic with chopsticks. The parents speak Japanese to each other and to the kids. The kids chat to each other in English.

Plane

Everyone else is dressed in holiday clothes, brightly patterned tops and jewellery. They look happy, the promise of sun during a long hard winter. On the plane a couple of about my parent’s age ask me about my holiday in Tenerife. I tell them about the situation as cheerfully as I can. I am clearly raining on their parade. The woman disengages from the conversation and looks out of the plane window. And then the smell of another country when the plane door opens and a feeling of warmth.

Hospital

Walking around the corridors you see another side of the post-Christmas holiday not advertised on television. The nurse tells my mum that the hospital is much busier in the winter. My expectations of Spanish health care are based entirely on Almodovar films and do not feature pensioners from Sheffield. But this hospital is Almodovar meets Alan Bennett. Spanish voices mingle with Yorkshire and Cockney. For dad, the hospital has other resonances. The sound of Spanish and the institutional acoustics takes him back to Mexico where he taught classes in civil engineering for a year during the early eighties. The university there, he tells me, was also a 1970s construction with a marble floor (no marble here, tiles). In the hospital we wait. Sometimes I go and get us drinks from the hospital canteen. I like this job, it gives me something to do. Spanish doctors and nurses lean on the bar drinking coffee. If you just listen and scrunch your eyes to block out the uniforms, it’s a bit like being on holiday.

Apartment

Me and mum get into a routine of moving between the hospital and the apartment block which is part of the post-Christmas holiday not advertised on television. The nurse tells my mum that the hospital is much busier in the winter. My expectations of Spanish health care are based entirely on Almodovar films and do not feature pensioners from Sheffield. But this hospital is Almodovar meets Alan Bennett. Spanish voices mingle with Yorkshire and Cockney. For dad, the hospital has other resonances. The sound of Spanish and the institutional acoustics takes him back to Mexico where he taught classes in civil engineering for a year during the early eighties. The university there, he tells me, was also a 1970s construction with a marble floor (no marble here, tiles). In the hospital we wait. Sometimes I go and get us drinks from the hospital canteen. I like this job, it gives me something to do. Spanish doctors and nurses lean on the bar drinking coffee. If you just listen and scrunch your eyes to block out the uniforms, it’s a bit like being on holiday.

Homeward

It only takes three more days but time passes slowly. There are tests, and the waiting for test results. And then it’s over. Dad can go home. And I start my journey back on a bus. After another three days, back in the melting snow, it’s as if none of it ever happened.
Villages are stratified. On the lower level concourse where the baggage arrives onto carousels in a noisy environment, a young back-packer village has formed. This village is equipped for rough sleeping and open to new forms of sociation. Bed rolls and sleeping bags are dragged out of rucksacks for one more camping assignment: a strategy for getting around the world on a low budget. Stories and personal details are traded. The missionaries on their way back from a mercy assignment in South America take charge, greeting new comers, making suggestions about where to get cardboard or plastic crates, offering to guard luggage. Advice on where to get food circulates fast. The baggage carousel village is in full swing and the mood is up beat.

Moving up a level, on the second level concourse an official village has been established by the American Red Cross. The village boundaries are marked with poles and black elastic stretched between them: the sort of arrangement usually used to get people through a queue in a timely and ordered way. No need for bed construction and improvisation, the system has kicked in. But not anyone can live here. There is an entry test. How long are you here? Do you belong to another village? If so you must go back there or there will be no space in the official village for the villageless and the dispossessed. You have to cue for a space to get into this upscale idyllic village with no cardboard or crates to rest on. You have to get food circulates fast. The baggage carousel village is in full swing and the mood is up beat.

As you move up through the levels and over the no man's land between terminals, you will find that everything would be sorted out by them - until the cloud. George and Beryl cast geography aside and make common cause with Stan and Betty from Torquay, strandees from the same cruise. Inside the village they have formed an extended household. They dare not leave their Red Cross camp beds for fear of a bedless night they take turns visiting the bathrooms. Neither do they dare to leave the airport and look at New York City just in case. In case the cloud stabilizes suddenly or an extra flight opens up and they are transported home with no warning. They think it is vital to be ready to go even though they know they are booked onto the flight leaving in 10 days time and everything else is booked.

Transit requires careful attention to new possibilities of mobility. They will spend 2 weeks at the airport George and Beryl, Stan and Betty. How could this happen? Why can't somebody do something? The ambassador came but only to offer medicine and phone calls home. Maybe the Royal Navy will come. And, although they have got themselves onto the upper concourse of the official village, they haven't done as well at negotiating at the airline counter. Some strandees learn to work the system better than others. What appears to be an organized system of departure in fact has room for manoeuvre, negotiation and special pleading. The well healed and well traveled do better at this and their concerns rise to the top of the check in clerk's list. Others will wait with George and Beryl, Stan and Betty.

Nighttime in the villages is surreal. The bright airport lights stay on. And, although the airport is closed for flights from around midnight to 4am there are periodic announcements. Not flights but announcements guarding the wellbeing of the truly sleeping strandees. 'This is a security announcement. Do not leave you baggage unattended at any time. Baggage left may be destroyed.' This is played on a half hourly loop until it is time to get up and wait again through another day in transit as dawn breaks over Newark.

In April this year a seemingly bizarre story captured the media's attention in the UK. A mother and daughter were arrested at Liverpool's John Lennon Airport and accused of trying to smuggle the dead body of 91 year old (Curt) Willi Jarrant onto an EasyJet flight to his native Berlin. They had dressed Willi in a big coat and sunglasses, strapped him into a wheelchair, and told airport personnel that he was sleeping. Both women have continued to insist that they did not know that Willi was dead and that he must have died at the airport. Willi's step-daughter Anke told reporters: 'Willi had Alzheimer's and had not been in good health and wanted to go back to Germany to die' (1). The repatriation costs of flying a dead body to Germany are about £3,000.

For nearly fifteen years I have been listening to and recording the stories of dying migrants and the professionals who tend to them in London, and in other British cities. Stories such as Willi's are not uncommon. I have often left homes, bedsideis and meeting rooms unmoored by what I have heard, seen or felt. Amidst the frenetic pace and vibrancy that we most readily associate with metropolitan life, is a slower more informal side of urban multiculture that begs greater recognition and understanding. To cities through the interplay between illness, death and difference is to open ourselves to extraordinary moments of vulnerability, love and hostility.

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In the UK, such moments are becoming less tenebrous and less inscrutable. They are not just moments of death but are the other end of age and migration trajectories: those who will get sick in their relative youth, who will begin to die. 'Generation Exodus' leave behind them the tempo and pace of life that we most readily associate with metropolitan life, is a slower more informal side of urban multiculture that begs greater recognition and understanding. To cities through the interplay between illness, death and difference is to open ourselves to extraordinary moments of vulnerability, love and hostility.

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Even with fluency in English, this is another language to add to the three-hundred odd other varieties already spoken in London. One Chinese patient having been told with great care that his cancer was no longer treatable appeared to take the news with equanimity. Before leaving the doctor's consultation room, he asked for a pen and wrote a single word on a tiny scrap of paper. He told the doctor he wanted to look the word up in his dictionary when he got home. The word? 'Terminal'.

Dying people may move amongst us, but they occupy a different, denser space and time. Their zone is marked by a cruel ecstasy of heightened nerve-endings and consciousness; a dis-at-easeness where the taken-for-granted fades away and bodies can become estranged and lonely. For dying migrants and settlers this is a space where the very conditions of migration - movement, improvisation and multiplicity - meet the demands of one last journey into the unknown. The spectacle of arrival can loom and recede uncontrolably and refuge can be sought in the semblance of mundane activities that provide a suggestion of normality or routine. These are the Caribbean women who attend church with intravenous chemotherapy catheters nestled under their immaculate jackets; the occasional brown face on the municipal bus that is going to a local day centre; the elderly Irish couple, who for you were emblematic of the frenetic pace and vibrancy that we most readily associate with metropolitan life, is a slower more informal side of urban multiculture that begs greater recognition and understanding. To cities through the interplay between illness, death and difference is to open ourselves to extraordinary moments of vulnerability, love and hostility.

At the other end of age and migration trajectories are those who will get sick in their relative youth, who will leave toddlers and teenagers, and who will die before their citizenship status is decided or questioned. As the recent general election campaigns showed, illegal immigrants arouse intense emotions across the political spectrum. Yet there is also creeping recognition of indispensable contribution of migrants to the life and economy of the UK. The wonderfully named campaign Strangers into Citizens’ won the support of the Conservative Mayor for London - Boris Johnson - with its demands for an ‘armed amnesty’ for illegal migrants working and living in the capital (2). A survey commissioned subsequently by...
Some time ago, the philosopher Jacques Derrida, with his usual, uncanny foresight declared that ‘The question of the foreigner concerns what happens at death and when the traveller is laid to rest in a foreign land’ (5). An Algerian Jew, writing in post-war France, Derrida understood, perhaps only too well, the all-night collision between death and difference that lay ahead in the margins: the profound existential and moral questions that are raised by the giving of hospitality to a stranger and of dying in a strange land. In this sense ‘la langue de l’etranger’ with which Derrida concerned himself, is both literal and symbolic. It speaks of alterity that can’t be translated into tribal difference, that turns us inside out and demands that we learn new ways to give. And to receive.

Notes:

Aliz eventually chose to die at home in Hungary in the very last stages of her life, resulting in the need for business class travel and an accompanying doctor. The doctor’s fees came close to two-and-a-half thousand pounds. Surprisingly for Brian, some of the money for Aliz’s home death came from a generous donation from the continental bakery in London where she had worked for just nine months.

Death workers in the city have to be emotionally bendy and resourceful. They gather in reels of hopelessness and despair and soak up life-times of regret, hurt, and disappointment. And, perhaps most demanding of all, they have to learn to try and accompany those who have hunkered down into deep interior recesses, blocking out all human contact. It’s disconcerting when I can’t discuss things with my patients’ Gill, a hospice nurse tells me. ‘And I can’t help feeling that I have failed them in some way.’ Gill has been recalling her care of a non-European speaking Ugandan mother dying of AIDS – with suspected AIDS related dementia - thousands of miles away from her children, family and friends.
Unpacking ships and containers in Newport and Cardiff

Steven Hanson

I began to notice shipping containers when travelling to serve on a jury at Newport Crown Court, in South Wales, in December 2009. ‘Containerisation’ refers to a faster and cheaper process of global goods-exchange. The shipping container reduces the process to a uniform Fordism, albeit one branded with the different liveries of competing logistics companies. But ‘containerisation’ is an odd name too, it literally means closing-off, at the same time as it is used to describe a process which is quite un-enclosed. I think it is possible to take the term ‘containerised’ and apply it to earlier forms of community study, as well as to many visual archives, which are affected by a kind of epistemological contained-ness.

People are often trafficked in shipping containers, which can be made airtight. Because of this, tragic accidents have occurred, and worse. An episode of The Wire (1) dramatizes this, showing young women brought into Baltimore for sex work, who are killed by a crew member, who shuts off the air supply before they reach the port. Trafficked people are contained within an increasingly mobile, radically un-enclosed modernity. In a similar way, ‘transition programme’ is another mobility term which is often inappropriately applied to knots of power or refugee camps. The phrase ‘all at sea’ is supposed to have emerged from times when navigational technologies were unreliable. It means being unable to place oneself in the world, being uncertain, scared. Identity has become fugitive and contingent. Yet Paul Gilroy uses the slave ship in The Black Atlantic (2) as a figure for contained-ness, but one which is simultaneously beyond the usual legalities of the nation-state, gradually moving towards new lands. It is bleakly ironic that trafficked people are enclosed within a modernity often described as ‘liquid’. Earlier, Gilroy described how race often becomes synonymous with nation. “Race” he said, “is bounded on all sides by the sea” (3).

Images 1 and 2 above are reproduced with the permission of the Newport Ship Project.

I wanted to think more about the concepts of being contained and un-contained. I was enclosed much of the time, in a juror’s waiting room where The Jeremy Kyle Show seemed to be compulsory viewing. I wasn’t quite as contained as the defendant, sat in his glass-fronted booth each day, like a fish in a tank. He will probably never know how he narrowly escaped prison in a trial with barely any evidence. The trial was often interrupted, and on free afternoons I took a walk around a few sites in Newport to examine some conceptual, historical and literal ships and containers.

First, I visited the Newport Medieval Ship project on the Maesglas Industrial Estate. The ‘Newport Ship’, as it is locally known, was a 15th century clinker-built vessel, discovered in the mud of the River Usk, in June 2002, during the construction of an arts centre. Huge concrete posts were already sunk into the hull of the ship when it was discovered (see images 1 and 2). The ship was very nearly left in the Usk and was only saved thanks to the tireless campaigning of a group of volunteers, who now have a partly governing role as ‘Friends of the Newport Ship’. During the summer of 2002, these people became rather un-contained, protesting at the site. Taxi drivers congregated to add to the protest, sounding their horns. The ship was excavated by a team of archaeologists and lifted out, timber by timber. It then received a Heritage Lottery grant to conserve it. The plan is to relocate the re-assembled ship into the arts centre which was going to bury it once both are finished (4).

Two shipping containers have recently been acquired at the Maesglas site to house the remains of two other boats. The Barlands Farm boat dates back to around 300AD and was found on a site which is now under the Tesco Distribution Warehouse at the Europark. Its design is Roman, but its ownership is assumed to be Celtic. The Tredunnoc boat dates back to around 1850 and is thought to have been used to carry coal, iron and bricks along the Monmouthshire canal, probably pulled by a horse (5). There is a simple pragmatism to the employment of a shipping container to hold these remains of ships in its function as a sealed, controlled environment.

Yet metaphorically, poetically, the idea of ‘the container’ breaks free from its own confines here. Because we know so little about these vessels, we risk being disconnected from the lives of the people and animals who worked on them. The problem is that very little is in the containers, when archaeologists and conservators at Maesglas talk about the ‘Newport Ship’, they are referring to tagged and submerged timbers and fragments of metal, rescued runs. The ship is in pieces which are being chemically stabilised.

One theory suggests that the ship found in the Usk belonged to The Earl of Warwick, ‘The Kingmaker’, who often favoured Portuguese or Spanish boats (6). We don’t conclusively know the origin of the ‘Newport Ship’, but it has certainly been re-named after the city it was found in. It has been conceptually re-contained. This extends further to thinking about community in Newport. Recently, the English Defence League were protesting at Stow Hill church being used as a mosque after years lying empty. They assumed that place and religion ought to be contained in particular ways, by utilising a set of very narrow origin-stories. Various socialist groups in the area turned out to stand-off the EDL rally. Again, tension and becoming un-contained are two seemingly opposing terms, but both apply to events such as this. Just a short walk from the Newport Ship’s site of discovery is the Westgate Hotel, scene of the Chartist uprising of 1839, which was violently suppressed, and some of its radically un-contained participants were ‘transported’ to Australia. Such transportsations were usually part of a mixed cargo - the ships carried goods as well as prisoners (7). The global trafficking of women is a marginalised form of capitalism, illegal, but ultimately a part of it, and one which sometimes uses the model of goods circulation used by the retail park and Tesco distribution warehouse. A ship’s cargo is not suddenly made ‘clean’ because its processes have been instrumentalised to the nth degree.

From Maesglas I walk into the centre of Newport, past the retail park, with its shops resembling warehouses, to the site of Town Dock, which was opened in 1842, against this context of labour activism and The Chartists. The Alexandra Dock was one of several later expansions. Monmouthshire industrialists became frustrated by the lack of port facilities and so an act was passed in 1865 to allow a new dock to be built (8). Working conditions were dangerous. The ‘Newport Dock Disaster’ was the burying of 46 men when a trench collapsed, in 1909. A decade later, ports in South Wales became the spaces of race riots.
The anti-black riots that spread through British ports that spring were associated with the demobilisation of the armed forces after the first world war, a period of economic crisis in which black populations became the scapegoats. In Newport on June 6th white mobs wreaked so many properties that, according to the South Wales Argus, the city looked as if it had suffered an air raid. The riots were at their most virulent in Cardiff. By June 11th they had developed into a series of organised attacks in the centre of the city and, in particular, on Butetown, where most of the black population lived. Hotels and lodging houses were besieged by mobs led by ‘colonial’ (Australian) soldiers armed with rifles, who presented themselves as leaders of the action (9).

The failure to aim protests at the complexities of capitalism and economic crisis, and instead to move onto the perennial, simplistic, barbaric and unreal terrain of race hatred, is not just a historical fact, but a contemporary problem. The failure of colonial Australian soldiers to see the illogic of violently policing race and nation, the harsh irony of it, can be mapped onto the present too (10). In Butetown, Cardiff, we also see the transformation of old money and power into the new industrial setting. The ‘mythical’ episode of The Wire portraying sex workers can be mapped back on to Newport and Cardiff’s docks. The attempt to gentrify these spaces contained an urge to sanitise, to disjoint certain kinds of night-time economy, particularly prostitution. This process continued in Cardiff’s Tiger Bay across the millennium (13). In the gendered, patriarchal stigmatising of the ‘fallen’ or ‘dirty’ woman it is possible to detect urges which can be tracked back to nineteenth century spatial discourses around the racial and classed city. Prostitution is a form of work with an often entirely elaborate scheme of making oneself visible or invisible in particular ways (14).

In the 1980s a Jamaica Dock opened at Newport, its name acknowledging the direct relationship between Britain and the colonies. Our current moment is framed in a similarly global way, a reality still often accompanied by negative, one-sided versions of the complexities. Attempting to think through the conceptual and real containers, and the way the social world can become radically un-contained in different periods is important. The specificities of any historical time are crucial in thinking through social events, but there is also a strong lineage to be traced across eras, of the global, spatial policing of bodies and objects, and therefore subjectivities (15).

But we need to think carefully about what kind of historicism is at play in each moment. First, the social container needs to be unpacked. We need to identify its limits and what it previously held, as well as what were beyond its steel walls. To ask what the container held, is not the way historians see things, it is a particular community, in, say, 1976 held, or what one holds in 2010. The container is epistemological, it is books, papers, films and photographs, conference lectures, and although all of them have some indexical relationship with reality, this is always partial. Alan Sekula talks of an ‘imaginary economy’ of images.

We need to advance to a new kind of epistemological approach which is open and mobile, attentive to the hybrid nature of culture and place, without becoming ignorant of the way the steel walls of the container previously structured the subject, and still structure the assumptions of some people and groups within communities, as well as those of some sociologists. The figure of the container doesn’t just apply to the extremes of people-trafficking, but to community generally. Gilroy’s use of the slave ship serves as a starting point to think more widely about the moving containers of community, which are not so slow these days, much like the vessels and processes of modern shipping.

Our task both is and is not to re-assemble, timber by timber, like the remains of ships at Manglas. It is about finding the fragments where they lie. The Barlinds Farm boat lying in the mud at the point when Tesco wish to build a distribution centre over it is more interesting, more ‘telling’, than its literally contained version, which will be re-assembled in a museum.

Over in Chepstow, workers at a Tesco Distribution Centre are faced with relocation, with a large effective decrease in earnings and loss of union recognition (16). The ‘distribution centre’ is a box surrounded by fences, not a series of routes to other places. The Barlinds Farm boat would have carried over four and a half tons of cargo, we know it is a hybrid of Roman and Celtic building techniques, as it differs from the remains of similar vessels found in the Mediterranean regions. The Newport Ship remains yielded traces of seals which identify individual merchants, to a man. One was Robert Baron who imported Spanish iron, cloth and dyed hair from Ireland. This information comes from customs records in Bristol (17). Medieval Newport was a walled city, a container. To link, across the centuries like this, is massively over-ambitious, risky, the territory of contemporary psychogeography, but details like this, about everyday life, do begin to open out the epistemological container.

There is a proposal to re-construct and display the Newport Ship ‘as it would have sailed’. Re-assembly risks containment, but it has to happen, otherwise how do we cogitate at all?

As sociological metaphors, we can think through the contents of our containers, our subjects. They should hold real, live humans, negotiating the world, struggling, trying to make a better life. But sometimes when we open the containers, we find only skeletons. A set of statistics relating to any community are a sort of skeleton, one part of the functioning whole. Like a nervous system, but of course if one lifts this out of the whole, it dies, and the only function left for it is to go on display for academics, officials, students, or a curious public.

Benjamin wrote about the constantly collapsing present (18), the eternal moment of catastrophe and re-building which characterise his understanding of historical materialism, not the ‘as it really was’ of the imaginary past of the Newport Ship, re-assembled in the future, in the arts centre which was going to cover it, but the flash of the remains of the Newport Ship, shot through with concrete pillars, after it was discovered, along with the atonal music of taxi horns. Those flashes and sounds, connections and disconnections, can illuminate, in the ‘moment of danger’, a much fuller moment of now, in ruins, with all its disconnections and tensions. The un-contained world, illogical, contradictory, may be impossible to reconcile, but it can electrolytically, in what Homi Bhabha once called ‘a reflux of astonishment’ (19).
Swinging a Cod: A day’s work at Billingsgate fish market.

Dawn Lyon

A few months ago, when I was a visiting fellow at CUCR, I started hanging around Billingsgate, London’s wholesale fish market. I feel the fish merchants there that I’m trying to understand the whole process, of where the fish comes from and goes to, how it gets distributed, and more generally what goes on at the market, what it is that fish merchants do. It’s part of an ongoing sociological study of fish, of all the work that’s involved in bringing fish ‘from sea to table’.

The first thing that’s striking as you enter the market site is the smell, not bad just there. Even the freshest fish in such quantities smells of something. It’s as if there’s an odour from all the wetness and cold too. When I arrive, the place is relatively empty, although the two cafés are more generally what goes on at the market, what it is comes from and goes to, how it gets distributed, and more generally what goes on at the market, what it is Trading Superintendent’s office, the Fish Merchants Association, inspectors, maintenance, police and first aid, as well as the Seafood Training School which offers courses in fish cookery.

Everyone works very fast. I know this because I am trying to keep up with them and it’s a struggle. The prawns confuse me – there are seven sizes, all in two kilo boxes. Some have different coloured labels; sometimes the labels are the same colours but the size is different. You have to read them then put them in the right pile. It sounds simple but I keep getting it wrong.

‘Give Mike a hand with the congers,’ Roger says. Thirty kilos a box. I can’t shift them an inch. So someone tells me to lay out the snappers. I start by trying to pick up a three kilo fish. By the tail with a hand around its slippery body. ‘Pick the fish up through the eyes,’ I get told. I do so then repeat the process with the cod and reach ahead of the person (especially with blood on my coat, a fishmonger assuming that’s what I do, seeing the role I’m chuffed that I can carry it, albeit from my thumb). I’m quite chuffed that I can carry this off, at least to the general public. I’m not selling to other fishmongers, mind you, Roger deals with them. He tells me to tidy up at some point as gaps start to appear in the display. ‘Presentation is everything,’ he proclaims after getting out more tuna and swordfish, ‘line those up’. I do so then repeat the process with the cod and reach ahead of the person. I must smell of fish right through by now. Down my neck. I must smell of fish right through by now. I do so then repeat the process with the cod and reach ahead of the person (especially with blood on my coat, a fishmonger assuming that’s what I do, seeing the role I’m chuffed that I can carry it, albeit from my thumb). I’m quite chuffed that I can carry this off, at least to the general public. I’m not selling to other fishmongers, mind you, Roger deals with them. He tells me to tidy up at some point as gaps start to appear in the display. ‘Presentation is everything,’ he proclaims after getting out more tuna and swordfish, ‘line those up’. I do so then repeat the process with the cod and reach ahead of the person.

At the other end, there’s a big selection of the fish and where everything’s caught. I spot the halibut, halibut, (brown and spotted), another stretch before Roger’s office (a space to write orders underneath the phone) and the till (a drawer). This is my patch for the day.

I want to hear you selling,’ Roger says, ‘not waiting for people to ask you things. So, what’s your pitch?’ Now I’m more comfortable, maybe I can do this. There’s a lot of customers’ space and it’s to all that gone, he says. Then there’s wild sea bass, £12 but I can go down to £10. ‘I’m old. Next to that are chunks of tuna, £12, swordfish, £10, and marlin, £9, all vacuum-packed in clear plastic. In front, there are lobsters – live – at £16 a kilo. On the side, there’s a pile of razor clams, £5, and along the top, Palourde clams, £18 for a two kilo box, scallops (out of the shell, £18 for a one kilo tub, £29 for a two kilo one), dover sole (small, £7, and medium, £12,) and padlets of crabeat, £2, and smoked salmon, £5 – but £25 in Harrods as Roger is fond of saying, I write out the prices either on the back of one of the boxes, or on a polythene lid as a reminder.

When the customers come, I talk about the eyes of the fish and where everything’s caught. I spot the middle-class people and tell them that the sea bass is wild, what a treat it is. I am the cod at those I think are Londoners, emphasise how it’s a bargain. The quantities are considerable: ‘You can feed a lot of friends with this fish!’ I say to the tired-looking, middle-aged women, white and black. None of this is planned, this is what comes out, and what I find myself doing when I’m not thinking about it. And that’s how you should address him.’ I take some pride in that.

Then they come back for two kilos of scallops, £29. ‘They know what they want, and don’t treat me as if I might be a source of knowledge. Others do, though. ‘What do you do with those?’ someone asks pointing at the razor clams. ‘How do you cook a sea bass?’ I say, ‘I realy in my element! I offer recipes and wine-sounding guidelines: ‘With fish,’ I pronounce, ‘the principle is always not to do too much’, and so on. I am getting into my stride and thoroughly enjoying myself. ‘You’re in the wrong line of work, you should be a TV chef!’

I get faster at mental arithmetic quite quickly. The first time I calculate 3.2 kilos I can’t calculate the 0.2. I’m embarrassed by this but own up and Roger gives me a calculator. Then I get the hang of how they round up and don’t go down. No need to get my calculator out now. They challenge me. In fact, more generally, people treat me like a fishmonger assuming that’s what I do, seeing the role ahead of the person (especially with blood on my coat, albeit from my thumb). I’m quite chuffed that I can carry this off, at least to the general public. I’m not selling to other fishmongers, mind you, Roger deals with them. He tells me to tidy up at some point as gaps start to appear in the display. ‘Presentation is everything,’ he proclaims after getting out more tuna and swordfish, ‘line those up’. I do so then repeat the process with the cod and reach ahead of the person.

It’s the porters’ space and it’s up to you to get out of the way. I’ve no idea what time it is most of the time I’m embarrassed by this but own up and Roger gives me a calculator. Then I get the hang of how they round up and don’t go down. No need to get my calculator out now. They challenge me. In fact, more generally, people treat me like a fishmonger assuming that’s what I do, seeing the role ahead of the person (especially with blood on my coat, albeit from my thumb). I’m quite chuffed that I can carry this off, at least to the general public. I’m not selling to other fishmongers, mind you, Roger deals with them. He tells me to tidy up at some point as gaps start to appear in the display. ‘Presentation is everything,’ he proclaims after getting out more tuna and swordfish, ‘line those up’. I do so then repeat the process with the cod and reach ahead of the person.

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Notes
(1) A version of this is also available at the No Way to Make a Living website at: http://www.whywontmakeliving.net/docs/0579.pdf
(2) Part of this research is a collaboration with Les Back (Goldsmiths) on the retail sale of fish at Deptford market.
(3) See Billingsgate Market on the City of London website at: www.billingsgate-market.org.uk/
Everyone’s 2012 and My Adidas: branding made perfect

Alberto Duman

"Bringing our sponsors to the table early – earlier than previous host cities – has also helped us to harness the creativity and market penetration of these companies in activating their sponsorships, which in turn helps us to meet the legacy commitments that we made in Singapore: the Lloyds Banking Group with the national school sport week; Local Heroes, the construction of adiZones for partnerships in the inner city; EDF with its sustainability campaigns..." (1)

"Just let yourself play; enjoying all of the feelings and sensations that come when you are in the zone" (2).

"Constructed in the shape of the London 2012 logo, adiZones provide a highly visible and tangible legacy from the Games. These innovative multi-sport areas, designed and developed by Adidas, the Official Sportswear Partner of London 2012, aim to inspire the local community to get involved in sport. In this way they can help councils to achieve their physical activity targets" (3).

Quoting both the notion of zoning derived from the vocabulary of urban planning and the out-of-time state of mind reached through high-performance physical activities, the adiZones are Adidas’ and LOCOG’s (4) idea of a ‘free’ sporting legacy for the London 2012 Games.

These dense, hypnotic, highly branded insertions on public parklands are standardized 25mx25m areas, where cluttered symbolic opportunities to do sport, play, movement, and fitness outdoor on a 24/7, 365 days a year basis are rolled together with unique branding opportunities; over 20 Adidas logos are contained within the oversized 2012 logo of any adiZones.

When in September 2008 Adidas committed £1 million to ‘the development of a new sporting venue in each of the five London boroughs hosting London 2012’ (5), expectations might have been different, but given the strict IOC rules restricting forms of advertising in the Olympic stadia or other competition areas during the Games, Adidas heeded the call to maximize their marketing opportunities.

Nobody sings My Adidas (6) anymore, but surely the brand knows very well the mechanism and advantages of endorsement; in every adiZone there is a ‘wall of fame’ comprising only of Adidas-endorsed athletes and singers, following on the pioneering footsteps of Run-DMC.

Initially conceived for the five Host Boroughs, the adiZones are now being rolled out all over UK. Costing £150,000 each and delivered in UK by The Great Outdoor Gym Company (7), the adiZones - as stated by the marketing material distributed by Adidas - are a ‘perfect solution to the Government’s target of the 5 hour offer’(8).

Despite the unique penetration in otherwise brand-free public spaces that each adiZone represents for Adidas, their costs are only partly borne by the company with the remaining 50% matching funds distributed between government agencies and local authorities who are also in charge of the £5000 yearly administration costs included in the package.

But with rising obesity levels it is obviously in the Local Authority’s interest to invest in activities that can get people more active’ (9).

Pushing further the hybrid proximity between public targets obligations and private demands for deeper branding integration in everyday life, the adiZones appear as a symptomatic confirmation of the established trend towards a corporatisation of contemporary cultural life in the UK and beyond.

Their outlandish presence in the uncharted spaces of local parks prises open new directions in this trend under the benign emblem of the Olympic rings. Everyone’s happy, so let’s get physical while we wait for other London 2012 legacies to come forth...

In the meantime, see Adidas’ arch rival Nike and their urban game ‘Grid: Claim your streets’ (10), a distorted corporate version of a Situationist gaming tactic freely appropriating urban sub-cultures, postcode gangs warfare and their branding obsessions.

Notes
(4) The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games.
(5) www.marketingweek.co.uk/11-september-2008/2739/issue
(6) en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Adidas
(7) www.tgogc.com/
(8) ‘13 July 2007: A £100m campaign to give every child the chance of five hours of sport every week was announced by the Prime Minster, Gordon Brown today/ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6896817.stm
(9)www.google.co.uk/search?q=adizones+faqs.pdf&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&q=t&rurl=tsr=org.mozilaen-US&client=fellow-a
(10) www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtmE4GRe_oE
Public space is thought by many to be the defining feature of the city; a synecdoche that still resonates. Henri Lefebvre (1) had an overriding concern about the harmful impacts of capitalism on urban public space. Although from the 1970s to the 1990s there was a powerful ‘death of public space’ discourse; in the 2000s there is a growing realisation that dynamic and inclusive traditional public spaces have survived and new ones have been created often through publicly funded urban regeneration projects. A good deal of academic research exploring the regeneration of Manchester city centre in the aftermath of the IRA bombing, is critical of the new public spaces created (2). I want to focus here on a different part of Manchester and examine the new public spaces of the Castlefield area on the south western edge of the city centre, I argue that the area exhibits some qualities of what Lefebvre called differential space: areas of the city which through processes of contestation and campaigns around counter-projects, resist and reconfigure the abstract space of capitalistic consumption for use by ordinary people and marginalised groups. What I highlight below is how, through photography, differential space is represented visually contrasting this with the way such differential space is largely neglected in painted artistic representations of Castlefield.

Roman Manchester was founded in Castlefield in the first century AD. The area became a bustling transport interchange, crucial for the city’s industrial transformation. It was also, for a time in the 19th century, the site of a large, boisterous, spectacular market and fair. Through here, for 150 hundred years, raw materials and finished products were imported from and exported to all points of the British Empire and beyond. In the 1960s the area went into deep economic and physical decline as industries became derelict and silent. After the area went into steep economic and physical decline of Castlefield through urban regeneration initiatives was left ‘unfinished’ (3), creating all kinds of potentials now being documented by urban photographers (4). Individuals and groups clearly enjoy the sheer delights of being in public, in a place where they feel at ease. Large scale free music concerts and sponsored events continue in the area; other people occupy Castlefield to express their personal identities. All kinds of political protests have taken place in the last decade as protestors speak out for example for an end to war or for recognition of the needs of forgotten war veterans. Thousands have gathered regularly at the Castlefield Arena to confront the problems of racism and homelessness. Manchester (Gay) Pride Festival starts from here and Aids Vigils have been held. Recently, hundreds of Salford school children came to protest about the planned closure of their school, St Georges and ‘right to the city’ protestors occupied briefly a disused former pub in Castlefield called Jackson’s Wharf.

Henry Lefebvre argued that painting in the era of modernity has a ‘special relationship to space’ and is another aspect of differential space (5). Painting therefore plays a key role in the production of city space. In addition to photographers, Manchester has a vibrant artistic scene with a host of Manchester born or based painters working to produce pictural representations of the city’s public space. Some of the most prominent are Sophia Butler, Ian Fennelley, Michael Gutteridge, Christine Lawley and Liam Spencer whose styles vary greatly from expressionist and photo realistic to impressionist (6). For my ongoing Ph.D research concerned with the production of Castlefield space, I interviewed Gutteridge and exchanged emails with the other artists in early 2010. Each has produced stunning images of Castlefield but what is striking is that their paintings are largely devoid of human presence, though Gutteridge does depict a few people here and there. Instead, the artists are drawn to Castlefield by the sheer visual drama of the area inculcated by the gigantic viaducts and shiny, mesmerising reflections on the snaking waterways. It is the visual aesthetics of the area, its beauty, that the painters find enticing; not so much its latter-day political resonances. Gutteridge is disarmingly candid that people are difficult to paint.

Castlefield has certainly become a theatre of public, political and social life. Flickr photographers are representing the everyday and the spectacular public space of the area; in so doing they are creating important Lefebvrian spaces of representation that foreground social interaction which can influence the reappearance and survival of differential space. The painters are concerned with the material elements of public space and the light that renders them visible, they too are combining the elements of Lefebvre’s spatial trial to create alternative pictural spaces of representation. Public space remains a powerful synecdoche for the city, though contested dialectically; it is alive and well on the ground and in the imagination.

Thanks to all Rick’s Castlefield photographers in particular Pete Brinkshaw and Paul Jones, and Michael Gutteridge and for kindly giving permission to use their images.

Notes
(3) Lefebvre, H. (1991)
(5) One of which I created in early 2010 see ‘Castlefield Manchester - the bright and the dark sides’ www.flickr.com/groups/13296070@N24/
(8) Lefebvre, H. (1991) p310.1
(9) All the artists mentioned have websites where their Castlefield paintings can be seen.
Building Home
Shamser Sinha with Les Back

Born in Kinshasa, Congo, Joseph migrated to London as a refugee at the age of eight. He does not remember much about the migration process. Joseph is now 18 years old and has UK citizen status. We first met in a ‘greasy spoon’ about ten minutes from Angel tube station. As we talk, I learn that upon arriving in the UK, Joseph lived with his aunt and uncle in a hostel in Finsbury Park. He quickly made friends at school and was popular. Before I learn much more, the café closes and we are asked to leave.

I suggest we take a walk around the local streets and continue our conversation. Joseph says he is very well known in the area. Almost on cue, we turn the corner of a street near his youth club and a white boy aged about 8 years old comes up to him to greet and engage him in friendly conversation. He is not the last person to talk to him while we are walking together. It is a dark and cold night and we walk round the local high rise council estate blocks. Often seen as places of danger, while walking with him, his neighbourhood seems friendly.

Whilst making friends seemed easy and school was good, Joseph says life at home was hard. Consequently, he used to spend a lot of time on the streets. He talks about his football team and two youth workers he met at the youth club who supported him with advice and guidance. He marvels at how far he has come.

Joseph talks about his ambitions. He is a talented footballer who has had trials with clubs including Chelsea and the club he supports, Arsenal. He was doing well over the period of his trials at Arsenal, but eventually his home life was so unsettling that he could not do his football skills justice. If he does not become a football player, he may coach football. He talks of opening a football skills justice. If he does not become a footballer who has had trials with clubs including Chelsea and Arsenal, he may coach football. He talks of opening a football team and two youth workers he met at the youth club who supported him with advice and guidance. He marvels at how far he has come.

Three weeks later I meet him again, this time together with Les Back (who is also part of the London-based EUMARGINS research team). Joseph has taken 36 photos, and it seems like he has had fun with the camera. He talks us through them. I quickly note how topics and places are mentioned that I would never have thought to explore.

Joseph did not feel welcome at his auntie and uncle’s house. He shows us a photo of the park where he and his friend used to play when they were twelve years old. He also shows us a photo of ‘the Chicken Spot’, talking about how he used to get the money for chicken and chips by returning Morrisons shopping trolley. He found on the street and collecting the deposits. Laughing and smiling, he says he made a lot of money.

Joseph was 11 or 12 years old when he started staying over at friends’ houses because he did not feel comfortable at home. He shows us a photo of his friend’s flat. Despite this disruption, he points out how he never missed school. Nonetheless, he would only return home when it was Sunday or Monday:

“So if my aunt says like, ‘where was you?’, I jus’ say ‘I didn’t feel like being here’.”

One day when he was 11 or 12, Joseph’s auntie had a dream about being murdered. She thought it was him who had killed her in the dream. His auntie took this as a sign that he was going to. She went down to where he and his friends were playing. Sending him home she spoke to his friends about him and said:

“A lot of stuff, bad stuff. When I went home she actually threatened me with knife, if I have any dream from you, if I have any bad dream from you, I will kill you.”

Joseph left his house and went for a walk by the canal. He shows us a photo of the bench where he sat down, to take it all in.

“I was so angry; I didn’t know where to go where to start, what’s next for me.”

Joseph had a mentor from the social services; a British-born white man. Joseph appreciates his perspective, and remains in regular contact with him even though he is now over 18 and is catered for by the leaving care team rather than as a ‘looked after’ child. He also has a close friend (another participant in this research) who was born in Ghana. Like Joseph he has had professional football trials. Joseph also has a friend from Jamaica who went to the same school. When he called round before school his family would offer him breakfast. Joseph also maintains contact with three youth workers. One is a black man who he thinks is from one of the Caribbean Islands (Joseph is unsure when I ask him). Another is a white woman who is born and brought up in North London. And then there is a British born Ghanaian youth worker whom Joseph has known since he was around eleven years old. While the youth and social services are often maligned in the public imagination, here they helped provide a network of advice, support and resources that some other migrants in our research appear to lack to their detriment.

Joseph’s foster mum is from Sierra Leone. She is supporting him while he is at college although he spends two hours a week on Friday working at his part time job to help support himself. After Christmas he went on holiday to Sierra Leone with his foster mum where he went clubbing and played football. Joseph is keen to rebuild a relationship with his auntie and uncle. Joseph is grateful that his uncle brought him over from Congo especially because this meant leaving one of his sons there and this seems one reason he is keen to maintain a relationship with him. He likes his foster mum but she is against this and sometimes she feels she does not understand Joseph complaints about having to listen to her lecturing him and puts this down to African culture, where the mum is always right. However, this interviewer thinks other daughters and sons experience this as well. Joseph has lived through deep troubles but is putting his life together and building home in London. He feels attached to people who may not be biologically related to him but who have become like a family. They might come from different parts of the world but they help him feel like he belongs here – even if he does fancy the idea of building a residence in Sierra Leone one day.

The EUMARGINS Project is a three-year study of the life narratives of young migrants. The UK part of the project is being conducted in London as part of an international comparative study involving six partner institutions in Estonia, France, Italy, Norway, Spain and Sweden. A full summary of the project can be found at www.vism.uio.no/forskning/eumargins
Hours of awakening in Brick Lane
Pernille Maria Børnheim Lundgaard

The dim light is slightly blurring the contours of the street, the tiredness of the eyes is making it difficult to focus on the people passing. It's early hours in Brick Lane on a Friday morning. The bars are closed, the party people have left the scene. These are the hours where Brick Lane becomes a street of its own, with locals waking up, beginning their day. The earringing noise of the garbage lorry slowly disappears behind me, leaving space for other sounds to emerge. A woman's shoes are hitting hard against the surface of the street. The intense and quick rhythm of the heels clapping onto the slabs fills the air and for a moment creates a dome of resonance among which strangers pass one another. As she hurries on, the dome gradually sinks into the ground again, letting the street reshape itself back into its rectangular form framed by little unpretentious square houses of two or so floors.

Normally one would have to stay focused on navigating the crowd of people, but out of the early hour the gaze is free to drift upwards and away from the pavement and its obstacles. The sky is clear, the air cold and crisp, and strangely it seems to be getting colder as the sun rises. The old Huguenot church now functioning as a mosque for the neighbourhood's large Bengali population, is brightly lit by the sunlight streaming in through the large old windows on the top floor. The numerous restaurants are closed, blissfully relieving one of the persistent tooting that fills the street at night. Now it is quiet and there is no need to speed up and shun eye contact in an attempt to escape the attention of the waiters, eager to attract your business. Now it is actually possible to stop. And just stand there, staring at the closed facades with their bright coloured signs, 'Chef of The Year', bent in neon. Wonder how many years ago that was made.

People begin to emerge from their houses, bringing a calm and fragmented sense of activity to the pavement. A woman with no legs is riding her electric wheelchair out of her front door dressed in a marvellous sequinned jacket. Off to work, I think. She has beautiful eyes that meet mine as she locks her wheelchair in time with the rhythm of the music before her. The woman with no legs is a woman who has been told her story many times before, a story that seems to fill the street at night. Now it is quiet and there is no need to speed up and shun eye contact in an attempt to escape the attention of the waiters, eager to attract your business. Now it is actually possible to stop. And just stand there, staring at the closed facades with their bright coloured signs, 'Chef of The Year', bent in neon. Wonder how many years ago that was made.

Antichrist, Lars Von Trier's newest film, touches upon themes relating to the darkness and beauty of the human nature. The story is told quickly. A couple is having sex while their young son crawls out of his cot and faces a fatal fall from the window- sill. The couple (only described as 'He' and 'She') is deeply affected by their toddler's death, although in very different ways. She is overtaken by her grief while he, a psycho-therapist, tries to face the distress in a controlled and therapeutic manner. In the course of their grieving, he makes her to explain the cause of these actions. As such, the film triggers more questions than answers. It leads us into a landscape of darkness, fear and beauty.

All this makes Antichrist beautiful and unpleasant at the same time. We are confronted with a couple that faces the cruelty of life, something that could happen to us all, the loss of a child through a sequence of seemingly unrelated events. Such a theme touches upon the greatest fear of life exposing madness so real and intense that it renders human fragility visible to us. But not only are we confronted by fear, but also violence and pain. In one scene, she satisfies her partner just moments after she has put him the shoes on the wrong foot. In another scene, she circumcises herself with scissors, another scene, she circumcises herself with scissors, another scene, she circumcises herself with scissors, another scene, she circumcises herself with scissors, another scene, she circumcises herself with scissors.

The Prologue is shot in black and white, featuring slow-motion close-ups. The images, beautiful and horrific at the same time, are emphasised by a Handel aria. The chapters – Grief, Pain (Chaos Reigns), De-spair (Genocide), and The Three Beggars – are filmed in colour (greens, browns and blues), mixing static shots with hand-held camera scenes, creating a sense of fictional reality. We see a grieving couple, beautiful landscapes, animals that speak, wide opened eyes, blood and sexual redemption. The viewer is exposed to a world of its own, as there are bits and pieces of information that lead nowhere than into an imaginary universe. One of the scenes shows, for example, an autopsy report that reveals a slight deformation on the boy's feet. Close-ups of Polarnor's later unveil the fact that she had put him the shoes on the wrong foot, not once, but constantly. Nothing is explained from this event and no predetermined meaning is released to explain the cause of these actions. As such, the film triggers more questions than answers. It leads us into a landscape of darkness, fear and beauty.

Antichrist is (similar to other Von Trier films) divided into sections – A Prologue, four chapters, and an Epilogue. The Prologue and Epilogue are shot in black and white, featuring slow-motion close-ups. The images, beautiful and horrific at the same time, are emphasised by a Handel aria. The chapters – Grief, Pain (Chaos Reigns), De-spair (Genocide), and The Three Beggars – are filmed in colour (greens, browns and blues), mixing static shots with hand-held camera scenes, creating a sense of fictional reality. We see a grieving couple, beautiful landscapes, animals that speak, wide opened eyes, blood and sexual redemption. The viewer is exposed to a world of its own, as there are bits and pieces of information that lead nowhere than into an imaginary universe. One of the scenes shows, for example, an autopsy report that reveals a slight deformation on the boy's feet. Close-ups of Polarnor's later unveil the fact that she had put him the shoes on the wrong foot, not once, but constantly. Nothing is explained from this event and no predetermined meaning is released to explain the cause of these actions. As such, the film triggers more questions than answers. It leads us into a landscape of darkness, fear and beauty.

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Based on the staging of the female body, Von Trier has been accused of being a misogynist; women as human beings guided by their emotions, especially grief, fear and pain, but also sexual desire. As such, the film bears a strong connection to fairy tales in which the female embodies the darkness of humanity; the witch, the stepmother; the evil sibling. In contrast, the film could also be seen as a representation of the powerful nature of the woman human being; females as loving, fighting and hoping individuals. Whatever way the film is interpreted, it confronts us with the very nature of human being. In the film, she is confronted with her existential self through her study on genocide. The following dialogue expresses the essence of her struggle in relation to her subject.

She: That kind of nature interested me a lot when I was up here. That kind of nature was the subject of my thesis. But you shouldn’t underestimate Eden.
He: Of all women. Female nature.
She: What did Eden do?
He: I discovered something else in my material than I’d expected. If human nature was evil then that goes as well for the nature of women?

In this context, ‘Eden’ represents to her what makes the human strange to itself. The force of nature is what creates the very vehicle that manifests that strangeness. Acorns, for example, represent birth and death. Each seed having the possibility turn into a tree or human. He, on the other hand, is confronted with his existence through the fight with her husband. She hunts him like an animal. She wounds him, she catches him and finally she tries to kill him. In this fight over life and death, civilisation and nature, man and female, he appears to succeed. However, by killing her he destroys his own subject of study and thereby the self-confrontation he faces through her very own being.

In the end, history seems to repeat itself as all victimized women (sisters judged as sinful and evil) throughout time arise from the landscape ascending the hills towards him, the killer. There is, however, no revenge, no salvation, no justice, no hope, but pure pain expressed in all its beauty. One could say that the audience is exposed to a violence of sensation, astonished by the power and beauty of the color of blood, the formation of flesh and the darkness of nature. As such, the film could be described as aesthetic perversion. It is beautifully horrific and painfully artistic.

**Urbanis research forum and journal saved**

Some of you will be aware that Urbis in Manchester has now closed. For those unfamiliar with it, Urbis was a museum which focused on city life, although it also dealt with many aspects of popular culture and cultural studies, particularly subculture. The Ian Simpson-designed building will be occupied by the National Football Museum, who have moved into Manchester from Preston. This is an exciting development, and I am delighted to hear that my ex-colleague Mark Rainey will be able to continue the Urbis research forum and journal. Its home, for now, is here:

http://urbisresearchforum.wordpress.com/

The first issue of the journal (ISSN: 2042-034X) can be downloaded from the website, and further editions will be uploaded soon.

Steve Hanson

**Cycling Cultures - new cycling research**

Kat Jungnickel, who finished her PhD at Studio INCITE in the Department of Sociology last year, is working as a Research Fellow with Dr Rachel Aldred in the Humanities and Social Sciences Department at UEL on an ethnographic research project that explores four relatively high-cycling areas in depth in an attempt to find out why cycling thrives in certain places.

The four chosen areas are Hull, Hackney, Cambridge and Bristol. All have differing social and spatial characteristics (from average income levels and ethnic mix to hilliness and local climate) as well as different policy and political environments (e.g., prominence of local cycling campaigns, political composition of local authorities). The project will analyse different components of cycling cultures, exploring how inclusive they are of different social groups, the different ways in which people think about and practise cycling within each locality and explain how cycling provides particular ways of experiencing the four places.

The project website is: www.cyclingcultures.org.uk

For all news, events, seminars and conferences organized by the CUCR please refer to website: www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/cucr

Film: Antichrist
Director and Scriptwriter: Lars Von Trier
Cast: Willem Dafoe & Charlotte Gainsbourg
Produced by Zentropa
First released at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival
www.antichristthemovie.com
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Duffy, Linda MA Cultural History, artist, LIP member
Duman, Alberto Artist, Lecturer at Middlesex University, 'practitioner of the city'
Leary, Michael Edema PhD Sociology and Lecturer at London Southbank University
Gunaratnam, Yasmin Lecturer and researcher, Sociology Department
Hanson, Steven PhD Sociology
Jackson, Emma PhD Sociology
Jones, Hannah PhD Sociology
Jones, Gwenn Independent photographer
Jungnickel, Kat PhD Sociology
Killi, Yaman MA Research Architecture
Kileen, David MA Photography and Urban Cultures graduate
Knowles, Caroline Professor of Sociology, Head of CUCR
Rooke, Alison Researcher and lecturer; CUCR
Lange, Ann-Christina PhD Sociology
Leary, Michael PhD student at CUCR, Lecturer at London Southbank University
Levy, Lani MA Photography and Urban Cultures
Lyon, Dawn Visiting Fellow, CUCR / University of Kent
Puuwar, Nirmal Senior Lecturer in Sociology / Director of Methods Lab
Sach, Peter BA Anthropology and Sociology
Sinha, Shamser Researcher, Sociology Department
Stimakovits, Krystina Independent photographer; LIP member
Vincent, Estelle MA Photography and Urban Cultures
Weber-Newth, Francesca MA Culture Globalisation and the City graduate

MA IN CULTURE, GLOBALISATION AND THE CITY
The Centre for Urban and Community Research (CUCR)

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Our world is moving from being a global village to an urban globe. One of the big challenges of the 21st Century is how to understand the social organisation of contemporary urban life. The MA in Culture, Globalisation and the City gives you the theoretical and practical tools to make sense of cities like London, Los Angeles, Nairobi or Tokyo.

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MA IN PHOTOGRAPHY AND URBAN CULTURES
The Centre for Urban and Community Research (CUCR)

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Photographers, visual artists and media practitioners, as well as those with a background in social sciences, interested in exploring the creative interplay between cultural research, urban studies and photographic practice. You should have a degree or equivalent in a relevant area.

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To find out more, contact: Bridget Ward (secretary), b.ward@gold.ac.uk

Further information and how to apply: UK and EU students: Admissions Office, telephone 020 7919 7060 (direct line), fax 020 7717 2240 or e-mail admissions@gold.ac.uk; International Office, telephone 020 7919 7700 (direct line), fax 020 7919 7704 or e-mail international-office@gold.ac.uk

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