

Weekly report (3.12 – 6.12)

Session 23 Ecole du Magasin

Workshops

Olivier Vadrot

He's an architect whose approach to art was rather intuitional. He is a creator of Salle de Bains in Lyon, later Triple V in Dijon together with Vincent Pecoil. For him both these places were a space of personal experience and exchange with artists. Usually exhibition shown there were a single-man shows. For us it was interesting perspective of cooperation with artists, where the gallery becomes a platform of two ways exchange, a kind of laboratory.

Vadrot also presented us photo documentation of his two big shows: *Freak Show* in and *N'importe quoi*. Both of these exhibitions were curated together with Vincent Pecoil also both of them were scenographically very strong and particular. The *mise en scene* was constructed in theatrical manner and closely related to the content of the exhibition. Curators consciously brought back the historical museum structures as i.e. Natural History Museum or a Freaks Gallery, using their way of presenting works. This strong decision definitely forced the final impression of the viewer. Our opinions about these shows were rather divided. (Do you have opinions? I hated it and you?)

I've personally found interesting the way they've conducted their researches. Both on the historical representation and symbolism of the freak - cinema / literature / mythology etc. (the fact that what is deformed or ugly can find its status of being exhibited because is freak), and the parallelism with the Natural History Museums, the way they classified the artworks as if they were animals or insects etc.

During his presentation Vadrot also mentioned his other projects connected with music. His project "Musique kiosk" became a very popular construction. The kiosk is a little space for a concert which is audible only for people wearing headphones connected with a booth. Apparently this construction travelled in many exhibition spaces hosting inside different musicians or DJs. Vadrot created intimate situation of a listener who is in special reaction with the performer. The limited number of participants and the headphones make the concert exceptional as given only for a selected (by who? By chance?) group of viewers.

Last of his mentioned projects is still in progress. The prototype of the *reveille* system in school was designed together with Sebastien Roux. This system of loudspeakers was installed in one of French collages. The artists designed a special loudspeakers for each class and recorded *reveille* connected with topic of lessons which are taking place in each room. The project will began next week.

The second part of the meeting was much more interesting for us, cause it brought a discussion and an exchange of ideas. Vadrot talked about issues he's particularly interested in: the idea of pavilion in the architecture on the example of German Pavillion in Barcelona; about collage in architecture; wider about Centre Pompidou architecture and Enzo Piano ideas. We discussed how the architecture of museums can also limit the potential of the exhibition, by not useful solutions and architectural ideas. This problem is caused by a lack of discussion between the architects and people working on the exhibition in particular spaces. In result work in the impressive architecture construction cannot be forced by equally impressive content. As an example of that situation Vadrot brought MACBA in Barcelona. The contrary example was the New Museum in NY, which special cubature gives various possibilities for the exhibition scenography and planning.

Andrea Bellini

He's seminarium was focused on monographic exhibition and issues which they bring. Bellini in his curatorial practice prefers to work on single-artist shows then on group exhibitions. He did few of them in his career, still he considers that a monographic show brings the most important part of the exhibition in a light – an art work. Bellini finds group shows too much determined by the curators' ideas and research, which may become too strong for art, too dominant. According to him it is the art work itself which will survive, which won't be forget by history, contrary to fluid idea, temporary exhibitions, curators.

On the examples of numerous shows held in Castello di Rivoli Bellini talked about the display possibilities and problems he faced, and which all curators may face in their practice. This very difficult space was the place where Bellini organised few shows with Italian artists coming from different backgrounds. He shown how this particular space (6m wide and around 60 m long) was limiting his ideas and how he was working on them with the artists. On practical examples he explained his ideas of juxtaposing works which can create a balance in this gallery. We found it very interesting, as working on an exhibition display always brings new questions and doubts. It is also a place to create another meaning beside these which works brings. What Bellini said talking about creating "travelling" shows: what is also important and substantial is to understand the space before creating a display, figure out how it's working. From his experience he knows that the same show in different spaces can be completely different.

Bellini also visited our exhibition "Je prefere etre derange" in ENSBA. He was positively surprised with it quality (conidering the fact it was made in a very short time, by 6 curators who all of them worked for the first time in such a group, etc). He found this show clear and readable. (Guys, I wasn't there, can anybody help me????) We made a "guided visit" with Bellini and the students from the University of Grenoble and we introduced the main topics of the exhibitions as well as the artworks chosen from the collection Bruno Henry. Bellini seemed interested, he listened carefully to our visit and asked sometimes questions about choice of display, for ex. the drawing by Richard Fauguet, the dvd by Haie, the apple charger etc. A he said, even if it's not the first time we see ordinary objects in an exhibition space, the choice of showing them was coherent with the whole exhibition and interesting in analyze the reaction of the public face to them. The visit ended with a discussion with Bellini and the students, we answered about technical questions and explaining the particular case of Bruno Henry

Blog

We organise our work in school not only around our group meetings. We decided to give each other at least one day per week to work on our own – at school, at home, etc. However we always gave each other assignments. This time we read/re-read few texts to discuss them next week and to comment on our blog:

Maybe it could be better if we worked on group on three _ website Gillick

Two text from book *Institutional critique* : Hans Haacke *Museums, Managements of Consciousness*, Material Group 1982-83

Should the future help the past by Gillick

The New Curatorial Rhetoric and Discontents by Paul O'Neil

In result of this day few new posts appeared on our blog.

Questions to Liam Gillick

This week we came back to the lists of questions to Liam Gillick corrected by Caroline. We discuss them for many hours, trying to reformulate them. The difficulty for us caused our research which due to lack of time is not deep enough to formulate more complicated problems and questions to the artist. We're also very carefull not to ask questions which are maybe too simple or to which answer was already given by the artists. We're still working on them, progress is very slow cause for us it seems to be a very important and almost fundamental moment for our cooperation with Gillick. They should be ready in coming week.

Meeting with Yves Aupetitallot

After nombrous obsctacles (full agenda, snow on tracks blocking the train etc) we had finally occasion to talk with Yves Aupetitallot about school and project with Gillick. Before our meeting we sent him a list of questions we would like to ask him and discuss. He also send them to Liam Gillick, what wasn't in our will. However for him it is a part of openness we should share, the transparent nature of our cooperation. Gillick answered the questions which were considering directly him.

QUESTIONNAIRE

In black - our questions

In red in French - YA's answers

In red English - LG's answers

In blue - result of further discussion during the meeting, selection of notes form it.

INSTITUTION

- Do you have a definition for institution / what is an institution for you ?

"L'institution" pourrait n'être qu'un objet transitionnel et symbolique, mais est certainement politique quand elle organise et quand elle cristallise le lien de l'artiste et de son audience à la communauté dans laquelle ils s'inscrivent

The institution is creating the system of relations between art-artist-audience. It gives a medium of communication, but they are not oblige to that. It is a space of reflection and exchange.

THE 90's

- Can you describe the atmosphere in the art field of the 90's ?

Difficile de répondre pour la décennie entière. Il faut certainement distinguer de la fin des 80's jusqu'au milieu des 90's où le milieu de l'art est soumis à la crise qui suit la première guerre du golf et dont les conséquences sont multiples, effondrement du marché, quasi disparition de la génération des 80's/arrêt brusque de l'émergence d'une nouvelle scène européenne et américaine dont la scène de Köln avait été le lieu de constitution.. La deuxième moitié des 90's consacre un repliement de la scène américaine et l'émergence d'une nouvelle génération européenne qui est celle de Liam. In 90' in France there was no system of art institutions, it was just emerging. How we know it today is a result of process guided by political forces and programs, regional and cross country.

- This was a very strong period (politically); how was the art field reflecting these events and changes ? (The fall of Berlin wall, the end of Cold war, the crash of Soviet Union, war in Balkans, Formation of EU ...)

Outre les conséquences factuelles des faits politiques et sociaux cités cette période est également celle de l'irruption du web et du sida et conséquemment des accords du Gatt qui installent la prédominance de l'économie libérale à l'échelle planétaire. Les artistes européens directement concernés par cette évolution seront plus que d'autres occupés à réfléchir la matrice de la production culturelle, de sa diffusion et de sa réception.
Sont posés pendant la décade les germes de la future mondialisation de l'art et de sa marchandisation.

- How did Great Britain influenced the art field and art critic at that moment ? (YBA, ...) Can you explain the differences between French and Anglo-Saxon view on art scene in that period?

FOR ME THERE WAS AN ENORMOUS DIFFERENCE WHICH IS WHY I BEGAN VISITING FRANCE ON A REGULAR BASIS FROM 1990 ONWARDS. I WAS LOOKING FOR A NEW SENSE OF WHAT AN INSTITUTION, CURATOR AND GALLERY MIGHT BE. AS WELL AS SEEKING OUT ARTISTS WHO HAD A MORE CREATIVE AND COMPLEX READING OF THE FRENCH POST-STRUCTURAL THEORY THAT SOME OF US WERE LOOKING AT IN THE UK.

D'accord avec Liam en rappelant que l'Angleterre et ses politiques culturelles publiques sont éteintes par le tatcherisme alors que la France voit se développer jusque dans le milieu des 90's une politique publique à l'inverse extrêmement volontariste.

GILLICK and POL-POT EXHIBITION

- What was the genealogy of the project ?

A DISCUSSION BETWEEN YOU AND PHILIPPE AND MYSELF - I THINK - WHERE YOU ASKED US WHAT THE POTENTIAL OF AN EXHIBITION MIGHT BE AND WHERE ITS LIMITS MIGHT BE FOUND.

Déclaration exacte de Liam

- Why did you decide to invite Liam Gillick this year ?

un contrepoin dialectique à la montée du néo-conservatisme (cf. Gioni) qui réifie l'oeuvre, son marché et l'académisme de sa présentation (audience/clientèle).

- Why did Gillick decide to invite Parreno to work with him ?

I AM NOT SURE IT WAS THAT WAY AROUND. I CAN'T PRECISELY REMEMBER THE ORDER OF INVITATION. IF I DID INVITE PHILIPPE IT WAS BECAUSE MANY RELATIONSHIPS AT THAT POINT WERE COMPLEX AND PROMISCUOUS AND IDENTITIES WERE EXCHANGED. CERTAINLY I LIKED THE IDEA OF INVITING AN UNINVITED GUEST TO BE PART OF SOMETHING.

Le groupe d'artistes dont Liam et Philippe pouvait se réclamer avait l'usage et a encore parfois la pratique d'un champ de recherche collectif ou l'expérience collective se dessine et se développe dans un espace, une plate-forme collective que nourrit une délégation curatoriale continue (cf. Moment Ginza de DGF)

- What have this invitation meant in the art field in France (if we take art field as a space of debates, in which position did this invitation put you as a curator and the Magasin as an art center) ?

Sincèrement pas grand chose sur le moment. Thierry de Duwe venait de publier "Faire Ecole" où il se faisait l'écho de très violentes critiques à l'encontre des artistes français du groupe.

- As a curator how did you work with Liam Gillick / Parreno and Gillick ?

cf. généalogie du projet

Is was surprising for us that the invitation Gillick to Magasin didn't bring wider reaction in France. The exhibition wasn't commented, didn't bring a discussion. Also just a fact of inviting this artists connected with institutional critique didn't bring any bigger feedback.

- Liam Gillick has worked with «supervisors » : it seems to be work of a self made man. In which ways the position of artists has changed in that period ? How it's linked with the move to political, economical, esthetical issues ?

Comme Liam je ne comprends pas la question certainement parce qu'il me faut vous apporter plus d'informations sur ce point particulier pour éviter une incompréhension. I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS QUESTION AT ALL. I THINK YOU SHOULD TURN IT ROUND TO THEM. IT SEEMS TO MISUNDERSTAND THE PROJECT COMPLETELY.

CURATORIAL PRACTICES

- What was your opinion on the curatorial practices in the 90 's and how did you define it ? What has changed for the art center / the way the institution was working ? Did your curatorial practice change from the 90's until today and if yes, in which way?

Here he talk in general about 90' and how they were influenced by the world politics. The Gatt agreement was a strong signal and moment for cultural institutionalization. In 90' institutions and art critics, curators were more opinion shaping, art market was focused on few artists. Today the art promotion in institutions focuses on relation with private collector sector. They seems to have more significant role on the show's promotion etc.

- If we take as an hypothesis that an exhibition is telling a story to a viewer, in which way this narrative issue has been changed in the 90 's ? forms, contents, shape ?

Je crois que l'exposition/ la proposition curatoriale fait tout à fait autre chose que raconter une histoire. I DON'T ACCEPT THIS HYPOTHESIS.

- What were the exhibitions which change your point of view ? / which were important for your own practice ?

L'exposition ne faisait que confirmer ma pratique curatoriale engagée notamment avec PVVC, Unité et les projets monographiques du tout début des 90's.

- How the internet has changed your way to be a curator ?

Un outil de travail (communication/information) supplémentaire.

EXHIBITIONS

- In the 90's what were the most important exhibitions and art places (the exhibitions that everyone were talking about) ?

idem pour moi. NOTHING MUCH... UNLIKE NOW THERE WAS NOT AN EXCESS OF EXHIBITIONS AND RECUPERATIONS OF THE PAST. YOU WILL HAVE AN OPINION ABOUT THIS OF COURSE.

- What kind of reactions / discourses the exhibitions of Gillick and Parreno generated ?

A nouveau en France négatives, à l'échelle internationale plus intéressées mais tardivement.

RELATIONAL AESTHETICS

- Have you visited the exhibition curated by Nicolas Bourriaus "Traffic"? If yes, what did you think about this installations / exhibitions ? Did you interact with people in this relational spaces ?

Je vous recommande le texte critique de Liam sur ce sujet. De mon point de vue l'exposition n'aurait en fait que très modestement souligné la question de l'audience institutionnelle sans en construire la critique. Elle aura été essentiellement l'espace préservé d'une socialisation entropique

de cette génération. THE NOTION THAT THERE WAS "INTERACTION" IS A MIS-READING OF MOST OF THE WORK IN THE EXHIBITION. IT WOULD BE GOOD TO TURN THE QUESTION AND ASK THEM WHAT WORKS FROM THE EXHIBITION THAT THEY ARE THINKING ABOUT? FOR ME TRAFFIC WAS NOT REALLY ABOUT AN AUDIENCE OR PUBLIC BUT AN AGITATION OF THE INSTITUTION ITSELF - WHICH WAS ACHIEVED IN MANY WAYS. THERE WAS VERY LITTLE DISCUSSION ABOUT INTERACTION. IN FACT I WROTE A TEXT THAT WAS PUBLISHED AT THE TIME ACCUSING THE CAPC ITSELF AS MISUNDERSTANDING WHAT WE WERE DOING AND THINKING OF IT AS INTERACTIVE BAROQUE CONCEPTUALISM WHEREAS WHAT WE WERE INVOLVED IN WAS ABOUT SHIFTING MANY INSTITUTIONAL ORTHODOXIES...

He doesn't consider *Traffic* exhibition as an institutional critique, for him this interpretation is too literal. Relational aesthetic is a result of the cooperation between artists, collaborative projects which N. Bourriaud transferred into institutional language. Philippe Parreno had an enormous influence for the NB practice, especially his *Les Ateliers de Paradis*.

For YA Gillick is not deconstructing the institution but rather he's questioning it, verifying the boundaries, talking about it through the rhetorical figures.

- Is it linked with Huygues and Parreno current exhibitions ? **Non**

- In your personal opinion, how are these exhibitions looking back at the 90's? In which way are they defining the works that you have seen in the 90's? A different way?

Pour Pierre et Philippe le cinéma est depuis l'origine au cœur de leur travail ce qui ne représente qu'une faible partie des recherches de cette génération.

- What is your present view of the 90's ?

En construction

- How were you looking at the 2010 on the 90's, (should the future help the past)? **Surtout pas**

- What is a retrospective for you ?

I DON'T VIEW IT AS A RETROSPECTIVE BUT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RE-ANIMATE SOME STRUCTURES IN LIGHT OF CHANGES (OR NOT) IN CURATORIAL THINKING AND ACTION. Idem. Le projet s'intéresse en effet à la réactivation du processus de ces pièces et à la mesure des outils curatoriaux nouveaux ou pas qui lui sont dévolus. La question de l'approche curatoriale/de l'implication volontaire des formations dédiées peut être considérée comme centrale(s) dans le projet.

FROM POL-POT TO GILLICK NOW / POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ART, INSTITUTION

Primarily, you have two artists who tried to talk about the trial of one dictator who had killed a lot of people : instead of putting images, they put in question the blindness of our society toward this question and tried to link political issue with aesthetic issues.

Furthermore, you have the hypothesis of Bourriaud : the relational aesthetic is creating some spaces which are a paradigm of democracy.

What kind of space could be the Magasin in the future as a paradigm for contemporary political issue / reflection of a contemporary political paradigm ? During the exhibition of Gillick ?

Je ne crois pas que l'espace d'art soit un paradigme de la démocratie.

In 1996 Gillick did *La fête au quotidien* in Le Magasin, whose aim was to put in question the art center as a social space and the power of the value of the institution to generate a controlled space outside the daily life.

Absolument. I DON'T THINK THAT WAS THE ONLY AIM OF THE EXHIBITION.

Today the institution Le Magasin and the institution in general, wants to communicate better with his neighborhood because of its mission toward audience. At the same time the relationship between audience and artists/art institution are increasing their economic power (a lot of money for mediation instead of art). You are doing the *Fete des voisins*, asking your team to make a kind of party for the neighborhood.

Je crains que vous ne soyez mal informée d'où une relative confusion quant au MAGASIN lui-même. En revanche l'évolution des espaces d'art de toute nature sous l'effet d'une hyper-socialisation et d'une marchandisation qui se substitue à l'économie sociale de marché sont une réalité internationale.

How do you see that evolution ? Does that mean that the relational aesthetic is outside the proper exhibition space?

Idem. (ALTHOUGH I AM NOT SURE THAT AN "ETHICAL TEST" OF ART'S EFFECTIVENESS CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH A DISAPPEARING OF THE EXHIBITION SPACE ALONE.)
SCHOOL TODAY

-You answered to the session 14 about the school in 2004 :

« Le premier enjeu de l'Ecole était de cet ordre et de cette urgence. Son programme pédagogique initial est fondé sur l'idée d'une formation par immersion dans le monde de l'art réel (je rencontre des professionnels qui peuvent le moment venu me coopter) et dans la pratique immédiate de l'exposition (c'est en organisant une exposition que l'on devient curateur). »

-> it's a way to increase the network and to learn by immersion in the art field. **Je crois que la phrase citée concerne les enjeux de la toute première période de l'Ecole où les exigences étaient d'un autre ordre. Si l'immersion et la praxis sont nécessaires, ils ne sont plus suffisants.**

-This year you choose six students who are already involved in the art field (we had worked from three to six years) and have our own network. What does that mean for the school ? What could be the rôle of the school in the future toward curatorial practices ? **L'Ecole constitue une excellente plate forme de recherche à l'intérieur d'un lieu de production quand autour d'elle les formations qui se réclament du curatorial se rapprochent de plus en plus du marché ou s'académisent.**

-The Ecole du Magsin has always been an independent training program, whose completion does not grant university credits or a diploma. This status has allowed the school to maintain a flexible structures within the time and to change it according to specific situations, and to the needs and wishes of each session. As a consequence of the financial cutting affecting the cultural and the educational field, since this year, the school is experimenting a close collaboration with the ESAD of Grenoble, establishing a more fixed schedule to fulfill the parameters of the national education system (e.g. Seminar with ESAD). Which is the future of the Ecole? Which consequences will have on the Ecole this development in the sense of a more "academic" and "instutalized" course of study?

Dans le contexte français l'Ecole, qui est plutôt de culture anglo-saxone inspirée du pragmatisme d'un John Dewey, est peu comprise et fragile. Pour en assurer la pérenité et le développement à l'échelle internationale il nous faut "l'habiller" des atours de la normalité administrative française mais sans rien changer à sa pédagogie ouverte (pas question de l'académiser et de l'institutionnaliser).

Ecole du Magasin is for YA a space of negotiation (between us and institution, between us as a group, between our group and artist or YA). He sees this negotiation process substantial for our future work as curators.

Meeting with Bruno Henry

On coming Wednesday we have meeting with Bruno Henry in Café de Magasin. We're going to discuss there his passion of collecting and books he finds interesting in this topic. We met him to

prepare core questions, we followed our discussion with him about his relation to the collection and art. The meeting will be held by Anna and Paola with support of the rest of students of Session 23

Seminar ESAD

This week seminar was around the person of Helmut Draxler and institutional critique today. We started on discussing Andrea Fraser activity and her work on economical situation of the artists in who are working in institutional critique topic. On the basis of her interviews with artists she tried to formulate ideas about the status of artists works (how he should be paid for it) and of the art works itself.

We Talked about her project *Prospectus* and *Services* held together with Draxler.

We talk about the way they're using an economy language(i.e. services prevision, etc.) in their art related writings.

We read and talk about the Occupy movements (Occupy Walla Street, Occupy Museum,...) and the phenomenon of year 2011 when in October in almost 900 cities around the world different occupy movements were active.

In the relation to the text of Franscina we read for previous seminars, we talk about *Guernica* which as a symbol of political resistance was recreated many times by different artists, institutions and collectives.

Katia presented to us T. Mitchel idea of "occupy" idea in his essay *Image: space, revolution, the arts of occupation*.

We planned our next meeting which will be in accompaniment of Helmut Draxler. We're going to prepare some questions to interview him. Session 23 is particularly interested in his knowledge about institutional critique today. Probably some of the questions will be the same which we prepared for Liam Gillick.