

**DURING THE SUMMER OF 2014, WRITER JESSICA LACK  
WROTE A LIVE BLOG COMMENTARY DURING OUR  
RESIDENCY AND EVENTS PROGRAMME, FUTURECAMP**

**The Way We Act** 14 June 2014

**Private vs. Public Entry** 28 June 2014

**The Way We Live Now: Environmental and Social Consequences** 12 July 2014

**Alternative Methods** 26 July 2014

**A Post-Gender World Entry** 9 August 2014

**The Way We Act** 14 June 2014

Tag: [thewayweactnowliveblogtext](#)

Welcome to our live coverage of the first Futurecamp event in which we explore how human behaviour has changed as a result of digital technology. Over the next few hours I shall be reporting the views of anthropologists and artists on the dramatic transformations in recent years in the way we communicate and what this holds for the future.

The event kicks off with digital ethnographer Dr Stefana Broadbent, who firmly believes web technologies are for the good. If you have time, check out her Activate talk on the subversive nature of mobile phone communication in the work place.

It could well be said this live blog is symptomatic of the very phenomenon up for discussion today, particularly in light of our second speaker Dr Kathleen Richardson's recent writings on social networking as a dissociative practice. Describing herself as an anthropologist of robots, Richardson will be presenting her vision of an android future.

**Dr Stefana Broadbent:**

On discussing the social history of attention, she says the biggest currency that is being sold and traded in the Internet and digital industry is attention. Our attention is a limited resource and that is what makes it so special for those trying to get access to it.

On changes in the home, she says the TV was a fundamental transformation of the home environment. It was a focus of joint attention and not considered a disruptive element in our social world. The story of the computer is completely different. They were positioned in corners that were identified as little offices. They were there for educational purposes and not considered fit for shared spaces.

On the introduction of WIFI, this home environment was subverted. We see the emergence of individual devices and the conflict rises not just from the separation and isolation of individuals but also in how our spaces have been designed. The Internet pushes the limits of what we imagine the home space to be.

**Dr Kathleen Richardson:**

On the digital age: The dictionary definition of an out of body experience is as if your mind and soul have left and you are looking at your body from the outside. This is how we see ourselves in the digital age.

On social media: People use social media as a way of displaying their social status and their wealth to others. There are two types of sites in digital networking: the anonymous and the personal. Richardson cites Walter Benjamin and his 'Work of art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction' saying that Benjamin changed our perception of the world around us.

Here's her example: If you go to the theatre it is a collective experience for both the audience and the actors. If you act for a camera, there is no collective experience because you are acting to a machine.

With social media, people are not interacting with other people they are interacting with a machine.

On robots: Richardson studies robots and social networking in order to see if they can help people with autism back into the social arena. A child with autism has difficulties reading human beings. There is the idea that a machine might be better at helping a child with autism communicate than another human being. In the philosophy of attachment disorder, people with autism are imagined to be missing social parts. These machines can address these problems. A human is too confusing to read, whereas a robot is simpler for the autistic mind.

On Mechanical sociality: There is the idea that we are not present when we are interacting with machines, but, Richardson argues, we are often not present when we are interacting with people. We are simply following well-worn social conventions that may not actually reveal who we really are.

#### **Discussion:**

##### **Question 1: Has concentration broken down through too many digital devices?**

Dr Stefan Broadbent: Attention is not linear, but traditionally this is how it has been. Think of the way children are taught in school, to be attentive to one subject at a time. But we all know that we pay attention to all sorts of things at the same time. We need to see attention in a different way.

##### **Question 2: Do you know of any research into whether TV was seen as a threat to social structures when it was introduced?**

Broadbent: I have been lucky to follow the arrival of the Internet because I have watched it evolve since its inception. When TV arrived there were only a few hours of programming, it was a slow evolution. It managed to fit into the shared environment. Whereas WIFI devices are personalised. In that respect it is less of a communal environment.

##### **Question 3: People are less aware of what is going on around them because of mobile phones; they are not present in the place that they are in. Is it really possible to be in more than one place at the same time?**

Richardson: People just are in different places at the same time. It is part of who we are.

Broadbent: It's about authenticity. What is the authenticity of the situation? People will have to make decisions about what is more important to them in the space that they are in. Is it the person calling them on the mobile phone? Or is it the person in front of them they are having a conversation with?

#### **Jesse Darling Performance:**

A Power point polemic on the nature of social alienation and private angst. Jesse Darling discusses the origins of her name (Jessamine), her personality and how she uses social media. It is lyrical, funny, particularly in relation to her surname Darling that she describes as 'a war cry of defence of the world that doesn't love you'

#### **Rachel Reupke: Wine & Spirits, 2013**

A slow moving silent film depicting the relationship between a man and a woman through the prism of a beer glass. The conversation between them is written on the screen.

Best lines:

"You need to breathe"

"I know I have actual pains in my chest"

**Rachel Reupke discusses Wine & Spirits, 2013:**

She has tried to read 'Gravity's Rainbow' by Thomas Pynchon three times and keeps getting stuck in the same place. The same situation is happening to the characters in her film. She says each scene in the film is autobiographical, but the actual staging of the characters comes from alcohol advertising. The film was inspired by Fritz Lang, and sees the diversity of images like modernist poetry.

**Erica Scourti: A Life in AdWords (2012/13)**

A film in which the artist reads out the pop up advertising words that are attached to her diary when she emails it to her gmail account each morning:

Unsurprisingly sex and hangovers seem to dominate.

A typical list runs thus: 'Birth control, red wine online, benefits of drinking water'.

I quite like that 'the artist' elicits the response 'fatigue testing' and 'vibrating monitors', while 'Teacher' is linked to 'kicked in the balls' and 'how to build self confidence'.

**Discussion between Kathy Noble and Erica Scourti:**

Erica says the lists reveal just how saleable our emotional and physical states are. You can be sold a new pillow, new medication or a new lifestyle.

Jesse Darling sees this as a feminist work

Erica agrees, saying the imperative towards self-bettering was particularly feminine and it was interesting that many of the keywords were about self-improvement.

**Performance by Shana Moulton:**

Cynthia is Shana Moulton's alter ego - "an excuse", she says, "to put on make-up, wear a wig and perform." But Cynthia is more than that. She's a 37-year-old Cindy Sherman looking conduit for all our neuroses, climbing through the cosmos of feminine hygiene products, beauty aides and cod-religious philosophy to Nirvana. Which, in this case is a pot of Aactiva - and all that eating it promises (immediate transformation into Shakira of course). A hilarious and warm portrayal of the ageing process, girdles, and the advertising industry that feeds off a woman's fragile vanity.

**Frances Stark's 'My Best Thing', 2011**

Coercion, collaboration and copulation in the digital world. A soap opera featuring two online avatars on a dating website which is developed from real experiences that occurred to Stark online. To begin with the woman seems to dominate the conversation, she appears to genuinely want some kind of relationship with the man and continually pushes the man to reveal himself, while the man's role appears to be more passive and only interested in seeing how far the female avatar will go to excite him.

Stark raises questions about the boundaries that are crossed when intimacies are exchanged online. The conversation swerves from flirty to aggressive to moments of poignancy, yet neither character ever truly reveals themselves and the relationship always seems to be contractual.

Best exchange:

Man: 'Do you have a slave who buys lighters for you?'

Woman: 'Yes'

Man: 'Capitalist'

**Private vs. Public Entry 28 June 2014**

Tag: [publicvsprivateliveblog](#)

Today's session asks what the future holds for the global economy and whether economic forecasts can shape the political landscape. Has society become more active or apathetic since the economic crisis? And what, if anything, can we do about the growing intrusions into our private lives through digital and drone technology?

I shall be keeping you updated throughout the afternoon. The event kicks off at noon with talks by Aaron Bastani, activist and founder of Novara Media, and Open Democracy Journalist Ray Filar.

In light of the recent ruling against three of Al Jazeera's journalists and their subsequent jail sentences, our thoughts turn to the Middle East. I'm looking forward to hearing Al Jazeera producer Rammy El at 2:30pm on cultural patriarchy in Egypt. The artist Soheila Sokhanvari was nominated for the Catlin Art Prize for her work TPAJAX. She will be discussing Iranian politics from 1920 to the fall of the Shah in 1979 and the impact it had on the culture of Iran.

Artists Yuri Pattison and Josh Harris will be confronting the pervasiveness of digital technology in our everyday lives. Harris is perhaps best known for his weliveinpublic project in which he lived under 24-hour Internet surveillance. Artist Nicoline Van Harskamp presents Yours in Solidarity, a film about the Dutch anarchist Karl Max Kreuger who died in 1999. Finally Patrick Goddard performs Apocalipstick at 4:45pm

### **Aaron Bastani:**

Here are the current problems:

The present economy: Bastani shows a film of the American Republican Paul Kanjorski discussing the electronic run on the banks in 2008. He describes this as an existential threat to the entirety of western civilization.

Bastani says this was the first trigger that awoke many from the apathetic slumber was the economic crisis. How bad was that crisis? It is still here. The solutions that have been introduced are temporary.

The long-term crisis in the ecology: The rise in temp 2 degrees C would mean the world JG Ballard describes in 'Drowned World' could be a reality.

On Wage Capital Relation: this means that capital eliminates people from the working model thereby diminishing amount of human labour needed.

But capitalists need wealthy time rich customers, and they want low paid workers, which results in ever expanding credit.

On political representation: memberships of political parties are in decline across the world. The Conservative party had three million members and now has less than 100,000. This undermines the possibility of these organisations having any meaningful influence and means they are sycophantic to the media in order to woo voters.

What will the future look like?

The collapse of Europe

That China will dominate the economy

White people are going to be an ethnic minority in the UK by 2065.

The world will be getting warmer.

Bastani suggests solutions through collective action.

### **Ray Filar: How to stay sane when everything is shit**

Success as a person = a successful career:

Filar says we define ourselves by the work we do. Politicians have championed hard working families but capitalism relies on the success of the few and the failure of the many.

The suggestion is that the unemployed are not trying hard enough creates a mental health situation.

The social imperative to stay sane:

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON. This is the worst slogan for anyone mentally ill.

This individualises pain. We are supposed to cope and if you are not coping you are broken. You have to get treatment. This is a deliberate political strategy. Neoliberals want us to be too sick so we cannot object to what they do politically.

450 million people globally have a mental health issues. In the UK one in four adults has a diagnosable mental health condition during the course of a year.

There is the idea with mental health that you are being lazy or you just need to get over it.

Refusing to stay sane as a radical action:

Filar publishes articles about politics and mental health. There are two types of people who write to her in response to this: those that say these articles resonate with them and the others who tell her she is brave. This is because writing about mental health can endanger your career. Who is going to want to employ you?

Filar wants to see a change in government policy by embracing mental health. This will hopefully build more mature, caring functional relationships.

Solidarity and communities of care:

Filar wants to form communities in which it is ok to talk about mental health. It is a form of radicalism when taboo subjects are turned outwards and publicised. Sharing these emotions is to create a community from which social activism can happen.

**Discussion session with Aaron Bastani and Ray Filar:**

**Question 1: There is this strange idea that health has become a building block in the neoliberal system – eat well and take care of yourself. So being unhealthy becomes a radical alternative, even if it is detrimental to the person. Do you agree?**

Filar: Yes, if you drop out you don't win. This is why communities are so important

**Question 2: What do you mean when you talk about abundance?**

Bastani: The obvious examples are Spotify or Amazon, organisations that give us access to any book or song. A socialist would say Nationalise them. It could happen to Amazon because they are too big to fail although it is highly unlikely. But I am more interested in local solutions like the Boris bikes removing the idea of 'my' bike, or 'my' car and being more collective.

**Question 3: In terms of mental health issues, the private made public happens all the time on Social media doesn't it?**

Filar: Yes but Facebook is a form of surveillance. This is not to say the kind of communities I envisage could not take place on social media. But in terms of mental health issues, I think it is important that these communities exist in another form. The problem with social media is that it has an isolating effect. The question is how you extend solidarity in social media?

**Question 4: Does social media stop people demonstrating because they can vent their anger out on social media?**

Bastani: if you look at the scale of some of the recent mobilisations it is in the 10,000s and 100,000s, and I'm not just talking about the Arab spring. The technology allows these protests to scale up to massive proportions this is thanks to digital networks.

**Soheila Sokhanvari on Iran from 1925 -1979:**

Sokhanvari takes us back to 1925 to tell the story of Modern Iran, a place that underwent a dramatic transformation when the royalty was overthrown and the Shah took power. He was pro-western and passed laws about wearing western clothes. She discusses the role of the British and the Americans

in bringing about the revolution in 1979, through their desire for oil and fear of communism from nearby Russia.

### **Rammy El: The Egyptian Patriarchy**

The structure of Egyptian society has always existed with the father at the top and there is a direct synergy with the position of the father and that of the godhead. Every organisational structure in Egypt is based on this patriarchy from the school to the factory to government. 'Consider Mubarak as your father' was the slogan.

The problem with this is that this system of rule is highly inefficient.

The Egyptian language has many proverbs and sayings:  
'If you don't have an elder representative you must seek one'  
'The father is the God of the house'.

El sites various ways culture has subverted this:

The novel 'Children of the Alley' by Naguib Mahfouz for which he received publishing bans and death threats told the story about a father who favours one son above the others (they are Satan, Jesus, Moses and Mohamed). He relates how Satan is expelled for standing up to his father.

In Egyptian society father knows best. Any non-conforming person is threatening. They are portrayed as unorthodox and dangerous and Political parties have respect because they've been around for a long time, not for their policies.

Throughout the Golden age of Egyptian cinema this patriarchal society has been ridiculed: El presents a series of films that demonstrate this:

'School of Trouble makers' by Ali Salem. 1973

'The Kids have grown up' directed by Samir Al Asfory, 1979

'Between the palaces' 1954 written by Naguib Mahfouz directed by Hassan El Iman

The Arab Spring occurred because there was a crack in the system that gave people the chance to reflect and ask that maybe father got it wrong. This seismic change was so big as almost impossible to comprehend.

What happens when the father is removed?

Because of Social Media, patriarchy cannot dominate in the way it used to and the young do not see stagnation as stability, they are not afraid of change. Extreme personality politics will fall to the side and substance will take control.

### **Skype conversation between Yuri Pattison and Josh Harris:**

Pattison: I came across Wliveinpublic, which I think is the first example of live blogging in which you filmed in every room of your house and people watched you 24hrs a day.

Harris: It wasn't that they were watching us, it was that they were getting into the hard drive of our brains and participating in our decision making process. I would get into a fight with my girlfriend and then she would go on social media and they would tell her to tell me to go sleep on the couch – which was out of character for her. People started controlling us.

Pattison: So social media shifts people's persona

Harris: Well actually Facebook is just a tip of the iceberg. It doesn't produce our lives very well. It is going to be more sophisticated than that.

Pattison: What led you to do set up Net Band Command?

Harris: Every part of life is censored and monitored by the system, so instead of having the CIA or the FBI watching us, we do it ourselves.

Pattison: So are you reclaiming the network?

Harris: Well I don't have any clearance level to watch other people. Someone in Scotland Yard is watching you, but I can certainly produce it better. Scotland yard's weakness is that it's not very interactive. In the world of Net band Command you can earn high security clearance and you can work in unison to effect change in the world. We are proposing to take over Tate Modern and turn it into a command centre for the world.

Pattison: Are the decisions of Net Band Command fair?

Harris: I just want to do a military action against the Tate Modern. In a virtual government, in any government people do good and bad. At least in this one I will have high security clearance.

Pattison: After you finished weliveinpublic what happened?

Harris: I was being hunted by the authorities. I was not normal. In this post 9/11 society anything that's fishy gets the fish eye! I was on the run and I can tell you, its pretty cool – for a while - then its nice to settle down.

### **Nicoline Van Harskamp, Yours in Solidarity:**

A film about the Dutch anarchist Karl Max Kreuger who died in 1999. Kreuger received letters from anarchists from all over the world, and these letters are spoken by actors who appear to be participating in a meeting of anarchists. The atmosphere is tense and impassioned, yet ultimately this film reveals the beauty of words written in the desire for a better world.

### **Patrick Goddard performs Apocalipstick:**

Like lobbing a Molotov cocktail through the window of England's green and pleasant land.

**The Way We Live Now: Environmental and Social Consequences 12 July 2014**

Tag: [thewaywelivenowliveblog](#)

Today we shall be confronting that monster of the political arena – living standards. With crippling house prices, high unemployment, child poverty, and mental health on the rise, the future looks about as bruised as a Brazilian football player. As the epidemiologist Sir Michael Marmot said this week "social injustice is killing on a grand scale". What are the answers? Hopefully our guest speakers can provide them.

### **Dr Isaac Marrero-Guillamón**

I'm going to be talking about a very unsustainable project: The London Olympics.

The Olympics actually belong to the International Olympic Committee (IOC). They have the right to exploit it commercially. When hosting the games, the public bodies carry the cost and the IOC exploits the benefits.

Here are a few things London did in order to host the games:

They regulated the use of language, words like '2012', 'summer', 'Gold', 'Silver', 'Bronze'. A kebab shop was threatened with legal action because its name was Olympic Kebabs.

Total revenue of the IOC in 2012 was £2 billion (tax exempt). The cost of the Olympics to the country was £9 billion

The cost of the economic structure on the ground was massive. Biggest compulsory purchase order in history was enacted in the purchase of the Olympic Park. 1500 residents, 200 businesses and 5000 jobs were displaced.

On the Olympic Grand Narrative:

The story of the Olympics was promoted as the creative destruction of an unregulated post-industrial landscape, a moral redemption of a contaminated and corrupt land.

Photographs were published of the Olympic stadium as a beacon of hope and beauty in the London darkness. In fact the area was a place of small businesses, artist studios, allotments and marshes.

Dr Isaac Marrero-Guillamón moves on to talk about some of the artists who began to question this grand narrative. A book called 'The Art of Dissent' was published. The artists:

1. Jim Woodall 'Olympic State': built a hut where he surveyed the Olympic site using surveillance equipment.
2. Office for Subversive Architecture, 'Point of View': built a staircase next to the wall for people to look over into the Olympic site – it was removed.
3. Adelita Husni-Bey 'Clays Lane Live Archive': constructed a story about the residents who were evicted from the site this story now resides in Bishopsgate library.
4. Space studio commissioned a project called The Cut by Jessie Brennan: created drawings inspired by stories collected from people associated with the site.
5. Gesche Würfel 'Go for Gold!': took photographs of the area before construction started. She returned to the site every year to document the changes as a way of showing the violence of the destruction.
6. Stephen Gill 'Buried': took a series of pictures of the area with a camera bought on the black market operating in the area. He printed the images and gave them to friends and collaborators to bury in the area. He then dug them up. A strategy of double exposure – significant in the context of the regeneration of the area. The contaminated nature of the soil was one of the excuses the authorities used to dig up the area.

**Dr Ian Hodge:**

Wants to talk about three things:

1. How eco-systems are driving the way we think about the environment
2. The Way in which eco-systems are being used in a neo-liberal context
3. Maybe there is an alternative way of thinking and reflecting on eco-systems and how it will affect our economic environment

We value the environment for economic purposes (crops, timber) and we value it for non-economic purposes (recreation, aesthetic, wellbeing).

There is a danger when governments try to work out the value of each eco-system eg..What is the value of Bee pollination in relation to the pesticides used to promote crop production?

The UK National Ecosystem Assessment tries to place some sort of monetary value on these eco-systems.

Here is the Neo-liberal approach to eco-systems:

Nature as a commodity

A source of economic growth

Monetary valuation

Delivery by markets and civil society (with private funding)

Economists have spent time trying to work out the monetary value of different aspects of the environment.

The fundamental question for environmentalists is whether this valuation system strengthens the argument for the environment or not.

It can misdirect policy.

For example if you want to protect the rain forests and use payments to those who have control



over the environment to get them to preserve it, what kind of consequences does this have for the stewardship of the environment?

Where is the moral argument in this when it is just down to who pays?

Do you pay polluters not to pollute?

The problem with the Neo-liberal approach is that while markets are important they are not a substitute for government intervention. Governments need to be active rather than stepping back and hoping the market will do it for them.

**Louise Carver:**

Should we value nature?

Carver studies Biodiversity offsetting in England.

She is interested in what happens when something is declared valuable, especially when the systems that now value nature, devalued it so badly in the past.

Carver shows the film 'Nature not for Sale' a spoof promotion for Fracking in Regents Park. Best line: 'selling off public assets to people the government went to school with is at the core of our policies.'

What is Biodiversity offsetting? They are conservation activities that are designed to give biodiversity benefits to compensate for losses - ensuring that when a large development damages nature, new, bigger or better nature sites will be created. Biodiversity offsetting is different from other types of ecological compensation, as it needs to show measurable outcomes that are sustained over time.

The problem with Biodiversity offsetting is that it entails the conceptual disaggregation of constructed units of nature from their wider ecological fabrics.

Biodiversity offsetting turns nature into a commodity that capital can actually see and work with.

The contradictory idea of selling nature to save it:

Carver uses the example of land grabbing in Tanzania. The villagers of Kisaware gave up their land for a large-scale Bio fuel investment. The project failed and the villagers now have 10,000 acres of useless, contaminated land, which the villagers are denied access to by guards.

What will happen to tropical forests when their services are traded and speculated by investment services?

We know there is nothing ethical about the way the markets work. Will they be liable for asset stripping? This has a profound social aspect to it.

Carver's research is concerned with:

The value of what? and for whom?

The tragedy of the well-intentioned valuation.

Solutions?

Carver says lets be radical pragmatists – we should criticize Biodiversity offsetting but let's not throw the baby out with the bath water.

**Dr Richard Barbrook:**

The Californian Ideology 20.0

In 1990 Dr Richard Barbrook wrote a book about the dotcom boom because he was certain it would be a massive social transformation.

He and his colleagues set up a research centre in Westminster University because:

They noticed that while lots of people didn't believe in the privatisation of publicly owned bodies (like the railways) they didn't feel the same way about the Internet. Suddenly it was cool to be a

neo-liberal. Whereas in the 1960s there was a division between private industry and the counter culture, it was not like that anymore. Why was it suddenly respectable to be a capitalist?

Marshal McLuhan created the key concept of our age when he said there would be this fundamental transformation in society caused by social media. He said, “we are moving forward to the electronic tribal drum”.

The prediction was that social change would be driven by information technology.

The Progress and Freedom Foundation, America:

The purpose of information technology was to break open natural monopolies and replace them with a world of small businesses. Everyone in the future will be rich and hip and we shall all become Californians.

But the Californian ideology is ambiguous – because it is founded on the principles of individual liberty brought about by the founding fathers. But we all know that the founding fathers (Jefferson, Washington) were slave owners. So there is an ambiguity in the liberalism they promote.

So what is the future?

Stop being caught in the perpetual present of post-modernism – break out of this and see the grand narrative – we can create a better future and it is not by looking at technology, but our minds, they need to be freed from mental slavery.

**David Raymond Conroy, There is no such thing as bad weather only soft people:**

Down and out in Mayfair and Fitzrovia. A polemic on style, work wear and the art world’s love affair with Nike Flyknit trainer. An artist on the verge of a capitalist breakdown.

**Ben Vickers of unMonastery:**

unMonastery is a global village with utopian principles set up to deal with three specific problems:

The large numbers of empty and disused properties in the world

Austerity and the rollback of state service provision

High intentional or unintentional unemployment

unMonastery opened in Matera in Southern Italy. They are funded by the EU and so far twenty people live in the beautiful monastery in Matera. They are heavily indebted to the HackerSpaces model, the only difference being that they are outward looking. They are a commune and have solved the washing up problem by having a rota!

You can set up your own unMonastery, and they have produced a set of cards that tell you how to do this. There is also a book of mistakes so that no other unMonastery will repeat them.

There are several organisations similar to unMonastery including Calafou, Aesir, Grupo Coop De Las Indias, unSystem and Open Source Ecology Europe and Oplate of St Benedict.

**Question 1: Who are the people who run unMonastery?**

Vickers: It is a diverse group, and a range of ages, middle class people, people from the hacker movement, documentary filmmakers and artists

**Question 2: How do you manage your finances?**

Vickers: We were given 35,000 Euros for the project and given the building by the city of Matera. The money is distributed and everyone gets 400 Euros a month and 200 of those Euros go on collective living.

**Question 3: Is it utopian**

Vickers: It is not a utopian project; it would be boring for future generations not to have some shit to deal with.

**Question 4: Why have you chosen an institutional set up?**

Vickers: if we have to build an institution for other institutions to trust us then fine, that is what we will do. But unMonastery is a democracy; there is no hierarchy of people telling you what to do.

**Question 5: Do you really trust each other?**

Vickers: In a situation where power is decentralised you have to trust each other or it won't function because we don't have a big stick (like financial gain).

**Question 6: It worries me that you are not supporting the welfare state.**

Vickers: It's too late. Bit coin now exists. You need to start building other things. When you have a decentralised currency its already too late. We recognise that the welfare state has gone – it's been sold off. So we can find violent or non-violent ways of doing things, I would prefer non-violent.

**Question 7: In the 16th century monasteries were destroyed because they were oppressive institutions. It's a strange thing to choose to model your project on, I think monasteries are a despicable organisation.**

Vickers: We don't want to reproduce the hierarchies in the monasteries. I was brought up by militant atheists and I'm not looking for spiritual redemption.

**Response:** I wasn't talking about religion I was talking about the oppressive nature of monasteries.

**Question 8: You seem to be shying away from calling it a commune or a co-op. Why?**

We want a plurality of structures to bring to the organisation.

**Talk by Bonnie Camplin:**

A meandering anecdotal narrative on mind control, super soldiers, psychics and surviving as a rational individual in the Twenty-first century. Lost its way and never found it again.

**Daniel Keller performance 'An iDrive':**

Love and commitment in the cybernetic world, where living life in the fast lane is about searching for an exit out of the cultural desert of redundant ideology. I think the audience were keen for a way out too.

**Alternative Methods 26 July 2014**

Tag: [alternativemethodsliveblog](#)

Well, here we are again, out in the bucolic wilderness of Wysing, for the fourth Futurecamp event. Today's session asks what the future holds for arts education, a timely topic as the country emerges beleaguered and battle worn from four years of Michael Gove's ideological war on education. Cuts in funding and a political climate that questions the relevance of an art education has resulted in a dire situation. But all is not lost, from Joseph Beuy's Free International University to the Anti-University in London, artists have always sought to create alternative revolutionary educational practices.

**Sally Tallant:**

Starts with a quote by Margaret Mead: Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed its is the only thing that ever has.

We need to take responsibility for our educational system. We need a range of arts institutions, it is important to have an ecology that works across the UK.

Sally talks about the contrast between her experiences of working in London and Liverpool. It led her to ask questions about the value of art when you are not working in a place that is saturated by the art market.

Now she asks the question:

What is necessary here in the place where you are making art?

Worked in the education department at The Serpentine Gallery for 10 years. Change is a slow process; it takes about three years to develop things. Her aim was to set up projects in the local communities that lasted longer (sometimes three years) than the six-week exhibition program.

Set up The Centre for Possible Studies – which grew into a research space and commissioned artists over long periods of time.

She then went to direct the Liverpool Biennial. Liverpool has a large population in decline. It has the highest percentage of households with three generations who have not worked for a living. Liverpool is paralyzed by its past, a nostalgia for the docks and The Beatles. There is also a thirty-year construction plan, which is going to totally transform the city.

So how does the biennial help the community deal with this?

Biennials are difficult beasts. The problem is:

How do you work in a local context and at the same time perform on an international stage?

Tallant re-branded the biennial as the UK Biennial of Contemporary art – much easier to approach funders if it's called UK rather than Liverpool

Ends on a quote by Doris Lessing

Whatever you meant to do, do it now. The conditions are always impossible.

### **Co-founder Anna Colin discusses Open Studio East (OSE) in Islington**

Group of curators, producers and critics wanted to create an open study program that was outward facing and responding to the environment. It is housed in a former library in De Beauvoir Town, Islington.

The organisers wanted to tackle the rise of tuition fees. At present OSE is open to 12 artists. Many of the people on the program could not afford to do an MA.

They get a free studio in the former children's library.

Tuition 2 days a week

Time to develop a project.

Artist Lucy Beech who was on the program says it is a flexible course; the students (called associates) are instrumental to the teaching and bring their own experiences to it. They are vocal; there is a conflict of disciplines that creates interesting dynamics.

AC: we invited writers, curators etc... who inspired us to come and talk. 40% of the course is open to the public. Which is important because we want to see what happens when someone comes in and disrupts the organization. The associates started to dictate that should come and talk and how they wanted the course to evolve. They were given the budget. The associates were pro-active and got their learning out into the public. The associates had to share their research; it is not a cosy institutional environment.

### **Sara Nunes Fernandes discusses the School of the Damned together with Ruth Angel Edwards and Emilia Bergmark**

It began two years ago as a rant on Facebook between friends about how they couldn't afford to do an MA. Someone offered them a free space at the Horse Hospital in Covent Garden for every last Sunday of the month.

So they started to meet.

They devised a structure around this once-a-month meeting.

Nunes Fernandes describes it as organised anger

Each month three people would present their art work and someone would give a half-hour lecture

They invited artists, curators to talk and paid them back by labour exchange.

Everyone put £50 in a group kitty for press material for the whole year. It lasted one year. They had a degree show, and then began to be invited to talk about the project.

After that they began asking what the future of the school would be?

The students were devising the structure and the original members didn't want to control the structure after leaving. So they handed it over to any artists who wanted to apply. They had 15 spaces and 15 people applied so they didn't have to reject anyone.

Second school of the damned was different because they were not a group of friends.

It took time to get to know each other.

They asked questions about how they repositioned themselves as different to the year before.

They re-wrote the manifesto and talked about changing the certificate from an MA to a PhD

For the future?

They want to avoid lapsing into a proper educational structure.

They would like to spread regionally like a virus and raise a conversation about arts education.

### **Questions for School of the Damned and OFS:**

**Question: What is the potential of people coming to the schools that don't have an arts background, and will that change your approach?**

Sara NF: I can't predict what might happen in the future

Lucy Beech: There are a number of people at OFS who don't have art training and it's been very important for them to be involved with those who have. But it is also important not to shy away from certain conventions of the art education system that work. It is not about emulating the system but about engineering change.

Sally Tallant: I find it very moving seeing people taking the situation into their own hands. But I haven't heard an articulation of the politics – it's around class, access to education and the politics of learning. The questions are about access. How the institutions do and do not exclude people.

AC: We have had discussions with radical arts organisations that operated in the 1970s, and we understand that we should make ourselves accessible to all. We want to be a radical 21st century arts centre open to all.

### **Leah Gordon co-director of the cross-cultural arts festival, the Ghetto Biennale, Port-au-Prince, Haiti**

Gordon on the inconsistencies of putting on an arts event in a place dominated by hustlers, the law of the ghetto and a violent neo-liberal government.

The organisers, Atis-Resistants put out an open call to international artists to participate in the Ghetto Biennale. They had no funding and they got 150 applicants. There is a lot of class immobility because artists have to pay to get to Haiti and pay for their own room so they needed to have money. They attracted de-authorized, de-materialised artists who were interested in institutional critique. The Haitians were disappointed because they wanted superstars like Damien Hirst and Jake and Dinos Chapman. One of the artists, Bill Drummond was very upset that when he asked the Haitians artists what they wanted, they said they wanted to have a big exhibition in New York.

The first ghetto biennale:

It was very exciting because it actually happened. It felt revolutionary.

The second ghetto biennale:

By the second, the earthquake had happened and the insertion of NGOs into the community became a huge issue. Gordon was working in an extreme political situation, there were kidnappings and the slum itself is an incredibly hierarchical place. Gordon was also aware of her colonial status.

The Third ghetto biennale:

By the third biennale they decided to ban the lens, as the ethnographic gaze from western artists disconcerted them. During the third biennale, three Haitian youths kept photographing the white visitors, telling them to look sad and happy as a reference to the way NGOs and artists had used them over the preceding years.

Banning the lens meant a lot of performance artists chose to participate. One artist gave a workshop about Arte Povera which the Haitians were very excited by. They couldn't believe so much money could be made out of art made from rubbish.

A guy from New York taught them how to make crates the western way, so that they could ship their art abroad.

Presently there is a vicious neo-liberal government in power that are very interested in capitalizing Haitian popular culture, which consists of them re-telling their history and it is worrying that this could become sanitized.

For the next biennale they are looking at bringing people from the global margins to the metropolitan margins.

#### **Ella Ritchie introduces Intoart:**

A London based art collective for people with learning disabilities based in Clapham.

It began because there was a need in the community. Often Intoart start with a conversation with the institution involved and then try to circumnavigate it. Intoart believe in the visibility of the artists and put them in a position of leadership. They work with artists for an infinite period of time.

The intention is to support them to work for themselves and in their own interests. Many of the people they work with have never been to a museum and there is a clear educational strategy.

Mentoring and leadership is key. Some disability artists are also asked to be artist mentors to other local people who have a disability. This is done only if it fits with the practice they do, not because they have a disability.

#### **Performance talk by Intoart artist Ntiense Eno-Amooquaye:**

A poet, performer and artist, who explores the relationships between the three mediums. She talks about her research practices and how she approaches an exhibition.

#### **Artists Rob Smith and Frank Abbott:**

Discuss the forthcoming Expanded Studio Project, collaboration between Primary in Nottingham and Wysing arts Centre in Cambridgeshire.

In 2013 Smith and Abbott coincidentally invented the same method of drawing names from a hat to implement a studio system. This got them talking and they decided to devise a collaborative practice between the two arts institutions.

RS: When the project begins we will have a grand draw, like the lottery and pull names from a hat to decide who will collaborate.

FA: Expanded Studio will act as a catalyst; to share knowledge and challenge established ways of working in a studio.

Abbott shows the film 'Old Skool Breaks' about a group of artists who were invited to come up with different ways of collaborating in Nottingham.

RS: A similar thing happened at Wysing because we felt we were missing a sense of community and collective action – what could we do as a group of artists to change this? So we set up collaborations between each other.

### **Dr Matthew Cheeseman and artist Florian Roithmayr on Tacit-knowledge:**

Roithmayr became interested in the Hungarian theorist Michael Polanyi after working with a concrete beautician in Germany. A concrete beautician is a craftsman who comes along after a building is constructed and beautifies the concrete so that it is perfect. Roithmayr says: “I learned a skill that no one will ever notice, because it is not supposed to be seen. There is no outcome, and so at the end of my time as his apprentice I had nothing to show for it.” He asked the question: “So what was I looking for?”

At this point Florian began to look at Polanyi’s theory of tacit-knowing.

Dr Matthew Cheeseman on tacit-knowing: It is the kind of knowledge that cannot be written down or verbalised. We can know more than we can tell.

Here is an example of Tacit Knowledge:

It is very difficult to describe to someone how to ride a bike. I could work out a mathematical equation about how to ride a bike, but we all know that wouldn’t help us ride a bike. Knowing the formula for riding a bike will not help someone perform the task of riding a bike.

### **Inspiring talk about The Silent University for academic asylum seekers by Ahmet ögüt**

A not-for-profit university set up for academic asylum seekers who have no work papers to give lectures, consultations and workshops in any language they choose. Some have to have their identity protected while waiting to receive visas.

They have created libraries, conventions, talks in the Dutch parliament as well as staging lectures at Tate Modern.

### **A Post-Gender World Entry 9 August 2014**

Tag: [apostgenderworldliveblog](#)

Welcome to Futurecamp: 5. Today’s topic is a Post-Gender world, is there a time in the future when humans will move beyond the biological and social constructions of gender? A range of artists and filmmakers are here to offer their visions of the future. We start with an installation by Richard John Jones, which goes from the abstract to the sublime, merging photographs of women making camouflage during the Second World War with paintings by the Hudson River School.

### **Jess Wiesner: ‘I’m Not Ready to Name It Yet’**

Urges and Ontologies, a performance work about fantasies and identities in the virtual world.

### **Berivan Erdogan, ‘Meanwhile’:**

A film in which Erdogan performs as her alter-ego, a maudlin Turkish man working 9 to 5 and the wife that doesn’t understand him. Fortunately the bottom of a bottle of Baileys has the answer.

### **The collective d3signbur3au:**

A film about a despondent spambot with the voice of a congested Mira Sorvino that ambles through the virtual stratosphere offering its vision of a future that will be, at best, midway between the monkey and the machine.

### **Tracey Rose: KniggerKhaffirKhoon**

Tell me the sound of one army fighting? A poem of post-colonialism malaise, Tracey Rose addresses African identity and war in contemporary society.

Best use of alliteration: ‘Our platoon was as platonic as a placebo’

### **Two films by Anne McGuire**

When I was a monster (1996):

Crashing out of the 20th Century, an autobiographical video about the aftermath of an accident.

Joe Dimaggio 1,2,3 (1991):

McGuire is a serenading stalker tracking the elderly gait of the ex baseball superstar Jo Dimaggio across a sunlit harbour parking lot.

### **Rachel Mclean: Over the Rainbow**

Rachel Mclean soaks up the sun to create a groovy little film in radioactive technicolour, it's as if My Little Pony mated with Ronald McDonald yet as the plot becomes saturated by celebrity culture, it develops into a claustrophobic hammer horror inspired by the 1959 chiller 'House on Haunted Hill'. It is only a matter of time before the entire work is consumed by a metaphorical wolf's ravenous jaws.

### **Leslie Thornton: Sahara/Mojave**

Ethnographic images of native peoples framed against a backdrop of jittery camera angles depicting a road trip into a dystopian America via Hollywood.

### **Discussion:**

#### **Jess Weisner on 'I'm Not Ready to Name It Yet':**

The film came out of her interest in the words 'post' and 'gender'. To her the word 'post' means having an experience of something.

#### **Tracey Rose on 'KniggerKhaffirKhoon':**

She was exploring ideas of Empire. Post is a position of privilege and the majority of people don't have access to this position. Rose wants to question this and look at the idea that we are modifying ourselves to such an extent that we are moving away from what it means to be human. She finds it problematic the way non western women are presented in Western cultures. It is a privilege of language because everyone has to speak English. It is a real loss for western society to go into Africa with a position of superiority. As artists it is important that you make work about issues.

#### **Rachel Mclean on 'Over the Rainbow':**

She played every character. It was pieced together through TV shows, films and interviews. An arts centre in the middle of the wilderness in Canada inspired the landscape.

#### **James Richards on the four films he chose:**

Berivan Erdogan is a young Norwegian Turkish woman mimicking a distant uncle; it has a wit and empathy.

Anna McGuire – 'When I was a Monster' is about when she had a rock climbing accident and she has pins in her arm and plays out the idea of a Frankenstein-like monster. Joe Dimaggio 1,2,3 interested Richards for the fact that each chapter gets more and more hysterical.

Finally he chose Leslie Thornton's film because of the strange logic of bringing together erotic ethnographic postcards with Hollywood.

#### **Richard John Jones on his installation:**

He thought there was poetry in the way the two subjects fitted together. The women reflected an emancipating moment when women entered the work place for the first time during the war. He was also interested in showing a form of female labour in which the women were making something used to hide men (camouflage)



Hudson River School depicted a romantic rendering of the North American landscape. It was a synthetic production of the landscape but they represent an erasure of the people who were living there. The reality of the political situation was very different.

**Zackary Drucker and Rhys Ernst, *She Gone Rogue*:**

Gamine youth negotiates a trans-gender world she discovers down a rabbit hole, a place where hopes and dreams are crystallized in a bejewelled vagina.