

The Performative Curatorial Studio:
Curatorial practice in a collective and performative context
or how to perform the Curatorial

A project conceived by Judith Lavagna and Lara Merrington

featuring

Katrina Blach, Ulrike Gerhardt, John Holten, Carlos Leon-Xjimenez, Monte Masi,
Pauline Payen, Paz Ponce Pérez-Bustamante, Clémence de La Tour du Pin,
Lorenzo Sandoval, To Whom it May Concern Collective, Joël Verwimp,
Jenny Wolka (Mahony) + Guests.

Agora - top floor
Sunday June 23, 10.30 am – 5 pm

<http://agoracollective.org/>
<http://day10-curatorialstudio.blogspot.de/>



The curatorial is the work of 'making constellations' three-dimensionally in space and time. Furthermore, the curatorial is contextual, and simultaneously conditioned and conditioning. (...) It has a relationship to art but it is not dependent on art - it can essentially be performed transdisciplinarily.

Beatrice von Bismarck, lecture at the second seminar 'Performing the Curatorial', University of Gotheburg, January 2011.

The Performative Curatorial Studio (DAY #10)* creates a critical and informed dialogue through varied forms of presentation based on collaborative practice and its reinvention of roles between artists, curators and researchers, through the particular theme *Performing the Curatorial*.

The Curatorial is a cross-disciplinary practice within and beyond art that is constantly reworked and reformulated, moving into territories other than art. **How can we discuss and create new potentials for remaking the context of the presentation of art and its social interactions?**

For this intensive one-day studio we invite visitors to insert themselves into an experimentation on the traditional symposium format through activating discussions and presentation methods in an exploratory real-time study. This happens through presentations and performances, critical workshops and roundtable discussions and the use of architectural forms within the space.

Through a closed workshop in the morning involving international artists, curators and thinkers on the field, stretching into the afternoon with real-time actions, performances and reading sessions open to the public, **The Performative Curatorial Studio provides a working platform** where we can discuss, process and create outcomes in a think-tank of minds and experiences coming together. As active participants, the public are invited to contribute their experiences and thoughts throughout the debates as well as submit physical or non-physical material. Informed in part by the input of the invited participants, they will create an expanded discourse around the performative aspects of curatorial practice today for which we do not seek answers but seek to question with the intention of active outcomes.

The Performative Curatorial Studio takes place inside the framework of the Agora ethos which is strongly focused on collaborative practices. We use this as **a space to experiment with pedagogical situations, acknowledging and 'thematizing' the tensions between ideas of art** as an autonomous activity or as participatory by the sharing, translating, transferring and reshaping of ideas.

The roles and discourses of curatorial practice are underlined in performative and 'live' critical conversations: reading sessions, talks concerning the performativity of particular book formats, roundtable discussions and the construction of a collaborative research in general. **The 'Live Library' expresses the performative aspects of curating where books and texts are displayed, and where audience are invited to become participants.** We are using and displaying our material and presentations with 'The Narrative Machine' conceived by Lorenzo Sendoval, an architectural and morphing structure which will change due of the Live Library necessities.

*This project is created in collaboration with guest curator Judith Lavagna, and SAVVY Contemporary TWIMC curatorial collective member, Lara Merrington. (DAY #10) is an extension of The Open Curatorial Studio, an open platform for curatorial discussion created by the To Whom it May Concern Curatorial Collective (TWIMC), which was held in April of this year for nine consecutive days at SAVVY Contemporary, and continues in an online and progressive presence at: www.theopencuratorialstudio.tumblr.com.

In September of 2013, a follow up day of research and workshops will take place at SAVVY Contemporary, in relation to 'The Performative Curatorial Studio' outcomes.

How things are organized, how an exhibition is put together, how a symposium is orchestrated (...). In contemporary art, in addition to the caretaker function, the curator's mediating function - or translation - has developed into curating or even a curatorial praxis. (...) The term 'Curating' is used as the technical modality of making art go public. It is craft that is involved much more than making exhibitions - beyond the walls of an institution as well as beyond what are traditionally called programming and education. This is 'curating in the expanded field'. (...) So far, the curatorial is understood to have a multidimensional role that includes critique, editing, education, fundraising, etc. But even more importantly, the curatorial goes beyond 'roles' and takes the shape of a function and a method, even a methodology.

Maria Lind, Introduction p. 11-12, 'Performing the Curatorial', Sternberg Press, 2012.

Following the lead of ideas raised by Lind's critical text, we would like to formulate and create debate around:

1. Social change vs Art for change: Art and curating in context

The curatorial is a cross-disciplinary practice that is constantly reworked and reformulated. How are artists and curators reappraising political and geographical situations and mapping them between pedagogy and performativity?

(Carlos Leon-Xjiminez, Katrina Blach, Jenny Wolka)

2. Presentation, Performance and Performativity

How to perform the curatorial? How can we experiment forms of transmission in a relationship to an audience? *Is curating therefore essentially an act of translation? If so, with what purpose, and can it be performed elsewhere?* Maria Lind.

(Lorenzo Sandoval, Pauline Payen, Judith Lavagna)

3. Critique vs Commentary: The language of narrative

Language, authorship and presentation for and of artistic practice introducing elements of narration and fictions between artists, writers and curators.

(Monte Masi, Paz Ponce Pérez-Bustamante, John Holten, Clémence de La Tour du Pin)

4. The Voice of the Audience: figures of speech

How to create temporal formats where audiences can performatively shift themselves from being passive viewers to being participants. *In the activity of the reader, the viewer, the listener, the writer, the performer is 'the artwork' - and the world - which is created, re-interpreted and reconstructed.* Johan Öberg, 'Performing Heritage at the University: some remarks on Maria Lind's Program., p.5, in 'Performing the Curatorial', Sternberg Press, 2012.

(Monte Masi, Lorenzo Sandoval, Joel Verwimp, John Holten)

Program

Workshop 'Performing the Curatorial' (closed session)

10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Activation of The Live Library, talks, performances and round table discussions (open to the public)

1.30 – 4 pm

Project presentation by Judith Lavagna and Lara Merrington

Lorenzo Sandoval, *The Narrative Machine*

Presenting forms of activation and deactivation in and for a performative context.

1.30 pm

Monte Masi, *Marathon Critique*

Online and interactive performance, San Francisco/Berlin.

1.30 - 5 pm

John Holten, reading session

2 pm

Clémence de La Tour du Pin and Judith Lavagna

Performative aspects of the project *we outsourced everything and now we're bored.*

2.30 pm

Performance by Joel Verwimp, *My Table is My Cock*

3 pm

Round table discussions

3.30 - 4.30 pm

Performance and outcomes by Pauline Payen

4.30 pm

About the participants:

<http://day10-curatorialstudio.blogspot.de/>

We would like to thank for their assistance in this project:

All the participants, the team at AGORA and especially Taina and Caique, the To Whom it May Concern Curatorial Collective, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung and SAVVY Contemporary and the Verein Berliner Künstler.

