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Andrea Fraser: Institutional Analysis

The relocation of the Generali Foundation Collection from Vienna to Salzburg, which took place without any public debate on possible alternatives and without any real assurances about its future, is in many ways exemplary of cultural politics in the early twenty-first century. As Sabeth Buchmann and Achim Hochdörfer have argued, the insurance giant's decision to close down its important Viennese art space, which was home to the collection, is also “a symptom of the conclusive historicization of the art of the 1990s, which may thus be said to have reached a definitive end—and so its museification makes perfect sense. In other words, art that is rooted in the traditions of Conceptualism and institutional critique is converted into discrete and self-contained ‘works,’ a process that neutralizes its critical potential. In a programmatic shift, institutional critique is made to serve the very corporate branding strategies it formerly promised to scrutinize and subvert.”¹

Andrea Fraser is arguably a key artist in the history of the Generali Foundation, and the foundation played an important role in her career. Her 1994—95 Generali *Project in two phases* is the fullest realization of the approach she had outlined in her *Prospectuses* of 1993. Existing in versions for individuals, for general audience public/nonprofit institutions, for “cultural constituency organizations” and for corporations, these prospectuses presented Fraser as a kind of embedded artistic researcher mapping and articulating (but not resolving) the institution's contradictions. The publication of the Generali project implemented the “corporation” prospectus and resulted in a montage of interviews with various managers and employees, mixed with texts written by Fraser. Some of the latter made use of Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of the artistic field and of the autonomy of art—with value, in art, being paradoxically dependent on an artist's demonstration of their autonomy from the market.² Fraser notes that the Generali Foundation was never about defending art's autonomy against corporate instrumentalization, but that it did defend art against “bad interior decoration” and the taste of some employees, who had their own ideas about the spaces they worked in. Originally, the creation of the Generali Foundation was partly aimed at ennobling the corporate headquarters through refined contemporary art, and of course at providing the insurance company with positive PR.

The foundation was thus *always* a corporate branding exercise, but with her 1994—95 project Fraser was able to reflect on it immanently, in real time, in relation to its recent past and present; *Project in two Phases* coincided with the opening of the Foundation's new public exhibition space, which was inaugurated with Fraser's installation of works from the collection, taken from the corporate headquarters and re-installed in the same manner in the new gallery. This exhibition space would exist for nineteen years. Here we are, after nineteen years, plus one. What does the historicization of institutional critique mean for the current reception of Fraser's work, and for its cultural and political use value? Is the canonization of her practice steadily undermining its contemporary relevance?

Buchmann and Hochdörfer are to be commended for ringing the alarm bell regarding the fate of the Generali Foundation Collection, but historicization properly understood does not equal neutralization (this may be why they use the phrase “conclusive historicization,” suggesting a form of historicization that closes off and enshrines a practice rather than opening it up to renewed investigation). What follows is an attempt—bound to be provisional and problematic—to flesh out what I take to be some of the more productive and urgent aspects of Fraser's practice past and present, individual and collaborative.

Performing Performance

By the time of *Project in two Phases*, Fraser had temporarily stopped performing. The signature form of her work in the late 1980s and early 1990s had been the gallery talk. Beginning with the *Damaged Goods* gallery talk in 1986, Fraser had adopted the guise of a museum docent. In some works, this docent persona (or “site of speech”) was identified with the name Jane Castleton—notably in *Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk*. As this heightened the risk of turning the instable performance persona into a readily identifiable character, Fraser had abandoned the name by *Welcome to the Wadsworth* (1991). The latter two performances became particularly influential in their video versions. In 1991, Fraser first delegated the performance of her script to actors for *May I Help You*, a collaboration with Allan McCollum at American Fine Arts.³ With the *Services* project she instigated with Helmut Draxler in 1993—94, she redefined (her) artistic practice as the providing of critical “services” in specific institutional settings.

While Fraser could now be said to appropriate and perform the role of a consultant, this conception of art-as-service clearly de-emphasized emphasizing the spectacular side of performance. Benjamin Buchloh has argued that “performativity” entered painting in two ways: on the one hand, as with Yves Klein or Joseph Beuys, it led to the artist becoming a public performer and to a “spectacularization of performativity.”⁴ On the other hand, and more fruitfully, there was a redefinition of paintings (and artworks in general) as being themselves performative, as, “as acts, practices, moments that were part of a linguistic system, of a discursive system, that at each time could be redefined and repositioned in regard to both spectator and participant-practitioner.”⁵ Departing from linguistic notions of “speech acts,” such an understanding of recent art focuses on the performative nature of all manipulations of materials and meaning (of meaningful materials). While this expanded notion of performativity is not without problems, it allows us to see that Fraser’s seeming abandonment of performance entailed a similar critique of “performance” as a narrowly defined form of showy artistic activity.⁶ If we look at Marina Abramovic’s progressive self-transformation into some kind of mutant celebrity, it is tempting to abandon “performance art” like so much toxic waste.

However, Fraser’s “return to performance” in 2001 can be read as an acknowledgement that her 1990s stance may have amounted to an all too abstract negation of the artist-as-performer.⁷ What about *the artist* as being composed of “acts, practices, moments?” As it had emerged in the second half of the 1980s, Fraser’s practice was profoundly invested in subjectivity. At this moment, a certain genealogy of institutional critique encompassing practices such as Buren’s, Haacke’s and Lawler’s was actively being constructed both by critics and theorists and by artists including Fraser—with Fraser contributing actively to the establishment of the *term* institutional critique.⁸ It quickly became clear, however, that in Fraser’s practice the “institution” was conceived of much less externally than had often been the case previously. With her logorrheic montage of bits and pieces cribbed from various discourses, Fraser’s “Jane Castleton” was compelling in part because of this precarious persona’s hopeless over-identification with the institutions of art and their promises of a noble existence.

In Fraser’s practice, subjectivity is on the line—power relations traverse everything and shape relations and identities. From this perspective, the tissue of quotations that is central to her Generali project is as telling and as performative as

Fraser's performance in *Museum Highlights* or *Official Welcome*. What is added in the latter cases is a stronger sense of subjectivity under pressure and on the spot. In recent years, an increasing number of talks in the art world are billed as "lecture performances." We don't just attend a lecture; we attend a lecture that is performed, or a performance that takes the form of a lecture. This, of course, puts the content between brackets. Do we really come to hear about the subject, do we care about analytical rigor—or are we in fact participating in a celebration of pure performance, of virtuoso labor? Fraser's manically precise dialectic of control and loss, resulting in a sliding series of crumbling and morphing selves, pushes this performative economy to the point where its contradictions explode in language and gestures.

That Fraser here emerges as a "star performer" of sorts is unavoidable, but her practice also counteracts reductive spectacularizations of her presence by returning to forms of intersubjectivity and collaboration. At the time of Fraser's solo performances of the late 1980s and early 1990s, she was also part of the V-Girls, a group of young female academics and artists (also including Martha Baer, Jessica Chalmers, Erin Cramer and Marianne Weems) who performed fully scripted "panel discussions." Mirroring and mocking the role of events such as CAA (College Art Association) conferences as job markets, the V-Girls' "Andrea Fraser" closed a statement in the V-Girls' *The Question of Manet's "Olympia": Posed and Skirted* (1989-90) by stressing, with a manically cheerful face, that she was "available for immediate employment."⁹ The V-Girls' pseudo-academic performances on subjects such as Manet's *Olympia* or Spyri's *Heidi* do for the disciplinary and disciplinary ritual of the panel discussion what Jane Castleton did for museum tours. However, as a group—they often stressed their status as a group by suggesting that they have been encountering each other at glamorous international conferences for ages—the V-Girls foreground intersubjectivity in the form of a heady mix of support, codependency, competition and sly aggression. As young professionals, any sense of group identity is almost automatically complicated by the need to assert themselves as individual performers, as living commodities on the job market.

As in the case of Fraser's *Museum Highlights*—which uses a museum and its contents to take aim at classist ideologies of private patronage—there is an ostensible subject to these performances; a manifest content. In the V-Girls' *The Question of Manet's Olympia: Posed and Skirted*, the canonical modernist painting is at times drowned in deliberately awful Freudian puns ("Man A, Woman B"), but also shown

in the form of more or less crude line drawings in a contest of a psychologist test administered by “Jessica Chalmers,” and as a slide of the actual work (shown both horizontally and vertically, to demonstrate its phallic dimension). The image is being performed: it is circulated and reworked, discussed and overworked by overeager young hopefuls until it is in tatters. Reproduced artwork and performing speakers are both entangled in a discursive system.

What precisely is the activity posited by institutional critique? What kind of praxis is it, what sort of critical act is involved? Accounts of supposedly critical practices in art are often surprisingly abstract and generic: the critical act (appropriating an image; intervening in an institution) is supposed to effect some kind of change in perspective that will make the appropriated material or the institutional context appear in a different light. More specificity would often be helpful. Speaking about Louise Lawler, Andrea Fraser has made the point that that Lawler’s practice consists of variety of acts that include “[arranging] pictures, *producing* matchbooks, *issuing* gift certificates, *sending out* invitations, *presenting* art and institutions through these activities.”¹⁰ There are, however, also limits to such desire for specification, as labor is more than ever oscillating between concretion and abstraction, between specific skills and deskilling, between the performing of specific operations and “general performance.”¹¹

A work such as *The Question of Manet’s Olympia: Posed and Skirted* can help to bring this out. What the V-Girls do with and to Manet’s *Olympia* (using it for a cockamamie test; tilting it to reveal its hidden phallus) happens within a mock panel discussion. The primary work of the group is thus the writing and staging of a panel discussion, for which the members use, misuse and abuse the considerable theoretical knowledge and discursive skills they have acquired. All these performative acts, by the “real” V-Girls and by their performative personas in the play, are marked by the fundamental tension between specificity and abstraction; between concrete practices and operations and the abstraction of labor-value. Knowing how to perform a certain operation, having the skill to do a specific trick, may be the surest way to produce abstract value and to advertise yourself as a versatile member of the General Intellect. I am available for immediate employment.

Experience in groups

The V-Girls' *Daughters of the ReVolution* (1993) did not mimic the panel discussion format as closely as their earlier performances, with the "girls" sitting on stools in a semicircle rather than behind a long table. The topic under discussion is the heritage of feminism. If the earlier V-Girls performances already hinted that the women were really a much tighter group than one would normally expect to encounter at panel discussions, here this is made much more explicit: in *Daughters of the ReVolution* we encounter a group of women discussing the history of consciousness-raising women's groups. "Andrea Fraser's" interventions range from denying that she has experiences with all-female groups and invoking Freud in stating that: "In every group I experience a fundamentally fascist horde," to rhapsodizing about the potential of the women's movement and women's groups: "It's the dream of collectivity beyond the markets in social, educational, and cultural—as well as economic—capital in which bodies and labor and lives are valued and devalued."¹²

If the V-Girls' discussions were in fact carefully scripted group performances, Fraser's 2012 piece *Men on the Line* is her solo re-performance of a group discussions between men who self-identified as feminists, broadcast by KPFK in LA in 1972. Throughout, Fraser seemingly effortlessly slides from one speaker's persona to the next, from the more boisterous and stereotypically masculine Lee Christie to the much quieter and more vulnerable Jeremy Shapiro ("I have this feeling that women are talking about me behind my back"). The conversation has certain traits of a self-help group meeting, and it ends in a group hug which, Fraser performs solo at the end, seated in her chair—making it look somewhat like a fetal position.

When she performed the piece in Amsterdam in 2014, Fraser announced subsequently: "Now I'd like to open it up to the audience." The lights went on, and Fraser became "audience for the audience." With therapeutic skill, she deflected all attempts to have her respond to audience questions either as herself or "in character" as Everett Frost, the moderator of the 1972 broadcast: "Can you respond from your own position in history?", "I would like to ask all of you if you could say something more about brotherhood?", "I have a question for Mr. Christie." Fraser and/or the 1972 speakers refused to be drawn in: "I would be very interested in hearing *your* thoughts." The post-performance discussion wasn't nearly as focused as the 1972 radio discussion, whose participants has a certain shared framework; in Amsterdam, it was clear that there were vast differences in age, background, historical knowledge

and theoretical sophistication (as well as English skills). One woman in fact remarked on her difficult relation with feminists who are more well-read and “theoretical.”

Once the artist opened the discussion to the audience, there followed an uncomfortable silence that was finally broken by Gregg Bordowitz: “I found the conversation between you all very moving, even though some of the terms are dated.” At times the discussion became a history lesson, as when a question by a young participant about the role of transgender people in the 1970s feminist movement was answered by Bordowitz. In the final contribution, Binna Choi tried to forge a now-time between the early 1970s and the present by recalling that the Wages for Housework movement started in 1972, whereas now we have Wages for Facebook, and ongoing domestic labor movement.¹³ Un(der)paid work, much of it performed by women and/or migrants, is still on the agenda, as successive civil rights and feminist, queer and transgender “revolutions” have resulted in some victories over structural political discrimination, but without affecting the fundamental economic and social inequalities that underpin the “free world”.

The video version of *Men on the Line* clearly echoes the earlier piece *Projection* (2008), a two-channel video installation *Projection*, in which Fraser plays both therapist and patient on the opposing screens. Although there is only one projection in the case of *Men on the Line*, the basic format, with a vertical projection showing a seated life-size Fraser, is the same. *Projection*'s script is based on fifteen hours of sessions with Fraser as patient. These sessions were not strictly psychoanalytic in nature; rather, they belonged to a kind of confrontational high-pressure therapy known as Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy, or ISTDP, in which video recording is used as an analytical tool. ISTDP comes across as a strategic response to the exigencies of competition and acceleration, aggressively intervenes in the relationship between therapist and patient, which Freud theorized in terms of the *transference* of emotions and desires by the patient onto the analyst. Transference both endangers the analysis and enables it in the first place; transference is what the therapist works with. Transference analysis had long been important to Fraser's approach to institutional critique; *Museum Highlights*, for instance, “Jane Castleton's” overinvestment in the august institution. However, in ISTDP the therapist exploits transference by challenging and ultimately bullying the patient. Far from being an advertisement for ISTDP, of which Fraser is very critical, *Projection* exploits the charged situation by playing both parties—though on opposing projections—this

gives the sensation of a subjectivity in dissolution, of a super-ego attacking a crumbling and struggling self.

With *Men on the Line* and its post-performance discussion in Amsterdam we have moved from the classic analytical duo to group situations. Fraser is of course well aware and that a group isn't necessarily a utopian realization of the "promise" of "collectivity beyond the market." Rather, groups are problematic materials than can be worked with, that can be reworked and re-performed through concrete interventions—in contrast to more general social notions like "society," "women," "people of color" or "the working class." Modernity was marked by a broken dialectic in which such notions were often difficult to square with individual experience. While Freud's bourgeois patients came to him as isolated individuals with particular pathologies, from the 1940s on psychoanalysts and psychologists increasingly focused on group dynamics and group therapy as a response to the shortcomings of "dual analysis" and its loop of transference.

Wilfred Bion, who became a pioneer of group therapy when working with soldiers during WWII, is of great importance to Fraser (as well as to her longtime interlocutor, Gregg Bordowitz).¹⁴ The group mediates between institution and individual; as an elementary social structure, it can challenge and transform subjective positions, which in turn changes the group itself. Bion differentiated between two forms of group therapy: groups of individuals brought together for the specific purpose of therapy, and "preexisting groups" that a therapist can work with—that is to say, a group that already exists for some other purpose or because of another reason, and that should be made to function more "smoothly."¹⁵ Fraser works with both kinds of groups in various contexts, including cultural and academic settings. In the context of her teaching, Fraser has developed what she calls "enactment analysis," which develops the preexisting student group as a medium to understand the social and psychological impact of artworks through how they affect the group. This includes activating structures of entitlement and disenfranchisement, feelings of shame and aggression, questions of gender, race and identity. Who feels what? Who speaks in what manner? These group sessions take the form of a discussion of a student's artwork, which functions as a trigger or activator, bringing implicit structures and relations in the group to the fore.

Recalling and analyzing instances when she started crying in front of artworks—from a Raphael Madonna to work by Fred Sandback, encountered at Dia: Beacon,

Fraser has asked: “What kind of aesthetic experience can be admitted by a hardcore, uncompromising, materialist, sociologically informed ‘institutional critic’ such as myself?”¹⁶ She praises the generous reticence of Sandback’s work, which hardly has a physical presence at all, and concludes: “It makes a place for me inside the institution that the work is inside. It is a place that exists between fact and illusion between reality and fantasy—what D.W. Winnicott called a transitional space, where loss can be renegotiated in the re-creation and reparation of things. It is a place of affective possibility created by work that doesn’t ask me to feel, and so, I think, allows me to feel, and to be alone in the presence of this art that’s so quiet and still, and makes too little in the way of demands. It is an art of objects without shadows.”¹⁷

Here we have returned to a dual relationship—not between therapist and patient, but between viewer and (somewhat dematerialized) object. It is the classic and in many ways mystifying relationship of modern aesthetic experience: the isolated viewer facing somewhat otherworldly presence of the artwork. In questioning this form of aesthetic experience and in substituting a focus on the frame for the work, the discursive system for the object, institutional critique may have thrown out one or two babies with the bath water. In her important essay on Sandback, Fraser re-engages with the potentially disturbing presence of the artwork—of a generous and open artwork. But she opens up the loop, dislodges the process of aesthetic transference, by questioning and critiquing her own response in a text destined to be circulated, to be read *and* to be discussed in groups—either in Fraser’s presence or in her absence, which obviously makes for different kinds of groups and discussions.

The *Services* project consisted of group discussions and talks in addition to a documentary exhibition, which presented historical and contemporary materials by artists and collectives. The latter included Group Material, whose later activities were part of the AIDS activism of the late 1980s and early 1990s. *Services* followed on the heels of James Meyer’s 1993 exhibition *What happened to the Institutional Critique* at American Fine Arts, in which Fraser participated and which was profoundly marked by the AIDS crisis. Already sensing the danger of canonization and bad historicization, Meyer floated the notion of *an expanded institutional critique* that is not necessarily limited to traditional art institutions and artistic interventions therein.¹⁸ How to imagine and practice such an expanded institutional critique? Two decades of museification later, the question is as urgent as ever.

New divides – new alliances?

Institutional critique is an embedded, immanent practice. The artists associated with institutional critique abandoned the neo-avant-garde's aesthetic of transgression and negation: whereas neo-avant-gardists from Allan Kaprow and Fluxus to the Situationists wanted to "leave the art world," to "merge art and life" or to "revolutionize daily life," institutional critique contended that there was no "outside," that it was necessarily to act critically within art and its institutions.¹⁹ Of course, this does not mean that institutional critique stopped tarrying with the negative altogether. Rather, critical negation was reimported into the context of art. Instead of abandoning the museum, or demanding its closure, institutional critique paid detailed critical attention to its mode of operation; its display systems and conventions, its economy, its sponsorships and other entanglements.

This kind of critical distancing is itself far from unproblematic, as Fraser has argued.

"Developing on Bourdieu's scattered references to 'negation in a Freudian sense', I am beginning to believe that this distancing functions through an operation of negation that often is more defensive than dialectical ... The key distinction [Freud] makes is between idea and affect: with negation, something may be admitted to consciousness as an idea, but is nevertheless distanced emotionally; it may be thought, but only negatively, as an idea that is rejected, dismissed, etcetera. More broadly, however, what is at issue is inside and outside: whether the idea or affect is owned and accepted or whether it is split off, expelled, projected or otherwise disowned, often, in a sense, by locating it outside of the boundaries of the self—which is also thus constituted, in some sense, by way of these boundaries, as autonomous and perhaps we could even say as an autonomous field."²⁰

The problem is that critical interventions in the field of contemporary art are used as proof of the criticality of this field. Art is cast in the role of the good, critical subject—and what is rejected as abject is cast out or projected onto some other (mass culture, the creative industries, capitalism). In other cases, the "good" critical artist is opposed to the "bad" market-driven artist. Is it possible, so Fraser has asked, to distinguish between merely defensive negation and truly critical negation? "Can there be a 'critical' distancing that is not also a defensive disowning? This has led me to consider substituting the term 'analysis' for 'critique,' or at least to consider analysis

as a necessary step following critique. If critique is indeed a moment of defensive negation that nevertheless allows a repressed idea to make its way to consciousness—but as split off and disowned—then we may still need a second step that allows for a recognition and reintegration of that idea as well as our affective investment in it. Such a second step might be called analysis, and my hope is that such analysis might finally lead us out of the now seemingly perpetual reproduction and expansion of contradictions in which we seem to be trapped in the art world today.”²¹ On a side note, it is intriguing that in 1986, when the notion was still not fully established, Fredric Jameson wavered between using the terms “institutional critique” and “institutional analysis.”

But to what extent is “the art world today” still a somewhat unified field? Both steeped in Bourdieu and acutely aware of ongoing transformations of the cultural sphere, Fraser has noted that the contradictions of the art world intensify, and that we have seen a “growth and coalescence of increasingly distinct artistic subfields, each defined by particular economies as well as configurations of practices, institutions, and values.”²² The field of art indeed appears to have become an archipelago. It is certainly imaginable that some of today’s artists from alternative circuits and counter-institutions will be in the collections of major museums; some are already there, marginally. But increasingly we have seen the establishment of practices that come with different forms of valorization, not resulting in a linear progression from vanguard marginality to a Manet-like status of sacrosanct museum piece, but in different trajectories—with some artists, for instance, becoming part of counter-canons established mostly through theoretical and art-historical writing. This in turn leads to a certain amount of market success and museification, but in highly uneven degrees. Furthermore, what is ultimately at stake is not the inclusion of artist X or Y into a universal canon, and a universal market, but rather the maintenance of distinct social and discursive worlds, where things are done differently.

In many ways it would be strange to characterize the more alternative or critical sub-fields as more autonomous, in analogy to the nineteenth-century avant-garde analyzed by Bourdieu (in its literary version) in *The Rules of Art*.²³ While it true that the artists and other actors in these sub-fields maintain a certain autonomy vis-à-vis the art market, all those involved feel intense and manifold economic and social pressure. Precisely because of this, they may be closer to forms of theoretical or activist practice than to other artistic sub-fields. If there is an ever-greater interest in

transversal practices that refuse to abide by strict divisions between relatively autonomous fields, this is one consequence of the fragmentation process that is underway—and an attempt to transmute the new forms of heteronomous determination into self-organized autonomy. Inter alia, this means that the cherished opposition between “transgressive” avant-garde practice and “immanent” critique must be called into question. The disparagement of “naive” avant-garde transgression by some protagonists and theorists of institutional critique as a practice of radical immanence looks increasingly problematic.²⁴ Just where are the borders of immanence? In her Occupy-related essays “Le 1% c’est moi” and “There’s No Place Like Home,” Fraser not only analyzed the art world’s implication in global wealth-redistribution from bottom and middle to top, but as a consequence also stressed to draw the line between a “critical” art world and the François Pinault segment.²⁵ In an expanding and disintegrating field, what forms can an expanded institutional critique take?

Fraser’s indebtedness to Pierre Bourdieu and his analysis of the “field” of art has never meant that she was content with performing some sub-sociological analysis of the status quo. Her practice was always also about the production of connections in and between fields and subfields. The V-Girls collective reflected, and reflected on, an emerging subfield or set of subfields in the overlap between art and academia (associated with *October* and the Whitney Independent Studies Program), while Fraser and Draxler’s *Services* project at the Universität Lüneburg’s Kunstraum (art space) was an intervention in academia and its didactic formats as much as it was a proposal for a different kind of artistic practice. In the vocabulary of Félix Guattari, such projects establish *transversal* connections across disciplinary and institutional borders. During the 1960s, in the context of what was known as institutional psychotherapy or institutional analysis, Guattari developed a highly politicized version of group therapy. Guattari recast Freudian transference between two parties as transversality in group relations, which could help people to “get out of themselves” rather than merely reproducing the same dual dynamic, in the process potentially turning the group subject into an agent of social change²⁶

In 2014, at a symposium in Lüneburg on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the *Services* project, Fraser gave a talk that focused on her involvement with the group W.A.G.E., or Working Artists and the Greater Economy. In an art economy in which many artists offer services rather than sell objects, W.A.G.E. tries to get

institutions to commit to certain minimum standards. Fraser showed a graph compiled by W.A.G.E. on the basis of a questionnaire, which revealed that both the best and the worst practices in the field (at least in New York) can be found in the subfield of performance—with The Kitchen being the best when it comes to recompensing artists, and Performa the absolute worst.²⁷ Old and new divides proliferate, but so too does the need for collaboration and self-organization, however fraught with difficulty and instability.

Writing about “divides” in art, Fraser has argued that the division that is ultimately crucial is not that between formalist and social-historical methods or between internal and external readings, but rather “the divide between what we do and what we say (or don’t say) about what we do. What concerns me is the relationship between what is performed or enacted in art, as well as in art discourse, and how those enactments are symbolized, represented, interpreted and understood, or not, by critics and historians as well as artists, but in art discourse above all. What concerns me is what that relationship itself performs.”²⁸ Of course, what we say about what we do, or what art discourse says about what art does, is itself increasingly relegated to the status of a mere epiphenomenon. Discourse is still deemed important in many art worlds, in many subfields; but the production of discourse as such rather than any specific critical enactments. Magazines and catalogues demand to be filled with content. Historicization and canonization cannot proceed without Significant Essays by Renowned Critics. The crucial task is to intervene at the frayed edge of immanence, where a critical re-performance of discourse, or a re-enactment of critique, may open up a historicized practice once more.

¹ Sabeth Buchmann and Achim Hochdörfer, “Institutional Critics,” in: *Artforum International* 53, no. 1, (September 2014), 68.

² Andrea Fraser, *Report*, Vienna; EA-Generali Foundation, 1995, 20-21; on page 21 Fraser quotes from Bourdieu’s *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993). On the Generali Project see also: Yilmaz Dziewior (ed.), *Andrea Fraser. Works: 1984 to 2003*, Cologne/Hamburg: DuMont/Kunstverein Hamburg, 2003, 170-175.

³ The main reason for this, it has to be noted, was practical: it was a job for more than one person. Fraser refrained from participating herself because by then she had

become too well-known among likely gallery visitors. Since 2005, Fraser has performed the piece herself a number of times, thus privileging precise attention to the piece over any surprise effect.

⁴ Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Reconsidering Joseph Beuys: Once Again," in: *Joseph Beuys: Mapping the Legacy*, ed. Gene Ray, New York: D.A.P., 2001, 81.

⁵ Buchloh, "Reconsidering Joseph Beuys: Once Again," 82.

⁶ Fraser was also, perhaps dominantly, concerned by the association of performance with (theatrical) fiction, as she regarded her work as being more documentary in nature.

⁷ In 1997 Fraser performed *Inaugural Speech*, but it is only in 2001, starting with *Art Must Hang* and *Official Welcome*, that performance returned to the centre of her practice.

⁸ For Fraser's first use of the term, see her early essay on Louise Lawler, "In and Out of Place" (1985), in *Museum Highlights*, 18. See also her reflection on her own role in the establishment of the term and of a canon of institutional critique in: "From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique" (2005), in: ed. John C. Welchman, *Institutional Critique and After*, Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2006, 122-135.

⁹ I have chosen to put the names of the V-Girls in quotation marks when referring to their personae in the context of the performances because they played versions of themselves that could be characterized as auto-caricatures.

¹⁰ George Baker and Andrea Fraser, "Displacement and Condensation: A Conversation on the Work of Louise Lawler," in: *Louise Lawler and Others*, Ostfildern-Ruit/Basel: Hatje Cantz/Kunstmuseum Basel, 2004, 110.

¹¹ See also: Sven Lütticken, "General performance," in *e-flux journal* 31 (January 2012), <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/general-performance/>; last accessed on January 25, 2014.

¹² The V-Girls, "Daughters of the ReVolution," in *October* no. 71 (Winter 1995), 136.

¹³ Wages for Facebook is a project by artist Laurel Ptak; see: <http://wagesforfacebook.com/>; last accessed on January 25, 2015.

see also: Binna Choi and Maiko Tanaka, *Grand Domestic Revolution Handbook*, Utrecht/Amsterdam: Casco/Valiz, 2014.

¹⁴ In the early 1990s, Fraser handed out copies of Bion's *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers* (first published in 1961) among members of the Cologne art scene in a somewhat unsuccessful attempt to make them ware of potentially harmful group dynamics. Bordowitz has incorporated Bion's "Contained and Contained" (from *Attention and Interpretation*) in his book *Taking Voice Lessons* Amsterdam: If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want to be Part of Your Revolution, 2014, xvii-xxv.

¹⁵ Wilfred Bion, *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers* (1961), Hove: Routledge, 1989, 11.

¹⁶ Andrea Fraser, "Why Does Fred Sandback's Work Make Me Cry?," (2004), in: *Andrea Fraser. Texts, Scripts, Transcripts*, ed. Carla Cugini, Cologne: Walther König/Museum Ludwig, 2013, 83.

¹⁷ Fraser, "Why Does Fred Sandback's Work Make Me Cry?," 92.

¹⁸ On Meyer's exhibition and notion of expanded institutional critique, see: Johanna Burton, "Cultural Interference: The Reunion of Appropriation and Institutional Critique," in: Johanna Burton and Anne Ellegood (eds.), *Take It or Leave It: Institution, Image, Ideology*, LA/Munich etc.: Hammer Museum/Delmonico Books/Prestel, 2014, 12-23; see also: my review of this exhibition catalogue in *Texte zur Kunst* no. 96 (December 2014), 170-175, from which I have reused and developed a few elements here.

¹⁹ See also: Andrea Fraser, "From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique" (2005), in: John C. Welchman (ed.), *Institutional Critique and After*, Zürich: JRP Ringier, 2006, 122-135.

²⁰ Andrea Fraser, "Autonomy and Its Contradictions," in: *Open* no. 23 (2012), 112-113.

²¹ Fraser, "Autonomy and Its Contradictions," 113. See also: "There's No Place Like Home" (2012), in: *Texts, Scripts, Transcripts*, 153-159.

²² Fraser, "There's No Place Like Home," 149.

²³ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (1992), trans. Susan Emanuel, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

²⁴ For a different reconsideration and expansion of the institution and of institutional critique, see: André Rottmann, "Networks, Techniques, Institutions: art History in Open Circuits," in: *Texte zur Kunst* no. 81 (March 2011), 142-144.

²⁵ Andrea Fraser, "Le 1%, C'est Moi," in: *Texte zur Kunst* no. 83, September 2011, 114-127; "There's No Place Like Home," 144-160. The writing of "Le 1%, C'est Moi" predates the beginning of the Occupy Wall Street protests on September 17, 2011; it was written in August 2011, as preparations for what was to become Occupy intensified, and as the phrase "We are the 99%" was becoming a rallying cry. This slogan was derived from a May 2011 *Vanity Fair* article by Joseph Stiglitz that Fraser cites in her essay: "Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%." See: <http://www.vanityfair.com/society/features/2011/05/top-one-percent-201105>; last accessed on January 25, 2015.

²⁶ Guattari differentiates between hierarchical "subjected groups" and transversal "group subjects," see: Félix Guattari, *Psychanalyse et transversalité. Essais d'analyse institutionnelle*, Paris: Maspero, 1972, esp. 72-85, 151-172.

²⁷ Andrea Fraser, presentation at the symposium Art and Its Frames, Kunstraum der Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, June 14, 2014. A poster containing the graph shown by Fraser is downloadable here: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/mk5ixwz3bohavy9/W.A.G.E.%20Survey%20Poster.pdf>; last accessed on January 25, 2015.

²⁸ Andrea Fraser, "Speaking of the Social World...", in: *Texte zur Kunst* no. 81 (March 2011), 155-156.