45). What is furthermore significant is that Agamben ascribes the power to do this to the poet, and thus to an artistic sensibility. The act of designing and adequately executing a curatorial concept, like Documenta 11, one that is able to point a gaze at that which lies in darkness, arguably through this definition becomes an artistic practice in itself, but more importantly is a practice of designing the parameters for specific kinds of knowledge creation. The particularities of this case, the establishment of a curatorial team, the platform system, they are all means to an end, which is a curatorial concept that "stares back" at the colonizer, and attempts to shine a new light on the arts festival as a means for the solidification of a Western identity, and the manufacture of an exoticized other.

Documenta 11 has been presented here because it is a good example, but not at all because it is the only example, of a curatorial concept as a quasi-artistic practice. The festival can be seen within a tendency to so-called "discursive exhibitions" that emerged within large-scale exhibitions in the 1990s, as the profile of the curator was transforming from someone with know-how on how to successfully mount and stage an exhibition to a figure more focused on reflecting upon and experimenting with parameters for knowledge production. Situating and understanding this turn towards more theory-based and experimental curatorial practice will be the central concern of the next section.

2.4 Curatorial Discourse

The case of Documenta 5 demonstrates the battles for authority and control of the exhibition format. On the one hand, Szeemann as curator made the exhibition into his own Gesamtkunstwerk, attempting to subsume the positions of the participating artists into his own vision for the exhibition, using them as "pigments for his painting," as Buren put it. On the other, artists such as Buren and Broodthaers dedicated their artistic practices to exploring and manipulating the conditions of display. Buren's stripe paintings encouraged visitors to think of the white cube spaces of the museum as only being an illusion of neutrality. Broodthaers' artist museum imitated the protocols of a "real" museum, and in doing so explored how this seemingly-invisible infrastructure is constitutive to the exhibited objects.

With Documenta 11, Enwezor's approach was to work more as a facilitator. He worked together with a team of academic curators who designed the program as a group. Documenta was split into five platforms around the world, giving a series of perspectives on Documenta and its relationship to the global art world. In terms of presentation and contextualization of works in Kassel itself, Enwezor left this mostly up to artists. Rather than composed group exhibitions as a form of curatorial meta-composition—a favorite form of Szeemann—artists and collectives

occupied large spaces with their own works showing the intertangling of global networks, and the activation of alternative archives.

In both these cases, artists were involved in the presentation of works that can also be considered curatorial, in that they experiment directly with the mode of display, and also attempt to design the parameters for a specific kind of event of knowledge for the audience to occur. With this in mind, the history of the artist in the 20th century should not just be described as the production of discrete objects, but, as Filipovic argues, there is also a whole history of "artists taking into their own hands the very apparatus of presentation and dissemination of the work that they had produced" (Filipovic 2017, 7). This can range from installations and interventions such as have been presented by Buren, Broodthaers, to many more forms of artistic expression.

These kinds of projects combine aspects of what has been contended here to be curatorial practice with artistic practice, and raise the question as to how they can possibly be distinguished from one another. A discussion of these terms will help make clearer both the relationship between curatorial and artistic practice, as well as the specific kinds of challenges that curatorial practice faces, in particular in regards to forms of critique.

2.4.1 Historical Emergence

This section will look at a selection of some of the most important characteristics that define the professional profile of the curator as opposed to the profile of the artist. It is important before doing this to note that these "professional profiles" should not be understood to correspond to specific people. A hallmark of the contemporary worker is their need to take on many different kinds of jobs, sometimes as artist, sometimes as curator, other times as proofreader or gallery assistant. These characteristics should thus be understood as symptomatic of the curatorial profile, rather than prescriptive, exclusive, or exhaustive. It is more an attempt to capture the challenges and discourses that exist when one ends up in a curatorial way of working; it is not an exhaustive how-to guide.

A first step is to reconstruct and extend a genealogy of the contemporary curator, following the argument put together by O'Neil in *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)* (2012). Though this telling of a history of curatorial practice should itself be understood against the background of a certain formalization and academization of curatorial practice that began in the 1990s, it can also help to shed light on how this particular profile has taken on a specific identity within the arts ecosystem.

As curators began to consolidate power over the field of visual art starting around the 1960s, the response from the wider art field was increasing calls for what then was termed the "demystification" of the role of the curator. In other words,

rather than accept the ascension of the curator-as-author of the exhibition, there was pressure for the curator to be understood as a co-actor in the development of an exhibition project, not as the gatekeeper of established values regarding the role and value of art. Instead, the insistence was that the role of the curator would be clear and transparent to the viewer of the exhibition (Obrist 2017, 129).

What was needed was this process of *demystification*, or exposure of the so-called "invisible hand" of the curator. Seth Siegelaub was one of the most prominent independent curators of this era, having worked closely on exhibitions with many early conceptual artists. In Obrist's interview with Siegelaub, he describes this process of demystification as a "process in which we attempted to understand and be conscious of our actions; to make clear what we and others were doing" (Obrist 2017, 130). Being conscious of one's actions as a curator, and also attempting to make them clear to the audience, was not just a symptom of the assertion of subjective authorship of the curator over the exhibition, but also a repudiation of the hidden and "mystical" power structures of the museum, too.

The museum's historical status as a place of rationality and authority meant that it was subjected to little of this kind of oversight of its activities, or its underlying ideology. Thus, the invisibility of the process of mediation against which curators like Siegelaub and others were turning has come along with a mandate to explain both itself and the institutional structures with which it was interrelated. As O'Neil puts it, "the emergence of the curatorial position that began with the process of demystification—as an opposition to the dominant order of what, and who, constituted the work of art—became a discussion about the values and meanings of the work of the exhibition" (O'Neil 2012, 27). These discussions were self-reflexive, meant as a way of making curators aware and accountable for their strategy of mediation.

By the 1980s, the curator's role would skew even more towards that of the sole author of the exhibition, which became understood as a "synthesis of artwork, concept, and praxis transformed into a *Gesamtkunstwerk*" (O'Neil 2012, 22). Exhibitions over this decade tended to bring together heterogeneous works into forms of "dialogue," or subjective and non-art-teleological narratives of the curator's own design. In other words, it was an imposition of the values of the individual curator onto works as a form of the curator's own self-presentation. The curator becomes the arbiter of taste. From a different perspective, Boris Groys argued that therefore selection for inclusion into the exhibition becomes the most important form of expression in the artistic system. The link between curator and author becomes in this way clearer: "the author is someone who selects, who *authorizes*" (Groys 2008a, 93).

In the 1990s, the "supervisibility" of curators can be seen as a mutation of this need to combat the opacity of decision-making in the museum. Strategies of so-called institutional critique, labeled as such by practitioners like Andrea Fraser, saw

artists try to subvert their compartmentalization and categorization by curators, attempting to reclaim some control of the narrative. Instead, these attempts to criticize and illuminate the hidden workings of the museum often served only to strengthen curators' reputations; it seemed that there was no such thing as bad publicity, particularly if it was intelligent.

In these moments of transparency, curators themselves are put on display, appearing as the centre of symposia, biennials, etc. Being asked to explain themselves thus became the offering of a platform on which to promote both themselves and their positions. Often hidden under the guise of this visibility or demystification, what would end up happening were re-enactments of a cult of celebrity that only reinforce their status as *auteur*. Transparency becomes a discursive performance of the curatorial statement rather than the works themselves (O'Neil 2012, 36).

These discursive performances, which had always played an important role in festivals, also began to take on a more central role, being sometimes put into the foreground in front of even artistic practices themselves. As O'Neil and Wilson argue, this "'curatorialization'" of discursive and education platforms raises important questions as to the possibility of producing non-instrumentalized forms of openness and criticality within the structures of the visual arts (O'Neil and Wilson 2010, 12–13).

This is seen for example in Obrist's curatorial output. The *Interview Project* that he has pursued since the beginning of his career in the 90s, interviewing a massive number of people in the art world, publishing many of them as well, exemplifies this approach, working as a kind of "'protest against forgetting'" (O'Neil 2012, 41). Obrist however still remains focused on the contemporary, and finally on his own self-performance more than anything else (as is obvious from the rest of his career), once again asserting a curator-centred personality under the guise of an engagement with, and increased visibility of, the past, reaffirming O'Neil's point about the guise of demystification. This is also how initiatives such as Obrist's interview marathons function, arguably serving to enrich the curator's reputation under the pretense of openness (among others at Serpentine Gallery, 2006; Documenta 12, 2007; Luma Westbau (89plus) 2013, etc.).

The 1990s are often referred to as the "age of curatorial studies." This period marked a concerted attempt to create a comprehensive historical and academic discourse around exhibitions of the past, curatorial innovations, and models in the name of transparency. This is an academic formalization of the field that had been expanding since the 1960s.

Beginning with the Curatorial and Critical Studies Program at the Whitney in 1987, this decade saw an explosion of education programs teaching curating to students in academies and universities, as well as a range of publications exploring

the discipline's history.[23] The emergence of curatorial studies meant a formalization of curricula, but also the emergence of a more rigorous academic discourse about also the implications of this kind of formalization. This academization only heightened the already important role that conversation and speech played in curatorial practice. The curator had become a nexus of debate and criticism, and in doing so had also consolidated other professions in the arts into it, such as the role of the critic (who had largely been replaced by the exhibition catalogue, produced by the curator), and the academic. (O'Neil 2012, 2)

Exhibitions and festivals being themselves temporally-limited events, the study and formalization of curating as a profession has seen a growth in catalogues and an entire publishing industry around exhibitions and curatorial practice. Documentation (what is reproduced, why, and how) and the curator's statement can often then become prioritized over the actual experience of the of exhibition, overriding the artworks' chance to make a statement of their own.

Documentation becomes particularly important with the emergence of the unprecedentedly-dense network of art institutions and professionals that has emerged as a result of communication technology and cheap air travel. As of the 1990s, this now-global art world would provide the conditions for the emergence of a curatorial class as itself a thoroughly-globalized profession. These new curators were what helped establish the mythical profile of the globalized biennale curator, living life in airport lounges as they jet from one biennale to another. (O'Neil 2012, 44–45)

The attractiveness and glamour that became associated with this new kind of curatorial practice are important to emphasize; the job attracted many former historians, critics, and administrators lured in by this dream job. The attractivity of the concept of the "curator," meant here specifically in the sense of one person's job, would do much to create the interest also of other art forms in adopting this mantle, in the hopes of also achieving a similar level of status and success.

2.4.2 Curatorial Ambiguity

> "He went to a philosophre which was the procuratour of the poure peple and prayd hym for charyte that he wold gyue to hym good counceylle of his grete nede." (William Caxton quoted in Oxford English Dictionary Online, 2018b)

Around the beginning of the Common Era (AD), Roman Emperor Augustus, began sending so-called "procurators" instead of senators to oversee the governance

23 For a list of publications about curating that have emerged since the 1990s, see O'Neil 2012, 144n162. For a list of magazines and journals dealing with the topic of curating since the mid-aughts, see ibid. 146n174.

of provinces far away from the capital Rome. Unlike senators, who were equal in standing to the emperor, procurators were sent as Augustus' representatives, and tasked with taking care of the functioning of the provinces in his stead. This included tasks such as taxation, the care of the emperor's extensive possessions, and ensuring the functioning of the province in the emperor's absence. Procurators would thus come in common usage to be understood as those people who manage or steward the affairs of another (ibid.).

Looking at the OED's entry on the procurator, this definition can be seen to expand over time. Procurator becomes the title given to those people who manage the affairs of another person or entity, such as a church, a household, or through the mechanism of power of attorney represent another person who is in some way unwilling or unable. It is the exercise of power through representation of others.

The wielding of such power must always involve some element of trust from those being represented, and an element of responsibility and acceptance of the consequences of their actions from the procurators. This leads to the third definition in the OED, namely "[a]n advocate, defender, or spokesperson," as illustrated in the quote at the beginning of this section (Oxford English Dictionary Online, 2018b). The procurator acts in what they think is the best interest of those who they represent, often in their absence or because of their inability to do so on their own.

The rise in popularity of the term "curator" has meant that its exact definition has been hotly debated for some time. For the most part, texts on the topic begin with the etymology of the word curating, which they trace back to the Latin *curare*, meaning to care for, or otherwise *cura*, meaning the cure. This word stems from the museum curators who were charged with the care of the growing museum collections of the 19th century. As has been shown in section 2.4.1, the rise in interest and influence of the term has come along with a shift towards exhibition-making rather than caring for collections. Szeemann for instance, became one of the first independent curators around the 1960s, travelling around to different museums, Kunsthallen, and festivals like Documenta or the Venice Biennale, creating exhibition concepts for them, not caring for their collections.

Thinking about the procurator here can serve as a way of thinking about responsibility and representation as a key dimension of curatorial practice that can perhaps better describe its professional profile as it exists today. Rather than caring for a collection, the curator is a *representative* for many different interests, and must mediate between them in order to create the curatorial project that they want to achieve.

Raqs Media collective, in their text "On Curatorial Responsibility," emphasize this aspect of the curator acting as a guarantor. They show that, in staging large-scale international biennales, curators end up representing a large number of diverse and often contradictory interests, negotiating between them in order to make

staging an exhibition possible at all. In their non-comprehensive list, they point out that curators can often be accountable to regional governments trying to increase their cultural capital through the project, art-world elites with insufficient knowledge of the particularities of the site, a jet-fuel-powered carbon footprint so large it eclipses any talk of sustainability, the possibility that the project reinforces the hegemony of problematic local interests, become unwilling real-estate agents for processes of urban renewal, or unwitting impresarios for the local government, etc. (Raqs Media Collective 2010, 281). Their point is that curators must negotiate this thicket of stakeholders, while simultaneously making sure that their project is artistically of the highest quality they can achieve, and that it fulfils the expectations of the public, who is either a supporter of the project through public money, or comes to visit it. Raqs argues that this negotiation is per se impossible, and that curating exists in a permanent state of guilt to at least some number of these stakeholders (2010, 282).

Curating then becomes de facto a game of compromise between these different factors, never making every stakeholder happy, but managing to negotiate between them to find the best possible imperfect result. They point out though that if this is the case, the curator needs to have some kind of guiding principle or ethics in order to know how to navigate these complex situations. To solve this, they take up the notion of *curatorial responsibility*, arguing firstly for its inherent performativity: responsibility as the ability to respond, to be answerable for the actions one takes, and not blame results on extenuating circumstances (Raqs Media Collective 2010, 285). This means remaining in dialogue, and acting as a node rather than as a tyrant, who would abuse one's position of definitional power (as seen in the Szeemann example). This responsibility is understood by the collective as such:

> *Curatorial responsibility* consists in taking the position of being a custodian of the ethical, authorial, pragmatic, and programmatic energies that act in concert to transform the occasion of a biennale into a process whereby (for the duration of the event) a space of creativity, display, and discourse is rendered public in a manner that articulates criticality, intelligence, pleasure, and an informed response to the matrix of social and political relationships that tie local contexts to global realities. (Raqs Media Collective 2010, 285)

Just as in the analogy of Emperor Augustus' procurators, the task becomes about acting in the best interests of those who have granted the curator custody over some part of mounting an arts festival. This kind of performative shaping of the intensities and flows that run through the event of the festival is a compelling way of thinking about these responsibilities. The task for them becomes one of the *art* of negotiating between these various demands on the curatorial profile in order to hollow out for the biennale a space of relative autonomy from its surroundings, enabling it also to take positions that respond and interact with those same sur-

roundings. This enables, at least nominally, the arts festival to remain a place of change and transformation, also in the sense of the festival that has run through this chapter.

Returning to the overarching question of this section, namely how should the relationship between the artist and the curator be conceived of, this position by Raqs will help to frame the answer: Curating involves a process of negotiation for the biennale between a wide and heterogeneous group of stakeholders that span the breadth of local and global power dynamics in a given place.

This conclusion is supported by Beatrice von Bismarck, who argues that it is exactly the unclear position of curating between so many different stakeholders and responsibilities, in reality a paradox, an impossible situation, that lends it its critical potential. More specifically, it is for her in the negotiation and articulation of this position that its critical potential can continuously unfold.

What von Bismarck argues is unique about the curator as opposed to the installation artist with whom they share so much similarity is their position in-between various roles and stakeholders, producing an uncertainty and unclarity that creates a potential for a critical practice. It is this paradoxical status of the curator that allows them to embody a particular *critical* role in the field of the arts. Precisely because of their mixed loyalties, their position as mediator within that minefield of relations that constitute the exhibition, they are able to "slip between" established codes and norms, maneuvering into a position of critique.

Because these mediators bring together disparate interests within themselves, von Bismarck argues with Bourdieu that they are two-faced, paradoxes, and always in a balancing act (*Doppelgestalten*), similar to the argument by Raqs Media Collective (von Bismarck 2007a, 20). Borrowing from a text by Bourdieu entitled *Genèse et structure du champ religieux* (Genesis and structure of the religious field) (1971), von Bismarck identifies two figures that help explain this situation, those of the priest and the prophet. The priest is the guard of that which is already deemed to be holy and in need of protection, they are the gate-keepers. The prophet is interested in the creation of new *doxa*, new forms of holiness, which have the potential to destroy or at least upend the old order (20–21).

Before the emergence of independent curators, and curators-as-exhibition-makers, the curator traditionally corresponded to the priest, *caring for* and upholding established values, for instance the museum's collection-as-canon. The artist corresponded to the prophet, and still fulfills this function of the creation of new ideas. The independent curator has however also has taken on characteristics of the prophet, thus becoming "a flexible, dynamic, and contingent constellation of op-

erations and positions, a specific form of criticality in the art field" (von Bismarck 2007a, 23).[24]

For her, the difference is that despite their sharing of a common area for expression (in the conception and execution of the exhibition), where they differ is in the curator's unique position between the various stakeholders who are responsible for the exhibition happening, be they funding bodies, the museum institution or board, the audience, the artist(s), etc. The artist is responsible for their work, and in the case of creating an installation or exhibition-within-exhibition (as in Broodthaers' case), also for many similar aspects like the relationship to the audience. They can however rely on a preexisting administrative, institutional, financial structure to make this happen.

The curator cannot, and is responsible for bringing these stakeholders together in such a way as to create the conditions for work to happen in the first place. That they subsequently can also act on the exhibition and its conception is precisely the double role that is being highlighted here. They are somewhere undefined in-between, creating the potential for conflict because of the working methods they share with both sides.

Von Bismarck understands the creation of new doxa as an inherently critical practice. Her understanding of critique is as a repartition of sense, or the reconfiguration of the existing regime of perception into a new one, changing the realm of the possible (understood in the sense of Agamben's "What is the Contemporary?" detailed above). The curator must use the tools at their disposal, namely those of composition, ordering, presentation, mediation, etc., in order to achieve this repartitioning, playing these two different statuses, as protector/priest and innovator/prophet, against each other. They thus exist in a *double role*, in a liminal zone between administrative and content-based work. This creates "a flexible, dynamic, and contingent constellation of operations and positions, a specific form of criticality in the art field," one that able to slip in between established codes and norms in order to achieve their curatorial goals (von Bismarck 2007a, 23).

2.4.3 Curating and Immaterial Work

The nascent tourism industry that fed the universal expositions of the 19th century was a harbinger of a shift in the focus of societal production from an industrial model of the accumulation of physical capital to one of cognitive capitalism, which focuses on the accumulation of immaterial capital and the dissemination of knowledge in order to create profit. "Cognitive capitalism" is used here in the sense of Moulier Boutang, who understands it as a system where "'the capturing of gains

24 See also Marchart's similar definition of the curatorial function (note: not the curator as professional role) as the creation of counter-hegemonies in the Gramscian sense (2005).

from knowledge and innovation is the central issue for accumulation, and it plays a determining role in generating profits'" (Thrift 2011, vii). Mauricio Lazzarato argues that this shift reached mass dissemination around the 1980s and 1990s, and saw workers' skillsets orient themselves towards two main characteristics: first an emphasis on "informational content," meaning the ability to communicate and exchange, and second, activities not traditionally understood as work, like forming public opinions, taste, or artistic standards, would become standard skills required for the workforce (Lazzarato 1996, 132).

In many companies, the task of the worker has shifted to become about taking on the responsibility of making decisions, and functioning as an "interface," successfully mediating problems in order to find solutions (Lazzarato 1996, 134). This is a kind of living and intellectual labour is called post-Fordism, or a model of the labourer after the demise of the so-called Fordist worker. Whereas the Fordist worker is involved in an assembly of mass-production, which is standardized and regulated, the post-Fordist worker is tailored towards small-scale production, or otherwise involved in situations where their creativity and problem-solving abilities are required in order for the business or factory to remain productive and profitable.

Ability to manage, process, and communicate information become key skills of the worker. Capital becomes interested in investing in technologies of management and the facilitation of communication and networking. The realization has been however that this also requires investing in technologies of control of the very subjectivity of the worker, making modern management techniques interested in having "'the worker's soul … become part of the factory'" (Lazzarato 1996, 133). Personality becomes a key factor to be controlled, making sure that workers are able to work not just effectively, but *affectively*, practicing the management of relationships and conflict resolution.

Interdisciplinary arts scholar Shannon Jackson points out that this kind of immaterial and affective work has long ago been theorized by feminist studies in their project to recognize the same sort of work done by women that was not recognized at the time as work (2012, 26). It has also been the domain of the performing arts for the entirety of their existence, which have had to develop ways of coping with the precarity of making a living off performative, affective work (ibid.). This kind of work is therefore not new, but rather just "something newly pervasive" with the service economy (25).

Thus this shift towards work that is performative, affective, and immaterial means that the work of society begins to resemble the artists' as it has emerged over the past 200 years. The arts start to become conflated with the dominant form of social production. Given the importance of creative labour today, it would follow that artists and artistic work could be a kind of model for this kind of labourer. This view is supported by Luc Boltanksi and Eve Chiapello in *The New Spirit of Capitalism*

([1999] 2005). They argue that the student protests of 1968 calling for revolution and freedom from the oppression of industrial capitalism, and striving for autonomy, spontaneity, and creativity were in the following years integrated into the capitalist system. The "artists' critique" as had been fostered by artists since the French Revolution was able to become a cornerstone of capitalist production, fitting with the subsequent transformation of the workforce to creative and affective work: If for instance the rigidity of a nine to five job was criticized by the students of 1968, then flexibility became a key trait of the post-Fordist worker (transformed into precarity).[25] The rigidity of what the protestors called *Metro–Boulot–Dodo* was replaced with a capitalization of creativity and self-realization ([1999] 2005, xxxvff). There are two main points to be made against this backdrop.

The first is to understand the centrality of the figure of the artist in post-Fordist society. As Chiapello argues in a later text, since the transformations after the 1968 protests, the model of the artist has been largely incorporated into contemporary management discourses. Job security was given up in favour of flexibility and creativity, and the post-Fordist worker is lured into forms of affective work that, though they may resemble the model of the artist as it has emerged over the past 200 years, in fact has become controlled and managed by capital (Chiapello 2012, 50).[26]

Chiapello raises the question as to whether there still exists a possibility for artistic critique in a post-Fordist society that has largely co-opted its historical project of searching for a so-called "authentic" life. In her conclusion, she claims that it is possible, but qualifies it by highlighting the difficulty of the task, as it must now be done through insisting on the autonomy of the artwork, while successfully navigating the pitfalls of its integration into cognitive capitalist discourse. She asks openly if there can be limits to capital's need to instrumentalize, reproduce, and control, or whether it in fact goes on indefinitely (Chiapello 2012, 51).

It has been shown how, already in the case of Documenta 5, artists struggled to insist on the autonomy of their work before the expanding role of the curator. However, if the defining characteristic that separates curatorial practice from artistic practice is that it works as a mediator between heterogeneous stakeholders spanning many areas of society, then perhaps curating can be understood as a site where instead of attempting to steer around the "pitfalls" of e.g. the management discourse, it worked with them instead. Curating then would resemble a kind of

25 See also Elke Bippus 2016.

26 The separation between artistic critique and social critique theorized as having come out of the 1968 revolution by Boltanski and Chiapello has been ignored here for the sake of brevity. In any case, Lazzarato's position against this separation, arguing that many workers affected by social critique are in fact also creative workers, would seem to argue against this separation. See *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, Boltanski and Chiapello ([1999] 2005) and Lazzarato, "The Misfortunes of the 'Artistic Critique' and of Cultural Unemployment" (2007).

artistic practice that has arisen over the same period that the transformation into the information society of cognitive capitalism has taken place.

The second point is then to consider the position taken up by von Bismarck, who points out the familiarity between curatorial practice and management discourse. Outlining the new economy's shift towards forms of immaterial labour, von Bismarck's argument is that the curatorial profile embodies the skillset of the creative worker even better than the artist. The curator not only participates in the exclusive domain of art, that leading industry (*Leitindustrie* in the Marxist sense) of the new economy, but is also *active* in forms of social technology such as networking, management, etc., thriving in it, not just trying to avoid its pitfalls. Curating becomes an exemplary blending of both this fetishized domain of art and contemporary management technologies that dominate the contemporary economy (von Bismarck 2005, 175–178).

The curator then performs on two different registers. The first is, as von Bismarck explains in section 2.4.2 that they operate both as priests and prophets. This means that they are caught in a balancing act between caring for established values one the one hand (as priest), and generating new doxa on the other (as prophet). As presented in section 2.3.1 on Documenta 5, this is mainly a task that happens within the creative sphere of the festival itself. The *other* register is that of management, which gives it an ambiguous relationship to immaterial labour and to the management of forms of knowledge. This is comparable with section 2.3.2 on Documenta 11, where Enwezor used his position as artistic director to become a manager and thus enabler of a small team of curators who would stage the project collectively. If Enwezor resembled then a manager in the sense of the new economy, it was one whose goal was the portrayal of the entanglement of Western artistic practice with its colonies and the rest of the globe, a thoroughly critical project, once again in the sense of "not being governed *like that*" after Foucault, or as Chiapello once again calls it, the search for an "authentic" life.

This is precisely the characteristic of curating that differentiates it from artistic practice. Curating has an uncertain profile, a role shimmering between instrumentalization and critique (an uncertainty that will also carry forward to curating performance). In this ambiguity of the position is where von Bismarck positions the potentiality and critical ability of the curator, situated in its double, liminal role between so many mediations.

The curator's capacity for critical action can then be argued to exist because of its ambiguous position in-between stakeholders and forms of administrative and artistic practice. This ambiguity means though that whether a curatorial act is in the final instance indeed critical depends also on its exact circumstances, which must be analyzed and determined on a case-by-case basis. Approaching the critical capacity of curating in this way portrays it as an inherently situated practice,

in that, because of its ambiguity, it is not critical per se, but rather in a specific moment of practice can be considered to act critically.

Such a conclusion argues to an extent against the usefulness of a history of curating, as conceivably any such history would not be useful any case-specific analysis of curatorial practice. As Enwezor says in an interview with O'Neil, he sees the value of a history of curating, but understands himself as an autodidact (Enwezor 2007, 114). Furthermore, despite the formalization which took place in the field in the beginning in the late 80s and 90s, a great deal other successful curators today have idiosyncratic career paths that have landed them in the same position. What then is the usefulness of a history of curating for curators, and furthermore, what is the use of this history for critical mediation in music? If these practices are really so situated, then what is the use of discussion and analysis removed from the urgencies of a particular context?

Definite Expansion

> The task at hand seems to be not one of liberation from confinement, but rather one of undoing the very possibilities of containment. We can rail against the structures that confine us, but until we produce the models of knowledge that operate conceptually against the very possibility of containment, … we have absolutely no way out of this conundrum. (Rogoff 2015, 39'17")

As curatorial scholar Irit Rogoff says in the quote above, the answer to this issue of the relevancy of a history of curating for a curatorial practice that must necessarily take place in a particular context is to reframe the problem.

A first important consideration is that curators like Enwezor are in some way immersed already in this body of knowledges and practices that are questioning the conditions of display and their implicit support of certain modernist/colonialist ideologies. Where a history of curating can help is where this way of thinking seems to be necessary but not yet so widely spread, as has been argued to be the case in regards to the leadership of music festivals. Despite sharing a similar history of their emergence and basic framework, there is a lack of critical leadership practices.

This connects to Rogoff's differentiation between fighting against confinement and creating models for knowledge that cannot be contained in the first place. The approach is not to understand curating as a discrete silo of knowledge belonging to a foreign discipline, but rather a collection of stories and ideas that can help realize a model for unconfinable knowledge among musical practitioners. In this way, the schema for a curatorial approach to music festivals becomes not one of comparing one to another, or of looking over the fence between them in order to appropriate the term curator. Rather, the approach is an extension of this "undisciplined," network-based way of thinking. It is a way of thinking that does not disregard history,

but rather takes the liberty to avail itself of histories that serve the production of critical knowledge in a given situation.

Rogoff, in her text "The Expanding Field," makes this connection more explicit by positioning curating not as a resistance against infrastructures such as the functioning of the festival that has been presented here, but rather

> the ability to locate alternate points of departure, alternate archives, alternate circulations and alternate imaginaries. And it is the curatorial that has the capacity to bring these together, working simultaneously in several modalities, kidnapping knowledges and sensibilities and insights and melding them into an instantiation of our contemporary conditions. (Rogoff 2013, 48)

This aspect of "kidnapping" seems to be highly appropriate here, in that it captures the fact that these histories and ideas are already existent, but cordoned off from fields in which they can potentially be made useful. In this way, curating becomes a practice that is not connected to any one particular history or set of rules, but engages with particular knowledges through a specific and concerted act of choosing those that are most suitable to solve a particular problem.

Having established this, it is still worth examining the "expanded field" that Rogoff positions as similar but in opposition to curatorial practice, both in order to underline this point, and to show the forces resisting it. She argues that in contrast to the construction of situated constellations of knowledges and histories that the curatorial puts forward, many concepts in contemporary arts practice have been able to expand and take on many different other meanings, but without allowing them to "burst" when they get too large and become something new (Rogoff 2013, 43). Curator is for her one of these terms (ibid.). This is part of a misguided politics of inclusion of subversive ideas into concepts once antagonistic to them, and for instance how criticism of museums, etc., can often be welcomed and presented within the institution, without the institutions themselves being in any actual danger of having to enact change (44).

This siloing is a kind of instrumentalization of critique, making it harmless, and something that ends up benefiting the institutions rather than calling them into question. This remains based on the modernist production of plurality, because what underlies it is a domestication of difference that prevents fundamental categorizations themselves from being questioned. In this way, it is a continuation of the paradigm of the Crystal Palace and its "crystalline veil," which makes visible a variety of cultural artefacts while also subduing their ability to challenge their frame (see section 2.1.1). The suppression of concepts critical of the institution functions in this way through a reversal, a catch-and-kill rather than an exclusion, resulting in the "expanding field." Instead of change, there is only an inflation of the institution to make room for more (Rogoff 2013, 44).

In this regard, curating, untethered from its confinements, but nevertheless still existing as an approach, a way of finding and linking, becomes a methodology of drawing new relations, ones that reframe/reimagine rather than reproduce relationships between knowledge and power/infrastructure (Rogoff 2013, 47). This is the basis for the understanding of curating music that is being formed here, in that it is focused on drawing together relevant histories, ideas, and examples, in order to create an alternate point of departure for both understanding, and hopefully also conceiving of, festivals for contemporary music.

2.5 Conclusion

The Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 has been shown to be a common ancestor between festivals for both music and visual arts, in that it represents an exemplary system of commodification of artistic practice not limited to one medium or another, but rather exhibiting an imposition of modernist values onto artistic and technological production. This applies as much to visual art practices as it does to those of music.

The approach taken by the 1851 fair, continued and refined in subsequent universal expositions, would serve as the conceptual basis for the smaller, more specific arts-focused festivals that would come shortly later. These festivals would focus variously on performing arts, music, or visual art, but share significant similarities in their construction. While these festivals are normally written about from separate academic perspectives within their own disciplines, this chapter has attempted to think of them within a unified, more general history of the arts festival. It has argued for not only similar origins, but also that all arts festivals share a range of organizational and programmatic similarities.

After having established these similarities, it has been argued that the music festivals that have been examined do have a different approach to these common characteristics, namely that there exists a history of experimentation with the festival format as a critical curatorial practice mainly in the visual arts, with a similar history not being readily discernable in music festivals.

These aspects being however crucial to understanding the administrative practices of the two case studies examined later, an overview of critical curatorial practice as it has developed historically in the visual arts had to be undertaken. This would establish an archive of practices and ideas that could subsequently be used in understanding and analyzing those case studies and how they fit in or diverge from that history of curating in the visual arts.

Curatorial approaches to Documenta were then examined over the years, as they provide important examples that have all had a great deal of resonance in the field.