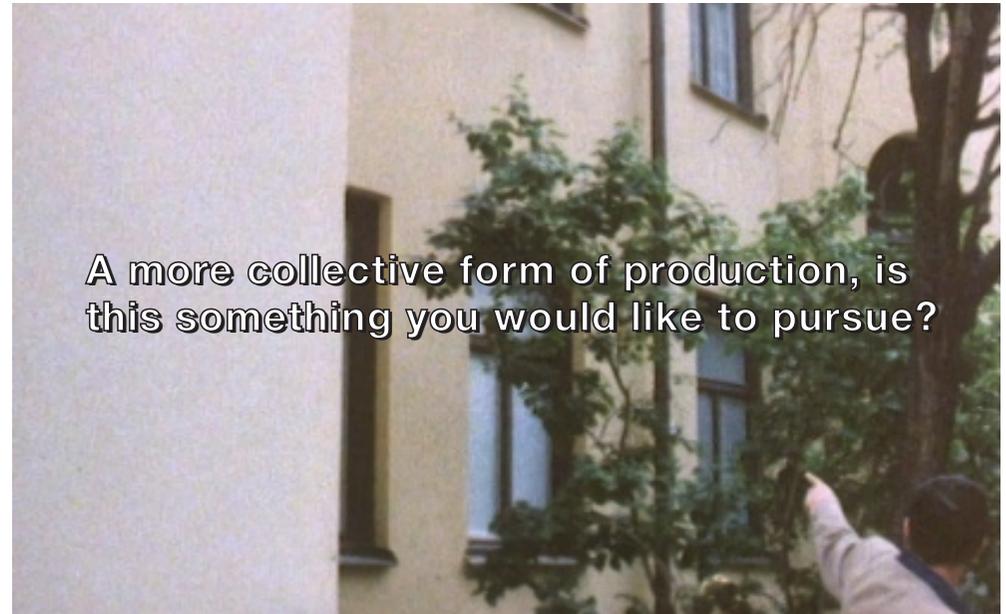


Reading the Word,



On Display:
The Aesthetics of Resistance*

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25th - 27th April 2016

Symposium organized by Achim Lengerer (Ph.D. candidate Goldsmiths Art Department) and Claudia Firth (Ph.D. candidate Cultural and Critical Studies, Birkbeck). The events will take place at both Goldsmiths and Birkbeck, with an informal workshop session to be hosted at The Field, an alternative community space in New Cross.

Taking Peter Weiss' historical novel, *The Aesthetics of Resistance* as a loose starting point, the symposium will take a sideways glance at questions of how we might 'read' leftist historical narratives. While deferring an interrogation of the term resistance to a later point in time (for the second part of the symposium in October at Birkbeck), we will instead follow a thread of collective learning and ask how subjectivity and politics might intersect through the process of 'reading' together. One of our questions will be: how these processes of collective 'reading' are organised and what we can draw from this experience for a contemporary artistic-activist praxis.

Monday 25th April
Birkbeck Evening Event

7pm-9pm.
Keynes Library, 43 Gordon Sq.
An evening panel on the changing nature of work, education and workers' education. The shift to Post Fordist modes of production and cultural and immaterial labour have changed our relationship to knowledge and how it is produced as well as changing the nature of work itself. With the increasing presence of work in education (for example through 'employability' training and work placements) it seems pertinent to ask questions regarding the relationship between work and education and the organisation of higher education itself.

Speakers:

Stephen Shukatis,
lecturer at Essex University. His work includes writings on Autonomia, self-organisation, class (re)composition and cultural labour. <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ebs/staff/profile.aspx?ID=2745>

Mike Neary
from the Social Science Centre, Lincoln, who currently provide free co-operative higher education. The SSC is run as a not-for-profit co-operative, and organised on the basis of democratic, non-hierarchical principles. www.socialsciencecentre.org.uk, <http://staff.lincoln.ac.uk/mneary>

Richard Clarke
- until 2012, was Senior Lecturer in Conservation at Birkbeck College and Director of the University of London Centre for European Protected Area Research. Will speak about the history of Birkbeck and models of useful knowledge and 'self-help'.

Tuesday 26th April
Goldsmiths Day Session

10am
Collective Reading as Political Act?
Claudia and Achim will introduce their shared research of various Aesthetics of Resistance reading groups in East and West Germany during the 1970s/1980s. They will introduce and elaborate on the forms as well as the political and social background of the different groups, such as West German unionists and East German private reading groups. They will also explore the reading group as a social, cultural and semi-public form, what it means to read and learn collectively and what this might mean for knowledge production and subjectivity.

11:30am
Carles Guerra - curator - curated an exhibition Barcelona in 2011, entitled 1979: a Monument to Radical Instants inspired by *The Aesthetics of Resistance* and Foucault's lectures on biopolitics. Taking Jameson's title from the forward to the book, the exhibition was conceived as a kind of historical essay that operated through image and object to organise the temporal moment as monument. It could also be seen as a 'translation' from the book into the spatial medium of exhibition. Choosing 1979, Guerra focussed the exhibition on a pivotal year for Spain and one that could be characterised as epitomising the birth of neoliberalism. Carles Guerra is currently director of the Tápies foundation.

2pm
Roundtable discussion on the relationship between collective reading/learning and praxis. Two self-organised collectives, the New Cross Commoners and another group (TBC) will share their experiences as groups that have read together and reflect on the interrelations

between reading and their particular social and political practices. The roundtable will be organised in collaboration with Ph.D. candidate Kristien Van Den Brande.

4pm
Florian Wüst - film curator - editor of a recently published DVD-compilation with Weiss' last documentary entitled BAG DE ENS FACADER/Behind Similar Facades, 1961. Florian will present a selection of Weiss' films embedded in a lecture about their historical context (the European and Swedish film avant-garde) and most importantly Weiss' development from being an avant-garde filmmaker to a political writer and writer in the 1960/70s (most notably the play *Marat/Sade* and *The Aesthetics of Resistance*). Florian Wüst has been an active film curator since the early 2000s. He was recently film curator at the transmediale/conversationpiece at transmediale 2016 in Berlin.

Wednesday 27th April
'Reading Group' Afternoon Session,
The Field, 385 Queen's Rd, New Cross
This will be a practical workshop session in which participants will be asked to bring fragments from their experiences of the previous two days' events. These could be words, things, dates, feelings or anything they might have taken away with them. Together, we will 'read' these fragments using a variety of methods and perspectives. Starting with discursive modes towards more affective registers to include the body, voice, rhythms and dynamics. This will be in collaboration with Cristina Ribas and other PhD students from the Art department at Goldsmiths.

The symposium finishes with an invitation to join us and the New Cross Commoners at their People's Kitchen at the Field for a communal meal.