

THE PERILS OF PAULINE:

(Based on a conversation with Lawrence Weiner)

1• *Entering the culture*

Thinking about cultural production in economical terms, Black Markets become interesting because they create a no-rules distribution network in which a product accrues value by its circulation and by what this circulation embodies. The objects—which sometimes are circumstantial—become iconic in their transition into culture. More than about supply and demand; to deal in this sphere is the prerogative to retain protean qualities, to remain outside of market laws. No aims for permanence are implied, since what is being proposed is a model that cannot be fixed.

When alternate, underground models are absorbed, we witness the crystallization of an immense collective desire: what was being circulated underground surges aboveground, and (quoting Lawrence Weiner) “we stop being revolutionaries, and become soldiers.”

Lawrence Weiner:

(Talking about the 60s – 70s)

WHAT YOU ARE REFERRING TO AS A BLACK MARKET, IN FACT IS JUST THE ASPIRATIONS OF A PARTICULAR GENERATION, NOT BASED UPON THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE PREVIOUS GENERATION. THAT IS, HAVING A FORM OF IDEALISM RATHER THAN A FORM OF ROMANTICISM.

YOU HAVE TO STEP ASIDE FROM THE NOTION OF CONCEPTUAL WORK AND DEAL WITH ARTISTS THAT WERE EMERGING AND TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION THEY WERE EMERGING FROM, A SITUATION THAT HAD NO PLACE FOR THEM. THERE WAS NO DRAMA, THERE WAS NO ROMANCE. THERE WERE JUST A LARGE ENOUGH AMOUNT OF THEM IN CITY CENTERS TO MAKE IT FEASIBLE.

OK, YOU HAD A NIGHT SHIFT, YOU HAD OTHER THINGS GOING ON, BUT YOU WERE WORKING TOWARDS ENTERING THE STRUCTURE. THE MINUTE THE OPPORTUNITY AROSE TO ENTER THE STRUCTURE, THERE WAS NOBODY THAT DID NOT STEP IN.

2• *changed circumstances and black markets*

The cultural/political situations of today —as in the past— create local shadow networks, which in turn produce cultural currency; but now this happens in a situation where it is no longer clear what they are operating against. This becomes a more important yet hazy question today, when the terms of the market (alternative or mainstream), the oppositions (east or west) are no longer clearly drawn

What do "black markets" imply when what is forbidden is not clear anymore? If they operate based on a system of exclusion —by offering on the sly that what is excluded from the regular network of supply / demand— what is it that is being excluded now? In this open-border model, what exactly is being traded below ground? What are the differences between the value that is accrued by straight up marketability as opposed to black market circulation?

Lawrence Weiner:

(in reference to his phrase "we are of our times"
and the present role of criticality)

I THINK AT THIS POINT, UNLESS YOU ARE CONTENT WITH THE CONFIGURATION OF WHAT IS SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY AND MORALLY AND AESTHETICALLY CONFRONTING YOU ON OUR SOCIETY, YOU ARE BEHOLDEN AS AN ARTIST TO TRY TO PRESENT OTHER READINGS, OTHER MEANS OF EXISTENCE WITHIN IT. SO DEFINITELY IT IS THE SAME EDGE OF CRITICISM, BUT BECAUSE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION HAVING CHANGED SO RAPIDLY, WHATEVER YOU ARE SAYING HAS A TENDENCY TO BE TRIVIALIZED BY VIRTUE OF ITS REPRODUCTION. BUT IF YOU ARE INVOLVED IN AN AESTHETIC THAT UNDERSTANDS THAT THE FURTHER THINGS GO, THE MORE SOMETHING IS DISTRIBUTED THE MORE IT IS WORTH, RATHER THAN THE LESS ITS WORTH... IT IS JUST TURNING IT AROUND TOPSY-TURVY. WE HAVE BEEN CAPABLE OF DOING THAT FOR YEARS NOW. ITS FINANCIAL REWARDS ARE NOT AS HOT AS DOING IT THE OTHER WAY, BUT IT IS EVEN QUITE POSSIBLE TO SURVIVE BY DOING IT. YOU KNOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO SURVIVE, SO THEREFORE YOU CAN DO THIS WITHOUT LYING. AGAIN, YOU ARE BACK ON TRACK. AN ARTIST THAT DOESN'T LIE IS ALREADY 75% OF THE WAY IN DOING A PRODUCT THAT IS USEFUL FOR THE SOCIETY, SINCE MOST PEOPLE ARE FORCED INTO ESSENTIALLY LYING ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THEMSELVES AND TO EVERYBODY ELSE

J.A: *When I think of conceptual art practice of the late 60s and 70s, I suspect that a new circulation/distribution network had to be created to enable this type of work to be seen and supported. From what I read it was a very unusual network: on the one hand it was radically alternative and opposed to existing institutional models, and on the other hand it was at times supported by corporations and other private capital. Is it possible, in your opinion, to speak of that situation as a kind of "black market" for contemporary art of the time?*

LW: MOST ARTISTS THOUGHT THEY WERE MAKING ART THAT WOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL THE PUBLIC IF THEY COULD JUST GET IT OUT... SO THEY BEGAN PUTTING IT OUT IN PLACES THAT DID

NOT HAVE A CULTURAL AFFILIATION. IN AN OFFICE BUILDING (WHICH WAS SOMETHING ARRANGED BY SETH SIEGALUB) AND PEOPLE CAME. THEY FOUND STOREFRONTS ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE. THEY FOUND STOREFRONTS HERE AND THERE. PEOPLE CAME. THEN THEY WERE LEGITIMIZED COMPLETELY AND THEY WERE NO LONGER BLACK MARKET, THEY WERE THE PEOPLE THAT WERE DEALING WITH ANOTHER FORM, ANOTHER SORT OF ART. THAT'S IT!

THE FACT THAT THEY HAD THE ASPIRATION TO TRY TO OPEN THINGS UP TO ANOTHER LEVEL IS ADMIRABLE. BUT I TELL YOU THIS TOO, THAT IS NOT UTOPIA. THAT'S WHAT MADE THEM LOOK DIFFERENT FOR PEOPLE THAT WERE LOOKING AT CONTEMPORARY ART HISTORY FROM THE 1800s PERSPECTIVE. THAT IT WAS NOT A MOVEMENT ABOUT "THEM", IT WAS A MOVEMENT ABOUT "WE", ABOUT "US". IT WAS AN IDEA OF BUILDING A MARKET WHERE THE ARTIST WAS AN INTEGRAL FUNCTIONING MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY. THE CHANGE WAS NOT A COUNTER-CULTURAL CHANGE, IT WAS THE ASSERTION THAT THE NEEDS AND THE DESIRES OF THIS SPECIFIC GENERATION HAD VALIDITY. IT GAINED VALUE BY ITS HAVING VALIDITY, NOT BY ITS BEING ALREADY A DESIRED OBJECT. ITS TRUTH MADE IT WORTH SOMETHING.

I THINK THAT'S WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO TALK ABOUT, HOW DO YOU BUILD SOMETHING THAT HAS INHERENT VALUE AND THEN FIVE GENERATIONS LATER IT HAS A ROMANTIC INHERENT VALUE BECAUSE FOR SOME STRANGE REASON THERE WAS SOMETHING VERY REVOLUTIONARY IN SAYING "THE VALUE OF THIS PRODUCT (BECAUSE WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE) IS STILL A VALUE". THAT IS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT OUR GENERATION MADE CLEAR. IT DOESN'T HAVE A FORM; IT DOESN'T HAVE TO LOOK LIKE ANY OTHER THING. IT IS EXACTLY WHAT IT IS, AND ITS ONLY VALUE IS ITS TRUTH. AND TRUTH IS NOT THAT IT IS ABOUT ART, IT IS NOT THE VALUE OF ART ABOUT ART ABOUT ART, IT IS A MANIFESTATION OF SOMETHING THAT IS TRUE.

(in reference to the notion of black markets)

IF THERE IS AN INTENT AND THERE IS CONCISENESS, THERE IS NO NEED FOR A BLACK MARKET BECAUSE IN FACT WE ARE ALL FUNCTIONING CITIZENS OF OUR ENVIRONMENT... AND WE CAN ONLY BE THAT WHEN WE FUNCTION AS WHAT WE ARE, WHICH IS AN ARTIST.

THIS WHOLE BLACK MARKET CULTURE THING IS BECAUSE SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF OUR HEAD WE HAVE BEEN THOUGHT TO THINK THAT ARTISTS AREN'T THE SAME AS OTHER PEOPLE. THEY DON'T HAVE THE SAME PROBLEMS, THEIR KIDS DON'T GO TO THE DENTIST? OF COURSE THEY DO! THEY DON'T HAVE TO PAY TAXES? OF COURSE THEY DO! WHERE ARE THEY DIFFERENT? JUST BECAUSE SOMEBODY, SOMEWHERE, -SOMEONE WITH A BELLY-ONCE SAID "ARTISTS DON'T WORK FOR A LIVING." SOME UNHAPPY GUY SAID "ARTISTS ARE GETTING AWAY WITH SOMETHING, THEY DON'T WORK LIKE ME" (BUT HE DOESN'T MAKE ART) AND WE BELIEVE IT. WE FEEL GUILTY ALL OUR LIVES THAT WE ARE NOT QUITE RIGHT. WE NEED A BLACK MARKET, WE NEED THINGS UNDER THE TABLE, IT HAS TO BE SECRET, IT HAS TO BE ROMANTIC. NO, IT DOESN'T!

3• *Multiplicity and simultaneous universes*

Making a revision of the terms, the idea of culture circulating through alternative channels –not because of a need of opening new spaces, but as a way to retain autonomy— would be better described as an *informal economy*; –a process of income generation that is unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated. – It is hard to find a concise definition of “informal economy.” Many studies approach the issue from the reverse and describe, what the informal economy is *not*, namely: formal economy (white market) / criminal economy (black market) / care economy (domestic economy, household).¹

This Informal economy or “gray market” doesn’t have universal parameters; it generates situations to foster the exchange and circulation of cultural production that hasn’t been assimilated and therefore doesn’t have a fixed value. As these situations can’t be instantly recognizable (there is no singular model for them), there is a multiplicity at work, an abolishing of distance. All here, all now

J.A: *what I came here calling black markets is part of what you call simultaneous universes...*

LW: I AM THINKING THAT WE HAVE REACHED THE POINT WHERE THERE IS A POSSIBILITY, THROUGH THE ARTWORLD, THROUGH WHAT WE ARE BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT MÉCHANICS – WHICH IS THE ARTWORLD, ITS MATERIAL- THAT WE CAN ACCEPT A SIMULTANEOUS UNIVERSE THAT THEN WOULD REQUIRE NO HIERARCHY OTHER THAN WHERE YOU CHOOSE TO PLACE YOUR ATTENTION. OF THAT LACK OF HIERARCHIES IN THE WORLD I AM LOOKING TOWARDS, WE CANNOT SAY ONE CULTURE IS HIGHER OR LOWER THAN ANOTHER, THEY ARE DIFFERENT. BUT THEY ARE HAPPENING AT EXACTLY THE SAME TIME, AT THE SAME PLACE.

J.A: *This situation generates a different type of value for the product.*

LW: IT GENERATES A VALUE BASED ON ITS USE WITHIN THE SOCIETY, THAT’S IT. NOT ON ITS HIERARCHY, NOT ON ITS POWER AND NOT ON ITS BRILLIANCE, BUT ON ITS USE WITHIN THE SOCIETY THAT IT FINDS ITSELF IN. I’VE BEEN A LUCKY PERSON AND IN MOST OF THE SOCIETIES THAT THE WORK HAS FOUND ITSELF –FROM WESTERN EUROPE TO NEW GUINEA– THE PEOPLE AROUND SEEMED TO FIND A USE FOR IT. BUT THERE MUST BE A CULTURE WHERE THERE IS NO USE FOR IT AND THAT JUST MEANS THAT IN THAT CULTURE IT HAS NO USE, IT HAS NO VALUE. YOU UNDERSTAND? WHEN THERE IS NO USE FOR SOMETHING YOU CANNOT EVEN MAKE A BLACK MARKET VALUE FOR IT, UNLESS YOU USE IT FOR SOMETHING ELSE

¹ From the Wikipedia entry on “informal economy”

4• *Truth, Revolution & The New (New Models of Criticality)*

I keep going back to a line I read in a book by Felix Guattari: “the unconscious has become an institution.”² It makes me think that notions such as “desire”, “revolution”, “truth” etc... are quite ingrained now into mainstream rhetoric, and what they stood for seems to be bankrupt of meaning. Those notions have been turned into slogans, and there appears to be a script or a model for revolution, a course of action for emancipatory politics. “Truth”, “revolution”, and “the new” have become normalizing categories stripped of meaning, but still being used as discursive operators for cultural production.

J.A: The idea of use value makes me wonder what happens with the role assigned to criticality in art at the present time. Paradoxically, even though its intentions are serious, it often ends up serving as a tool of validation for the very same institutions and structures it sets out to undermine.

(talking about criticality in art)

LW: MAYBE MORE A SYSTEM OF ACCREDITATION. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT HAS ALREADY ENTERED INTO THE STRUCTURE, SOMETHING THAT SOME GROUP CALLED THE ACADEMY –WHICH DOESN'T REALLY EXIST- IS WILLING TO ALLOW INTO THE CONVERSATION. IT IS BASIC ACCREDITATION. IT IS NOT BAD, IT IS NOT GOOD. IT IS NICE THAT SOMETIMES THE ACADEMY WANTS TO HAVE A CONVERSATION, BUT IN FACT, WHO ACCREDITED THE ACADEMY TO CHOOSE WHAT'S PART OF THE DIALOGUE? THAT'S A QUESTION THAT I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO.

J.A: Can we pose a level a responsibility for new critical practice? Is it a viable position at the present time to take down the institutions at large and not propose an alternative?

LW: WELL, THAT COMES FROM A MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF STRUCTURALISTS. MOST OF THE PEOPLE LIKE FOUCAULT —THAT REALLY STILL HOLD UP QUITE WELL— THAT ATTEMPTED TO UNDERSTAND THE COMPONENTS OF A STRUCTURE BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE WAY THE STRUCTURE FUNCTIONED, THEY THOUGHT THERE WAS AN INHERENT ERROR IN THE WAY THE STRUCTURE FUNCTIONED. THAT JUST BECAME A STYLE, OF DE-STRUCTURING EVERYTHING. BUT NOBODY WAS CAPABLE WITHIN THAT GROUP TO RE-STRUCTURE. THEY TOOK THE ERECTOR SET APART, TO UNDERSTAND ITS PARTS, THEY TOLD YOU WHATEVER THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT THE PARTS AND THEY WERE PRETTY TRUTHFUL, BUT THEY NEVER FIGURED OUT HOW THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO RESTRUCTURE. SO YOU GOT A WHOLE PILE OF AN ERECTOR SET.... WITH NO RULES. AND THAT GAVE THEM ANOTHER EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME OF AUTHORITY BECAUSE EVERYTHING YOU PUT TOGETHER THEY WOULD SAY “NO, THAT'S NOT THE WAY TO DO IT... THAT'S NOT

² Felix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: an ethico-aesthetic paradigm*, Indiana University Press, 1992, pg.10

THE WAY TO DO IT.... AND THAT 'S NOT THE WAY TO DO IT" THAT IS ANOTHER 10 YEARS OF PEOPLE GOING TO SCHOOL FOR THEM. THEY FINISH THEIR CAREER, THEY GET THEIR PENSION AND THEY LEAVE. I SAW THAT AS SOME SORT OF WELL-MEANING TRICK, IT DOESN'T DO ANYBODY ANY HARM, BECAUSE THE YOUNGER STUDENTS WILL LOOK AT IT AND SAY "WELL HEY, WE UNDERSTAND ALL OF THIS, NOW, HOW DO WE PUT IT TOGETHER AND, WHERE IS THE SCREWDRIVER?"

(...)

THERE IS A DIFFERENT PROBLEM HERE, HOW CAN YOU INSTITUTIONALIZE TEACHING SOMETHING THAT ONLY EXIST IN ITS CONTINUING INTERACTION WITH A CHANGING SOCIETY? THE WORLD TURNS, AND YOUR AREA MAY HAVE BEEN FANTASTIC IN 1972, WHEN WE WERE CONFRONTED WITH THE HORRORS OF VIETNAM, BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE ANY KIND OF QUESTION OR ANYTHING FOR THE HORRORS THAT WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH IN 2005. THAT'S BECAUSE WHAT WAS REACTIONARY THEN BECOMES GERIATRIC. YES, YOU ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING AT ONE POINT, YES YOU HOPE THAT EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE SOMETHING THAT YOU EVEN DID THEN TOSSED INTO THE CONTEXT STILL QUESTIONS... BUT THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE THE ANSWER HASN'T BEEN GIVEN.

5• *The damsel in distress (Can the product determine its circulation?)*

What we are given as a model for resistance, also works as an assumption. It assigns references, perpetuates readings and presupposes the conditions both for resistance and for what is being resisted. It denies the unexpected —the next dispatch of a story that keeps repeating itself?

This predictability makes the cycles of cultural production rather similar to the cliffhanger show, "The Perils of Pauline", a 1917 silent serial shown in weekly installments featuring a perpetual damsel in distress. At the end of each installment she was generally placed in a situation that looked sure to result in her imminent death. The start of the next episode showed how she was rescued or otherwise escaped the danger, only to face fresh peril again. Her most familiar plight is being tied to railroad tracks with a rapidly approaching train.

If we think of cultural production as a "damsel in distress," why do we, in fact, want to rescue her? Maybe if she does get run over, we can start a new movie. Maybe she can even untie herself and walk off. How do we escape the genre and revitalize things? Is it possible to propose a circulation model that will remain vital and current?

J.A: *There is an implicit relationship of reciprocity between mainstream*

networks of consumption and the new ones being proposed. What happens when new forms are absorbed? It is a bit like your image of the damsel in distress, except that the guys that rescue her are the ones that will tie her/us up again in the following episode.

LW: IN THE LOGIC STRUCTURE, THEY WILL PROBABLY END UP TYING SOMEBODY ELSE TO ANOTHER THING. RATHER THAN THE TRACKS THEY'LL TIE THEM TO A ROAD SIGN. BUT THEY'LL TIE THEM UNTO SOMETHING, THAT IS JUST THAT REFLECTION OF POWER. AND WHEN THE HEROINES SAVE THEMSELVES, THAT STILL DOESN'T GUARANTEE THAT THEY WON'T TIE SOMEBODY ELSE UP. YOU CAN USE AS A CASE IN POINT A PLACE LIKE ISRAEL OR NIGERIA, WHERE PEOPLE WERE BRUTALIZED AND THEN THEY TURNED AROUND AND BRUTALIZED SOMEBODY ELSE. YOU THINK THAT THEY WOULD KNOW BETTER.
ARTISTS DO THE SAME THING.

J.A: *It is frightening when that comes to art*

LW: WELL, ARTISTS GET SCARED, PEOPLE GET SCARED, YOU ARE FORGETTING THAT ARTISTS ARE HUMAN BEINGS, AND THEY HAVE TO LIVE IN A PRECARIOUS ENVIRONMENT. THEY GET FRIGHTENED AND THEY BEGIN TO PROTECT THEMSELVES. THEY DON'T QUITE REALIZE THAT THEIR REAL USE IS TO MAINTAIN THEMSELVES WITHIN THE ARENA OF CONVERSATION, IT'S NOT TO FIND THE IVORY TOWER AND KEEP PEOPLE OUT. THAT'S AN OLD FASHIONED IDEA OF ART, PERHAPS IT WAS NECESSARY AT ANOTHER TIME; BUT IT IS NOT NECESSARY ANYMORE. FORGET ABOUT IT BEING EVEN GOOD OR BAD, IT IS NOT NECESSARY.

6• *Material/process in the present tense*

“Structure implies feedback loops, it puts into play a concept of totalisation that it itself masters. It is occupied by inputs and outputs whose purpose is to make the structure function according to the principle of eternal return. It is haunted by a desire for eternity.”³ —Felix Guattari

Artists on the 60s and 70s often worked with casual materials: bricks, fluorescent light bulbs, negative space cut out from a wall. What happened was very interesting—and frightening—for my generation of artists: those materials acquired formal value. And if we are to have some fidelity to the facts, it is no longer possible to think casually about piles of earth, or about anything that you can buy at the hardware store. New universes of reference are established, and now it is as if they had always been there. Things are getting crowded to the point that it feels like a mined field—references, straitjackets, or guidelines? Their generation may have tied mine to the tracks...

³ Felix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: an ethico aesthetic paradigm*, Indiana University Press, 1992, pg. 37

J.A: *You have said that you work with “non-heroic materials”*

LW: I TRY TO

J.A: *Those materials now carry a different value.*

LW: YOU CAN SUBVERT THE VALUE, YOU CAN TAKE A PIECE THAT I DID ON THE 60S WHEN DOW CHEMICALS WAS GIVING AWAY ALL THESE STUFF. THE ONLY PIECE THAT I COULD DO WITH THE DOW CHEMICALS MATERIAL WAS TO LAY IT IN THE GROUND. IT WAS OBVIOUS WHAT IT WAS ABOUT, BUT IT STILL WAS REALLY ABOUT A PIECE OF HD300 SET INTO THE GROUND, FLUSHED WITH THE GROUND.

THE METAPHOR THAT THEY MADE FROM IT –AND THEY WERE FURIOUS— WAS THEIR METAPHOR, I WAS MAKING A SCULPTURE, TOTALLY WITHIN THE AESTHETICS OF MY OWN WORK. OF COURSE WE CAN DO THAT STUFF! WE ALL ARE SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT STUFF! BUT IT HAS TO REALLY BE A PIECE OF SCULPTURE, NOT A TEMPORARY CRY IN THE DARK THAT THERE IS AN INJUSTICE. THAT BELONGS ON GRAFFITI, ON POSTERS, AND ON YOUR MOUTH AND YOU ON THE STREET AND YOUR VOTE. IT DOESN'T NECESSARILY INFORM WORK OF ART, BECAUSE NOBODY KNOWS WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT AFTER YOU'VE BEEN SUCCESSFUL AT STOPPING THE ATROCITY. BUT IF IT HAS A MATERIAL VALUE, THAT THEN CAN BE CONVERTED INTO ANOTHER READING, AND ANOTHER MEANING FOR ANOTHER TIME.

J.A: *You are also producing a system of reference...*

LW: A SYSTEM OF REFERENCE THAT AT LEAST IS COMING FROM MATERIAL OBJECTS AND DOESN'T CARRY WITH IT A SYSTEM OF VALUES. CONTEMPORARY ART AS IT STANDS, WITH ITS PERVERSE PLACE IN THE SOCIETY PLACES ITSELF IN SUCH A MANNER THAT IT DOESN'T CARRY WITH IT AUTHORITY. PEOPLE FIND USE FOR IT, YES THEY FIND USE FOR IT... AND THE MORE THEY FIND USE FOR IT, IT ACCRUES AN AUTHORITY, IT WORKS. IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A GIN GIMLET, THAT RECIPE WORKS. ART IS JUST A RECIPE.

With the advantages that time gives us, how can we go about generating processual ruptures on the structures as they are now? Do we want to re-signify, or to a-signify? Is it enough of a shift to take the parts of the system and reassemble them in a different way? Do we care about the quality of the base materials?

J.A: *The way structures are now, I feel that the artist ends up being a natural resource*

LW: WELL, THE ARTIST IS A NATURAL RESOURCE, AN ARTIST IS A CIRCUS INDUSTRY; THEY PERFORM A CIRCUS BY FUNCTIONING WITHIN THE STRUCTURE, THEY ARE LIKE WHITE PORPOISES(...)

J.A: *I am talking about natural resource more on the way that you see a raw material before it enters the cycle of production*

LW: YES, THEY ARE RAW MATERIALS, BUT THEY ARE RAW MATERIALS THAT HAVE A CERTAIN KIND OF FULLNESS TO THEM THAT THEY ARE CAPABLE OF EXERTING SOME FORM OF POWER TO MAINTAIN THEIR OWN DIGNITY, I HAVE BEEN DOING THESE BODIES OF WORK ABOUT THE IDEA OF WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE MATERIAL IS BROUGHT DOWN TO THE POINT WHERE ITS INTEGRAL DIGNITY IS SO DISTRESSED THAT IT NO LONGER AGAIN CAN IT FUNCTION AS THE SAME MATERIAL. IT IS NOT A METAPHOR FOR PEOPLE; IT IS REALLY ABOUT THE MATERIALS. ALRIGHT, SOMEBODY THAT JUST HAS BEEN WRONGLY OR RIGHTLY IMPRISONED AND TORTURED, THEY'LL READ IT AS SOMETHING THAT RELATES TO THEM, OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE WALKING DOWN THE STREET THAT'S CRUMBLING BECAUSE OF SHITTY CONCRETE, THEY'LL RELATE TO THAT... THAT'S THE POINT OF MAKING ART, TO EMPOWER PEOPLE TO BE ABLE TO BUILD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE THING, THAT THERE IS ESSENTIALLY SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE CONCRETE WHEN IT CRUMBLES UNDER YOUR FEET. IT'S NOT GOOD; IT'S NOT WHAT THE SOCIETY PAID FOR.

7• *The international art market: Biennials as circulation strategy*

Over the last 10 years, there has been a huge proliferation of biennials and international exhibitions. This point in time could even be dubbed as "the biennial generation". While the need for so many exhibitions of these kind can be questioned, they provides a way of generating value that is not directly tied to capital, and it also allows for certain type of work to exist, specially work that may have a difficulty finding its place within the gallery system.

J.A: *It can be seen as a way to set up a system of circulation*

LW: YES, OF CIRCULATION, OF GETTING IT OUT IN THE WORLD.
(...) AGAIN, ANYTHING THAT GIVES PEOPLE A DIGNIFIED MEANS OF SHOWING WHAT IT IS THAT THE CULTURE IS PRODUCING, BE IT FOR SOMEONE THAT IS 90 AND HAS BEEN DOING IT ALL HIS LIFE, OR FOR SOMEBODY FOR WHOM IT IS THEIR FIRST TIME OUT, IT IS NICE; YOU DON'T KNOW ANY OF THAT WHEN YOU SEE IT UP IN THE WALL, YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN YOU SEE IT ON THE FLOOR, YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN THEY TURN IT ON AND TURN IT OFF, YOU JUST SEE WHAT IT IS, AND I THINK IT IS GREAT, THE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO SHOW, THE BETTER. I DON'T LIKE BIENNALES AND TRIENNALES THAT HAVE FALSE CLAIMS: "THIS IS THE TRIENNIAL OR BIENNALE THAT IS GOING TO CHANGE THE WORLD" NO. SOMETHING IN IT MAY CHANGE THE WORLD, BUT BIENNALES AND TRIENNALES ARE GOING TO CHANGE NOTHING, SO THEY ARE MAKING A TRAP. IT IS NOT THE EXHIBITION, IT IS WHAT IS IN IT. IT IS NOT THE MUSEUM THAT MAKES ART PART OF THE CULTURE, IT IS WHAT IS IN THE

MUSEUM. PEOPLE WHO FALL FOR THE AUTHORITY, THE FALSE AUTHORITY OF THE MUSEUM, MOST OFTEN WHEN THEY HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO SPEND SOME TIME AROUND, THEY REALIZE THAT THE MUSEUM IS NOT AN ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY, THE MUSEUM IS A MEANS OF HOLDING TOGETHER WHAT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE PRODUCED... AND THAT'S IT. IT IS A MUSEO, A PLACE WHERE THEY CAN HOLD TOGETHER THINGS THAT ENTER THE CULTURE AND NO LONGER WERE TALKING TO ANYBODY, BUT THEY MAYBE INTERESTING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION TO UNDERSTAND... YOU READ HISTORY, I READ HISTORY...

8• *Corollary*

LW: I LIKE THE IDEA OF YOU PUTTING YOURSELF UP ON A SITUATION OF COMING TO HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH A COLLEAGUE OF YOURS WHO IS YOUR FRIEND, ABOUT WHAT IN FACT YOU ARE DOING BY INVOLVING YOURSELF INTO A TRIENNIAL BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT LOOKING TO ADD FALSE VALUE TO THINGS, BUT YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR THINGS TO HAVE VALUE... IT IS A VERY GOOD CONVERSATION BETWEEN ARTISTS WHEN YOU TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHAT IT IS THAT YOU ARE PUTTING OUT INTO THE WORLD AND IT IS JUST AS VALID AS ANYTHING ELSE... BUT IN THE END YOU ARE STILL STUCK WITH WHAT IT IS YOU PUT OUT, AND NOT HOW YOU PACKAGE IT AND HOW YOU PHRASE IT. BEAUTIFUL LIFE. ISN'T IT?