

situations

What is an Organisation?

Saturday 25 October 1-5pm, Spike Island, Bristol

The afternoon will be led by Ana Dević and Sabina Sabolović from What, How and For Whom (WHW), Curatorial Residents with Situations and Projectbase from 20th to 30th October 2008. Presentations will be given by WHW, SKART (Djordje Balmazovic) and Geoff Cox followed by a discussion moderated by Paul O'Neill.

What is an organisation?

What are the imperatives of organisational form?

Is artistic production without an organisational structure possible?

What is the minimal requirement of organisational form?

What are the potentials and the limits of self-organisation?

How flexible are the boundaries between formal and informal?

What is the hidden hierarchy within non-hierarchical structures?

These are some of the questions that will serve as the point of departure for *What, How and For Whom* during their Curatorial Residency in Bristol and Cornwall. WHW wish to approach the residency as an investigation of the complex relationships between different forms of organisation and collective work in Bristol and Cornwall.

Although the word 'organisation' is itself derived from the Greek word *organon*, meaning 'tool', the notion of organisation investigated will go beyond this strictly instrumental point of view. In the seminar on 25th October, WHW will explore a set of process-related activities, considering how more efficient models of artistic production and resistance to the dominant art systems can be generated. In doing so, WHW will offer a productive criticism of social institutions and their relation to politics.

"Self-organised initiatives can take many forms", WHW suggest, "but we are not primarily interested in exploring the formal structure of organisations (networks, communities, groups, platforms etc.), as much as their attempts to redefine the categories of site, status and the function of art in the public space. Although there are many common sites of departure, organised networks and self-organised practices are not a unified movement. Our seminar will try to look into different models of working, comparative curatorial methods and strategies, with particular consideration of the context in which they develop."

The Curatorial Residency forms part of the Curatorial Network Programme. To contribute to the ongoing online discussion list, visit www.curatorial.net. The seminar will be published as a transcript online as part of the Situations research resource at www.situations.org.uk.



ArtProjects and
Solutions [the-curatorial-network](http://the-curatorial-network.org)



Spike Island

Biographies

What, How and For Whom (WHW)

What, How and for Whom/ WHW is a curators' collective formed in 1999 and based in Zagreb, Croatia. Its members are curators Ivet Ćurlin, Ana Dević, Nataša Ilić and Sabina Sabolović. Since May 2003, WHW has been directing the programme of Gallery Nova a non-profit, city owned gallery in Zagreb. They are curators of the 11th Istanbul biennial taking place in 2009.

What, how and for whom are the three basic questions of every economic organisation that also concern the planning, concept and realisation of exhibitions, as well as the production and distribution of artworks or artists' position at the labour market. These questions, which were the title of WHW's first project dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the Communist Manifesto, in 2000 in Zagreb, became the motto of WHW's work and the title of the collective. Instrumentality of social capital in constituting the social post-socialist reality turned out to be a matrix for the development of WHW's projects and their internal and external operations. All WHW projects have been conceived as a platform for discussing relevant social issues through art, theory and media, as well as a model of collaboration and exchange of know-how between cultural organisations of different backgrounds.

Geoff Cox

Dr. Geoff Cox is a lecturer in the Faculty of Technology at the University of Plymouth (UK), an occasional artist, writer, and Associate Curator of Online Projects at Arnolfini, Bristol (UK). He is programme manager for MA/MSc/MRes Digital Art & Technology and part of the Art & Social Technologies research group at Plymouth, and also a member of the research faculty of Transart Institute, Linz (A). He has a research interest in software (art) studies expressed in various projects and writing. He is co-editor of the DATA Browser book series published by Autonomedia (New York), works on various projects with Kurator, is a trustee of Kahve-Society, on the council of management of Spacex gallery, and treasurer of the UK Museum of Ordure. www.anti-thesis.net/

Djordje Balmazovic

Djordje Balazovic is a member of the collective Skart (meaning reject or scrap) founded in 1990 at the Belgrade faculty of Architecture, which crosses fields of design, performance and poetry. After the first 10 years of activity in a small group, in 2000, Skart conceived new collectives: Horkeskart a 40-members skart-choir-and-orchestra, Female and Male embroiderers of "New cooks" and Proba (Rehearsal) a music collective. The Skart-workshops, presentations and actions were all performed in Europe, North America and Asia.

Moderator - Paul O'Neill

Dr. Paul O'Neill is a curator, artist, and writer. He joined Situations in 2007 as the GWR Research Fellow in Commissioning Contemporary Art and leads the Locating the Producers research project. In 2007, he completed his PhD at Middlesex University in 'Curating Cultures, The Culture of Curating: The Development of Contemporary Curatorial Discourse since 1987'. He has curated or co-curated over 50 projects including exhibitions at Project, Dublin; Glassbox, Paris; Redux, London; Text and Work Gallery, Bournemouth; Studio Voltaire, London; Glassbox, Paris and Zaçheta Gallery of Contemporary Art, Warsaw. His writing has been published in a range of books and journals including Art Monthly, Space & Culture, and CIRCA. He is editor of the curatorial anthology *Curating Subjects*, ed. Paul O'Neill (Amsterdam & London, de Appel and Open Editions, 2007).

Recommended Reading

Block, Rene and Nollert, Angelika, eds. *Collective Creativity*. Frankfurt: Revolver, 2005.

Bradley, Will, Superflex, et al, eds. *Self-Organisation: Counter-Economic Strategies*. Frankfurt: Sternberg Press, 2006.

Doherty, Claire. 'New Institutionalism and the Exhibition as Situation' in *Protections: This is not an Exhibition*, Graz: Kunsthaus Graz, 2006.

*Misiano, Viktor. 'From and Existential Individualist to Solidarity: Collective and Collectiveness in Contemporary Russian Art' in *Collective Creativity*. Frankfurt: Revolver, 2005.

*O'Neill, Paul. 'Group Practice', *Art Monthly*, issue 304, March 2007.

Rossiter, Ned. *Organized Networks: Media Theory, Creative Labour, New Institutions*. Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2006.

Stilinović, Mladen. *30=0*, exhibition catalogue, Zagreb: Gallery Nova, 2006.

*What How and for Whom. 'New Outlines of the Possible', in *Collective Creativity*. Frankfurt: Revolver, 2005.

WHW. 'To be put up in a public debate?', in *Taking the matter into common hands, On Contemporary Art a Collaborative Practices*, London: Black dog publishing, 2007

WHW. 'Magical World, These Days', in *Potentialities Beyond Political Sadness, What Is to Be Done?* Newspapers #16, St. Petersburg, 2007.

WHW. 'We are all autodidacts', in exhibition catalogue of *10th International Istanbul Biennial: Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War*, Istanbul, 2007.

WHW. 'A Place Under the Sun' found at
<<http://www.andreja.org/tekstovi/place-under-the-sun.htm>>

WHW. *A Place Under the Sun*, exhibition catalogue, Zagreb: Gallery Nova, 2006.

WHW. 'Here, Tomorrow', *Parachute* 109, Jan/Feb/Mar 2003.

WHW. ARTISTS BOOKS IN (what was formerly known as) EASTERN EUROPE, New York, Printed Matter, 2006 also found at <
<http://printedmatter.org/researchroom/essays/whw.cfm>>

*Copies of these texts will be available at the presentation.