FORE-CLOSED Between Crisis and Pos-sibility

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Intro-
duction

Tracing Foreclosure

Today the term *foreclosure* is often associated with the collapse of the subprime mortgage market. Caught in a cycle of crisis that grips us individually as well as collectively, the instinctive reaction is one of paralysis and a search for solutions in the same institutional logic that produced the problem.

Foreclosed: Between Crisis and Possibility counters this paralytic reaction by beginning with a critical reevaluation of the term itself. *Foreclosure* refers not only to a forced eviction from a home but also to a rejection of particular experiences, memories, and narratives from dominant forms of representation. It evokes processes of exclusion, a shutting down of recognition, reflection, and debate. We embrace this expansive meaning of the term as a primary field of investigation; our curatorial approach aims to critically examine the systems that produce crisis rather than represent the consequences of it. Cutting across the psychic and the spatial, we explore artistic practices and discursive strategies that investigate the ways in which everyday experiences of displacement, threat, suppression, and loss are embedded within specific social contexts. How are certain narratives or subjectivities foreclosed by particular political, economic, and historical conditions? Through work in photography, film, video, installation, and performance, the artists in this exhibition challenge the politically paralyzing rhetoric of crisis by positing and negotiating alternative imaginaries.

Using a multilayered curatorial strategy that integrates the gallery space with a series of public platforms, this exhibition elaborates an understanding of foreclosure as both a very real phenomenon that demands critical evaluation, as well as a versatile term that can function as a tool for insight and analysis. Taking this second mandate as a point of entry into the first, we recuperate alternate meanings of foreclosure by tracing the term through its incarnations in psychoanalytic and postcolonial theory. By locating the idea of foreclosure within the mind, the psychoanalytic approach helps to uncover the ways in which crisis is experienced on both an individual and collective level as a trauma or break. This approach asks how foreclosure is embodied psychically, physically, and socially. Postcolonial theory helps us develop an understanding of how Western cultural and intellectual discourse forecloses the voices and narratives of the Other. Our decision to address the foreclosure crisis in an artistic context is not an attempt to speak for anyone or provide a platform for visibility. Rather, it is our hope that by elaborating the complex mechanisms of foreclosure as a system of invisibility and exclusion, we can facilitate a critical awareness that is, in itself, a strategy of resistance.

This generative excavation of the term *foreclosure* recasts our understanding of the current financial crisis, of which widespread property foreclosure is both an extremely tangible effect and a highly potent symbol. The dominant belief in neoliberalism as a system of victimless wealth accumulation forecloses countless stories of marginalization and oppression. By framing the current crisis as the result of complex processes embedded in global networks that are shaped by histories of disruption—a reorientation brought about by tracing the term itself—the artworks in this exhibition provoke an examination of the relationships between micro-narratives of threatened home loss and the broader economic system that such narratives reflect.

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This dialectical integration of system and subject structures the exhibition's concept and design. Spatial and economic

visualizations, on the one hand, and psychic or subjective representations, on the other, set two limits for a field of exploration within which artists interrogate the resonances and points of intersection between these seemingly oppositional foci. Taking on the challenge posed by the phrase "The consequences are easier to depict than the system itself," from Alexander Kluge's epic film *News from Ideological Antiquity: Marx–Eisenstein–Capital* (2008), the first pole of the exhibition focuses on the economic, spatial, and architectural systems that underpin both the current financial crisis as well as broader structures of global capital. Claude Closky's wallpaper is composed of numbers and letters taken from NASDAQ. Begun in 1971 at the dawn of neoliberalism, NASDAQ is a computerized information system that facilitates the fictions of instantaneous exchange and harmless wealth accumulation. By inscribing his art within this model, multiplying its so-called logic to an extreme degree, Closky interrogates the loss of meaning caused in part by the proliferation of signs; at a certain level of saturation, statements of value become no more than decorative items in a frieze.

Allan Sekula's photographic and written work responds directly to this imaginary geography produced by global capital. *Fish Story* (1988–1994) is an expansive documentation of the effect of international cargo shipping on the socioeconomic spaces of individual ports and cities. It reveals the inescapable materiality of these international processes of exchange, as well as the everyday lives of the maritime world's often displaced or marginalized inhabitants. Harun Farocki's video installation *Comparison via a Third* (2007) similarly examines the technologies of production and the social conditions of labor, as reflected through the manufacturing of bricks. By juxtaposing footage from Burkina Faso, India, France, Germany, and Switzerland, this work examines the materiality of the brick in relation to different construction practices.

Moving from the systemic to the psychic, the second pole of the exhibition interrogates how such overarching narratives are registered on a personal or

collective level. This focus on the subjective experience of foreclosure not only refers to the threat of home loss but also to instances of political, economic, and geographic exclusion. Kamal Aljafari's film *Port of Memory* (2009) addresses the daily behaviors of a family living under constant threat of displacement. By revealing and unraveling a state of suspension—caught between paralysis and repetition—Aljafari interrogates the experience of psychic and social foreclosure. His installation *In Praise of Bystanders* (2011–) similarly focuses on the cinematic occupation of Jaffa through an endless process of reframing and rephotographing the Palestinian bystanders accidentally "caught" in the frames of Israeli dramatic and Hollywood action films shot on location in the city.

This interrogation of the precarious conditions of everyday life also informs the work of Yto Barrada, who explores the border space between Morocco and Spain. Her revelation of the tension between the immediate and harsh reality of the Strait of Gibraltar and the projected dreams of Tangier's inhabitants evokes ideas of suspended desires and foreclosed possibilities. While operating in a radically different medium, Tania Bruguera's *Immigrant Movement International* (2011–) similarly explores the notion of physical embodiment within contested territories. In this project, which began in Queens, New York, Bruguera uses her position as an artist as a point of articulation in the attempt to form a social and political movement encompassing various immigrant groups. Responding to crisis with a sense of possibility, this project aims to expand notions of belonging and citizenship by promoting a sense of solidarity independent of class, nationality, ethnicity, and gender. This transition between crisis and possibility, a thread that runs throughout the exhibition, is further emphasized by David Shrigley's dual-sided sign *It's All Going Very . . .* (2010). Capturing the instability that distinguishes the present moment, this work suggests the rapid fluctuation between optimism and pessimism in times of rupture.

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Much as our exhibition concept began by tracing the term *foreclosure* through various modes of critical thought, our curatorial strategy attempts to push the idea of foreclosure to its limit by means of an active occupation of the gallery space. In this space, a series of public platforms and performances interrogate ideas posed by this exhibition, countering processes of foreclosure through both structure and subject matter. These events are termed "platforms" because the word evokes a cacophony of voices—a raised site for action and debate. The participants in these events are called "respondents" because each event is catalyzed by a set of questions that helps create a unified sphere of investigation for practitioners from disparate disciplines. These events are shaped as productive sessions that seek to work through challenges posed by real-life conditions. Through a collective critical exercise, we rethink such problems from diverse perspectives and address urgent questions at varying levels of complexity. To further elaborate this curatorial approach, the three-part diagram that immediately follows this introduction helps visualize this field of inquiry as a site for the creation of cultural discourse.

Each of the three platforms presents a different interpretation of the term *foreclosure*: the economic/systemic, the psychic/social, and the spatial/urban. The first platform, *Forgotten Spaces*, is a screening of Noël Burch and Allan Sekula's film *The Forgotten Space* (2010), followed by a discussion between Sekula and the geographer David Harvey. The second platform, *Foreclosure/Foreclosed*, examines connections between the subprime mortgage crisis in the United States and the psychic or social experience of home loss. The third platform, *City as Stage*, looks at urban space as a site of contestation and possibility. Together, the platforms unpack the complex ramifications of foreclosure, as well as reflect our ongoing curatorial process of intense collaboration and discussion. By pressuring the temporal and spatial boundaries of traditional formatting, we hope to generate knowledge that will persist beyond the life of the exhibition.

The primary questions and overarching concerns of each of these three events are discussed in greater detail in a later section of this catalogue, which also incorporates the participating respondents' perspectives through excerpts of their previous research. In addition, this catalogue includes a section that elaborates on the work of the artists, exploring the nature of their practices as well as the relevance of specific works to our understanding of foreclosure. Finally, each of the curators contributes a critical essay that further expands upon these artistic practices in the context of the exhibition framework.

In *Estuaries of Thought*, Jennifer Burris articulates the discontinuities of capital through an analysis of works by Allan Sekula and Yto Barrada. The split structure of this essay formally manifests the relationship between artistic practice and the economic, political, and social contextualization of such work. It also reinforces the dialectical polarity of the exhibition's structure, which examines systems that produce crisis, on the one hand, and the tangible effects of crisis in lived experience, on the other. Sofía Olascoaga's *Staging: Experiments in Social Configuration* addresses conditions of possibility and presents a conceptual framework focused on the notion of staging as a way of analyzing the artistic field as a testing ground for social models. Taking as its point of departure Tania Bruguera's project *Immigrant Movement International* (2011–), this essay investigates the strategies through which her artistic practice enters the public realm and establishes direct relationships with members of particular communities. Sadia Shirazi's essay, *Construction/Destruction in Cinematic Spaces*, considers the counter-narratives produced through films by Harun Farocki and Kamal Aljafari. Her analysis of these works is premised upon an understanding of construction and destruction as two opposed but mutually informed positions. Concentrating on works by Claude Closky, Allan Sekula, and David Shrigley, Gaia Tedone's essay *Abstract Patterns, Material Conditions* interrogates the ways in which artists either expose or challenge the narratives produced by the neoliberal myth. These narratives include the role

of information as commodity, the elusive modes of circulation of financial capital, and the paralyzing rhetoric of crisis.

Together, these four essays highlight the multiple meanings of the term *foreclosure* as both a generative concept and a curatorial strategy. By engaging with the idea of foreclosure within these expanded processes of cultural production, it is our hope that this exhibition will provide a platform for critique, while also creating space for interdisciplinary investigations into possible futures.

We derive our understanding of foreclosure, which cuts across the economic, the psychic, and the postcolonial, from the following texts:

David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, "Foreclosure (Repudiation)," trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: The Hogarth Press, 1980), 166–168.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Exhib
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Diagram

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Tania Bruguera

Staging and visibility
Migration as a contemporary condition
Foreclosure of immigrants from
political representation

Kamal Aljafari

Psychic and physical foreclosure
Constant threat of displacement/state
of perpetual suspension

Yto Barrada

Precarious conditions of everyday life
Suspended desire and territorial exclusion

David Shrigley

Humor as a subversive strategy
Paralyzing rhetoric of crisis

Psychic/ Subjective

Trauma or break

Processes of exclusion

Right of visibility

Embodied experience of crisis

ition

Allan Sekula

Discontinuities of capital
Complex economic and
geographic networks
Sea as a forgotten space of
international trade

Claude Closky

Abstract patterns of economic systems
Distortions and standardization of values

Harun Farocki

Construction and destruction
Social and temporal organization through
cultures of brick making

Diagram

Social/ Systemic

Global economic systems

Access to space

Uneven geographical development

Postindustrial mythologies

Public P

Forgotten Spaces

David Harvey
Allan Sekula

Foreclosure

Kamal Aljafari
Harriet Fraad
Ingrid Gould Ellen
Maggie Russell-Ciardi

atforms

oreclosed

Diagram

City as Stage

Yto Barrada
Tania Bruguera
Peter Marcuse
Damon Rich
Radhika Subramaniam

Artists

This page Kamal Aljafari, stills from *Port of Memory*, 2009 16mm film, color, sound, 63 min
Collection of the artist, courtesy the artist

Following spread Kamal Aljafari, detail from *In Praise of Bystanders*, 2011–
Color photograph Courtesy the artist

Kamal Aljafari

In Kamal Aljafari's film *Port of Memory* (2009), Palestinian residents of the city of Jaffa live with the imminent threat of eviction from their homes. This crisis pervades daily existence, and a palpable tension overhangs every gesture, movement, and conversation in the film. The strained psychological state within which familial life exists is further underscored by the film's soundtrack, which consists of the ambient sounds of the construction and demolition of buildings that permeate the auditory climate of the city. A layered and complex psychic narrative emerges from the film's juxtaposition of footage from Hollywood action and Israeli dramatic films with the everyday gestures of the families who inhabit the same sites in the city that served as sets for these films. Through this palimpsestic process, *Port of Memory* offers a new reading of Jaffa's cinematic archive.

Aljafari's installation *In Praise of Bystanders* (2011–) further interrogates the foreclosure of the Palestinian residents of Jaffa by creating an alternative archive. Aljafari begins by projecting films and videos shot in Jaffa so that he can rephotograph moments in which residents of the city were unintentionally captured on screen. By reframing buildings, sites, and people caught in the footage, Aljafari alters their originally peripheral role, making them the central focus of his work. The installation consists of an enlarged photograph displayed alongside a shallow receptacle that holds thousands of postcards with printed images from this constructed archive. The photograph depicts a young schoolboy with backpack in hand standing in the shadow cast by the stone arch of a passageway. This boy could be the artist himself, who as a child remembers watching a film shoot in his neighborhood—a neighborhood that is disappearing and today only fully exists within its cinematic representation.

This page Yto Barrada, stills from *The Smuggler Tangier*, 2006 Video, color, silent, 11 min
Courtesy Galerie Sfeir Semler, Hamburg and Beirut, and Galerie Polaris, Paris

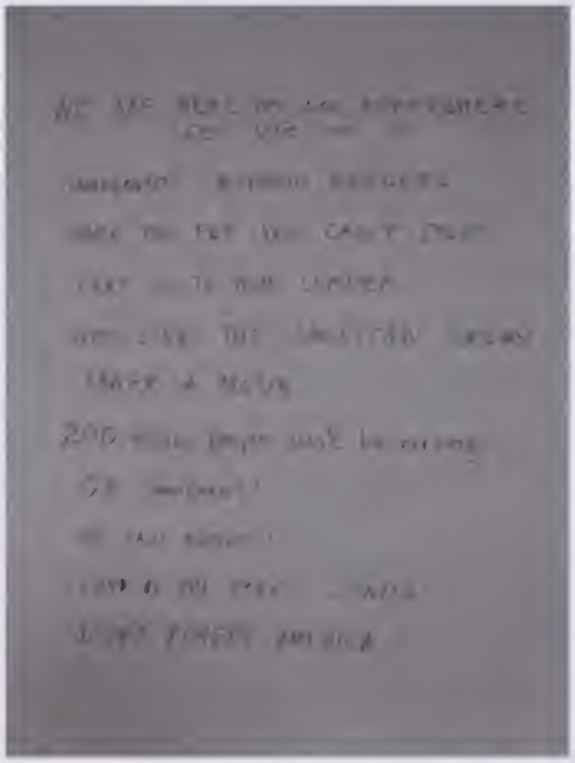
Following spread Yto Barrada, *Terrain vague (Vacant lot)*, 2001
Color photograph, 23 6 x 23 6 in (60 x 60 cm) Private Collection, New York

Yto Barrada

Yto Barrada is a French-Moroccan artist born in Paris in 1971 and based in Tangier. Working primarily with video and photography, Barrada explores the economic and social spaces of her adopted city through individual narratives and architectural analogies. The works included in this exhibition are the video *The Smuggler* (2006) and a photograph from her ongoing series *A Life Full of Holes: The Strait Project*, which she began in Tangier in 1998. *The Smuggler* is a portrait of a Moroccan woman, who, over the course of thirty years, has made regular trips to the enclave of Ceuta to smuggle fabric, clothing, and goods back to shop owners in Tangier. Ceuta, an autonomous city of Spain located on the North African coast, is separated from the surrounding Moroccan territories by a "border fence" constructed from barbed wire with spotlights and motion sensors. Because she is an older woman, "the smuggler" is able to traverse this violent barrier without being searched by the Spanish authorities. The foreclosure of her visibility opens up the possibility for economic survival and quiet defiance.

The contested space of the border is further explored in Barrada's photographic work, which engages with the uneven patterns of circulation and migration between Morocco and Spain, as well as with the negative effects of property development aimed at tourist and international business economies. *Terrain vague* (2001) focuses attention on the topological foreclosure that excludes Tangier's inhabitants from sites within their own city. The idea of an insurmountable and unsurpassable barrier is visualized as a vertical expanse of concrete dominating the frame.

Tania Bruguera, street view of *Immigrant Movement International* headquarters, Queens, New York, 2011. A project initiated by Tania Bruguera and presented by CreativeTime and the Queens Museum of Art; courtesy Studio Bruguera



Tania Bruguera, slogan writing workshop with University of Dance, Stockholm students, part of *Immigrant Movement International*, 2011 – A project initiated by Tania Bruguera and presented by CreativeTime and the Queens Museum of Art; courtesy Studio Bruguera

Tania Bruguera

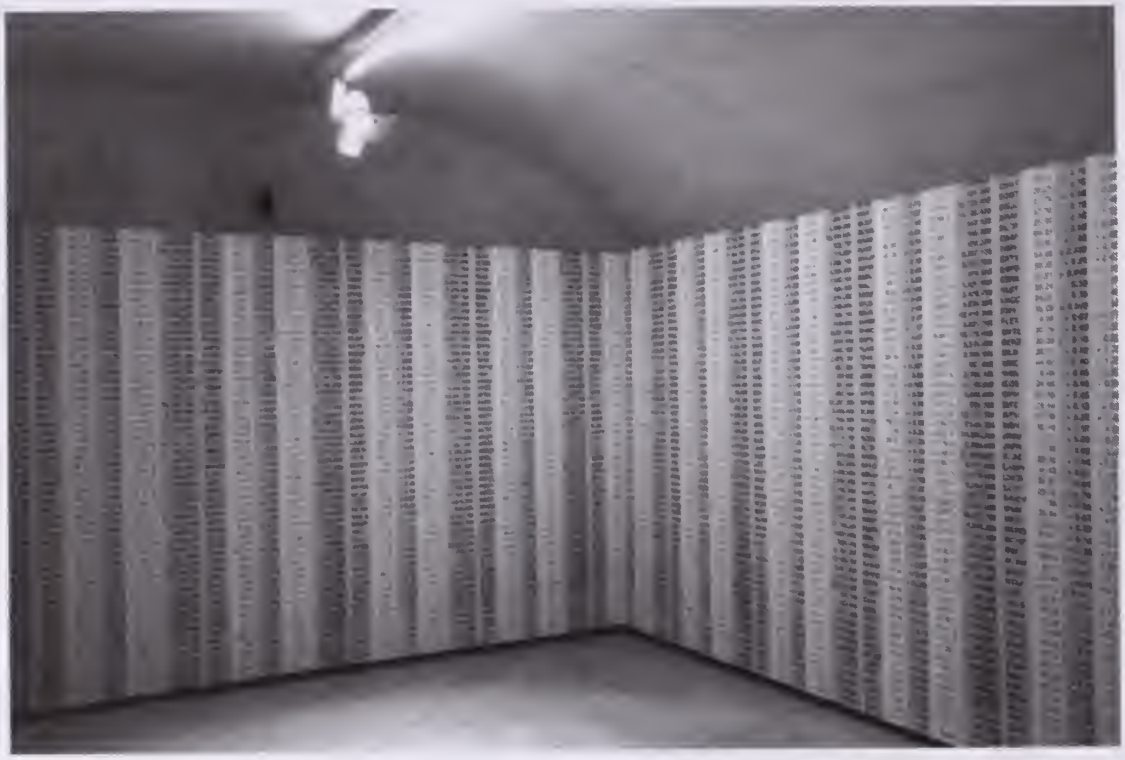
Tania Bruguera is a Cuban artist currently based in Queens, New York. Begun in 2011, her *Immigrant Movement International* (*IMI*) is a long-term project that is copresented by CreativeTime and the Queens Museum of Art. It takes the form of a sociopolitical movement, headquartered in the neighborhood of Corona, Queens. *IMI* will engage with local immigrant community groups and social service organizations in a series of public workshops, events, and actions. Through ongoing collaboration and engagement, this project presents a more expansive definition of the term *immigrant* by focusing attention on the larger question of what it means to be a citizen of the world.

This exhibition offers *IMI* a moment of visibility, which will consist of an installation composed of a series of written handouts as well as a telephone line that connects the gallery space of The Kitchen to *IMI*'s headquarters in Queens. Furthermore, a receptionist will be present during The Kitchen's opening hours in order to communicate the goals of Bruguera's initiative to gallery visitors. The second aspect of visibility is a final public performance that will bring together the project's multiple audiences and participants within The Kitchen's auditorium.

Bruguera seeks to address the foreclosure of immigrants from political representation in the United States as a starting point from which she can develop international networks of inclusion and representation. She challenges the self-conception of immigrants, attempting to link groups of disparate ethnicities, nationalities, classes, and genders under the larger umbrella of her *IMI* project.

IMMIGRANT MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL

Tania Bruguera, *Immigrant Movement International* logo, 2011. Dimensions variable.
Courtesy Studio Bruguera



This page and following spread: Claude Closky, *Untitled (NASDAQ)*, 2003 (installation view, Mudam, Luxembourg). Wallpaper, silkscreen printing, dimensions variable. Photograph © Joséphine de Bère, courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

Claude Closky

Claude Closky creates work that is often characterized by the recycling and sampling of available images and information through various media. The unifying characteristic in Closky's diverse artistic output is his adamant refusal to endow these found materials with any aesthetic attributes they did not previously contain. In other words, rather than criticize the models that run our daily lives by proposing an alternative subjectivity or a transcendental art, Closky chooses to fully immerse his work within such models in order to multiply their so-called logic to an extreme degree. He places his art within the structures and style of preexisting nonartistic forms (magazines, rating systems, and taxonomies) in order to make these structures highly visible. In the process of creating the absolute product of these methodological arrangements, he reveals their absurdity.

One major source of material for Closky's work is the never-ending supply of signs circulating in a general economy of exchange. *Untitled (NASDAQ)* (2003) reorders letters and numbers from the electronic financial exchange system into elaborate chains and associations. The object that results is a wallpaper screen of incoherent strings of words and horizontal and vertical lists of pointless data. The sheer number of signs erases their singularity and strips their previous association with the signified. Closky magnifies the human desire to classify signs into an edifice of symbolic significance to the point at which the product becomes characterized by its absolute meaninglessness.

	- 0.48 %	801,800	HSIC	9.06	+ 0.06	+ 0.67 %	587,400	VRSN
		2,194,100	HGSI	24.66	+ 0.06	+ 0.24 %	1,992,800	VRTS
		148,800	ICOS	33.69	+ 0.65	+ 1.97 %	50,287,200	WFMI
		059,800	IDPH	16.54	+ 0.15	+ 0.92 %	2,489,600	XLNX
		533,500	INTC	47.08	+ 0.22	+ 0.47 %	1,759,900	YHOO
		,172,700	INTU	30.16	+ 1.57	+ 5.49 %	22,633,400	ADCT
		7,549,300	IVGN	2.77	+ 0.02	+ 0.73 %	7,712,700	ADBE
		4,286,200	JDSU	7.39	+ 0.03	+ 0.41 %	12,771,100	ALTR
		2,888,000	JNPR	39.00	+ 1.64	+ 4.39 %	913,800	AMZN
		858,000	KLAC	36.53	+ 0.67	+ 1.87 %	955,400	APCC
		7,000	LAMR	32.37	- 0.04	- 0.12 %	6,389,600	AMGN
		600	LNCR	28.18	+ 0.79	+ 2.88 %	2,993,800	APOL
		00	LLTC	7.86	+ 0.24	+ 3.15 %	7,166,300	AAPL
		0	ERICY	35.84	+ 0.07	+ 0.20 %	3,764,900	AMAT
		0	MXIM	28.20	+ 0.32	+ 1.15 %	1,313,100	BEAS
		0	MEDI	31.41	+ 0.16	+ 0.51 %	3,165,200	BBBY
		0	MERQ	25.65	+ 0.39	+ 1.54 %	27,780,500	BGEN
		00	MCHP	53.79	+ 0.07	+ 0.13 %	4,654,200	BMET
		00	MSFT	8.32	+ 0.01	+ 0.12 %	668,200	BRCM
		00	MLNM	24.49	+ 0.06	+ 0.25 %	6,192,200	BRCD
		00	MOLX	10.711	+ 0.011	+ 0.10 %	12,500,700	CHRW
		00	NTAP	12.70	+ 0.24	+ 1.93 %	9,421,500	CDWC
		00	NXTL	31.20	+ 1.34	+ 4.49 %	3,335,384	CEPH
		00	NVLS	12.96	+ 0.65	+ 5.57 %	30,835,300	CHKP
		0	NVDA	11.56	+ 0.35	+ 3.12 %	766,100	CHIR
		0	ORCL	47.62	+ 0.37	+ 0.78 %	543,900	CIEN
		0	PCAR	15.31	+ 0.332	+ 2.22 %	318,300	CTAS
		0	SPOT	43.77	+ 0.34	+ 0.78 %	1,504,500	CSCO
			PDCO	31.20	- 0.19	- 0.61 %	1,809,600	CTXS
		00	PTEN	29.03	+ 0.11	+ 0.38 %	5,052,900	CMCS
		0	PAYX	19.00	+ 0.29	+ 1.55 %	1,304,600	CPWR
			PSFT	18.01	+ 0.03	+ 0.17 %	429,200	CMVT
			PETM	56.18	- 0.74	- 1.30 %	10,722,800	COST
			PIXR	37.77	+ 1.37	+ 3.76 %		
		,000	QLGC	35.7	+ 1.44	+ 4.20 %		
		16,794,000	QCOM	8.10				
%		728,700	RFMD					
%		1,729,000						

	+ 0.47 %	4,6	INTC	16.54	
+ 0.08	+ 0.47 %	533,500	INTC	47.08	+ 0.
- 0.06	- 0.11 %	10,172,700	INTU	30.16	+ 1.
+ 0.91	+ 4.13 %	7,549,300	IVGN	2.77	+ 0.
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+ 0.35	+15.22 %	2,888,000	JNPR	39.00	+ 1.
+ 0.70	+ 2.73 %	11,858,000	KLAC	36.53	+ 0.
+ 0.13	+ 0.98 %	8,777,000	LAMR	32.37	- 0.
+ 0.95	+ 4.85 %	1,979,600	LNCR	28.18	+ 0.
+ 0.37	+ 2.31 %	8,294,800	LLTC	7.86	+ 0.
- 0.13	- 0.26 %	1,617,300	ERICY	35.84	+ 0.
+ 0.51	+ 1.13 %	2,632,500	MXIM	28.20	+ 0.
+ 0.10	+ 0.68 %	30,337,700	MEDI	31.41	+ 0.
+ 0.55	+ 3.93 %	4,846,300	MERQ	25.65	+ 0.
+ 0.08	+ 0.67 %	2,779,000	MCHP	53.79	+ 0.
+ 0.931	+ 2.71 %	1,611,800	MSFT	8.32	+ 0.
- 0.25	- 0.60 %	1,424,900	MLNM	24.49	+ 0.
+ 0.27	+ 0.93 %	7,627,800	MOLX	10.711	+ 0.0
+ 0.11	+ 0.67 %	12,718,300	NTAP	12.70	+ 0.
+ 0.07	+ 1.54 %	610,900	NXTL	31.20	+ 1.
+ 0.44	+ 1.42 %	863,800	NVLS	12.96	+ 0.
+ 0.359	+ 0.82 %	1,138,000	NVDA	11.56	+ 0.
+ 0.17	+ 0.34 %	4,694,500	ORCL	47.62	+ 0.
+ 0.64	+ 4.56 %	1,458,600	PCAR	15.31	+ 0.3
+ 0.14	+ 0.36 %	5,934,400	SPOT	43.77	+ 0.
+ 0.01	+ 0.18 %	1,140,400	PDCO	31.20	- 0.
+ 0.14	+ 0.30 %	50,917,500	PTEN	29.03	+ 0.
+ 0.27	+ 1.98 %	2,655,500	PAYX	19.00	+ 0.
+ 0.56	+ 4.31 %	7,669,300	PSFT		
- 0.30	- 1.21 %	1,289,900			
+ 0.03	+ 0.63 %				
+ 0.10					

This page and following spread: Harun Farocki, stills from *Comparison via a Third*, 2007. 16mm film, double projection, color, sound, 24 min. Courtesy Harun Farocki Filmproduktion, Berlin

Harun Farocki

Harun Farocki is a writer, filmmaker, and video artist based in Berlin. His impressive body of work in film and installation interrogates the way vision, technology, and modes of production mediate everyday experiences. His documentaries and essay films challenge viewers to recognize how intertwined meaning is with perception and vision in our image-saturated world. Farocki rejects standard features of filmic narrative, which encourage the spectator's passive consumption of images. Instead, he employs techniques such as montage and split screen in order to engage viewers in the active construction of meaning.

Comparison via a Third (2007) is a two-channel film installation that depicts technologies of brick production at various sites in six different geographic locations. From hand-molded baked bricks in India to the mechanized industrial scale of production in Germany, this installation reveals the way in which various societies and spaces are differentiated by temporalities of brick production and building construction. By cutting back and forth between multiple geographic sites and distinct modes of production, Farocki challenges dominant linear historical narratives that understand the relationship between the Southern and Northern hemispheres as a movement from pre- to postindustrial society. This non-hierarchical montage encourages viewers to consider these modes of production "in comparison." The title of the work refers to the individual spectator who constitutes "the Third" and creates meaning between the images, ideas, and herself.

This page Allan Sekula, *Chapter 6. True Cross* "Waterfront vendors living in containers," Veracruz (1994) from *Fish Story* (1988–1995) Dye destruction prints, 24 3/4 x 57 1/4 x 1 3/4 in (62 8 x 145 x 4 4 cm) Courtesy the artist and Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica, California

Following spread Allan Sekula and Noël Burch, still from *The Forgotten Space*, 2010 Essay film/feature documentary, color, sound, 112 min Produced by DocEye Film, Amsterdam, in coproduction with WildArt Film, Vienna Courtesy DocEye Film, Amsterdam

Allan Sekula

Allan Sekula is a photographer, writer, and critic whose images and writings have shifted the terms with which the medium of photography is understood. His formative influences, which include Marxist theory, documentary photography, and the Conceptual art movement of the late 1960s, enable the connection of typically distinct fields, including history, politics, and aesthetics. Sekula took up photography in the early 1970s at the same time he developed a critical approach to documentary practice as a way of exploring the conditions of everyday experience within an advanced capitalist system.

Sekula's photographic and written project *Fish Story* (1988–1994) is the third in a series of works focusing on what he has repeatedly described as the imaginary and material geographies of the advanced capitalist world. By investigating the transformations of the international shipping industry, Sekula showcases the sea as a forgotten space of transnational trade. Conceived as both an exhibition and a book, the project consists of a sequence of one hundred and five color photographs alongside twenty-six text panels that are organized into seven chapters. The chapter presented here, "True Cross," focuses on the Mexican Gulf port city of Veracruz. It depicts abandoned cargo containers being used as shelters by the nomads and vendors who live and work in the port. The steel boxes offer them some form of domestic comfort as well as a temporary refuge from the precariousness of their daily lives.

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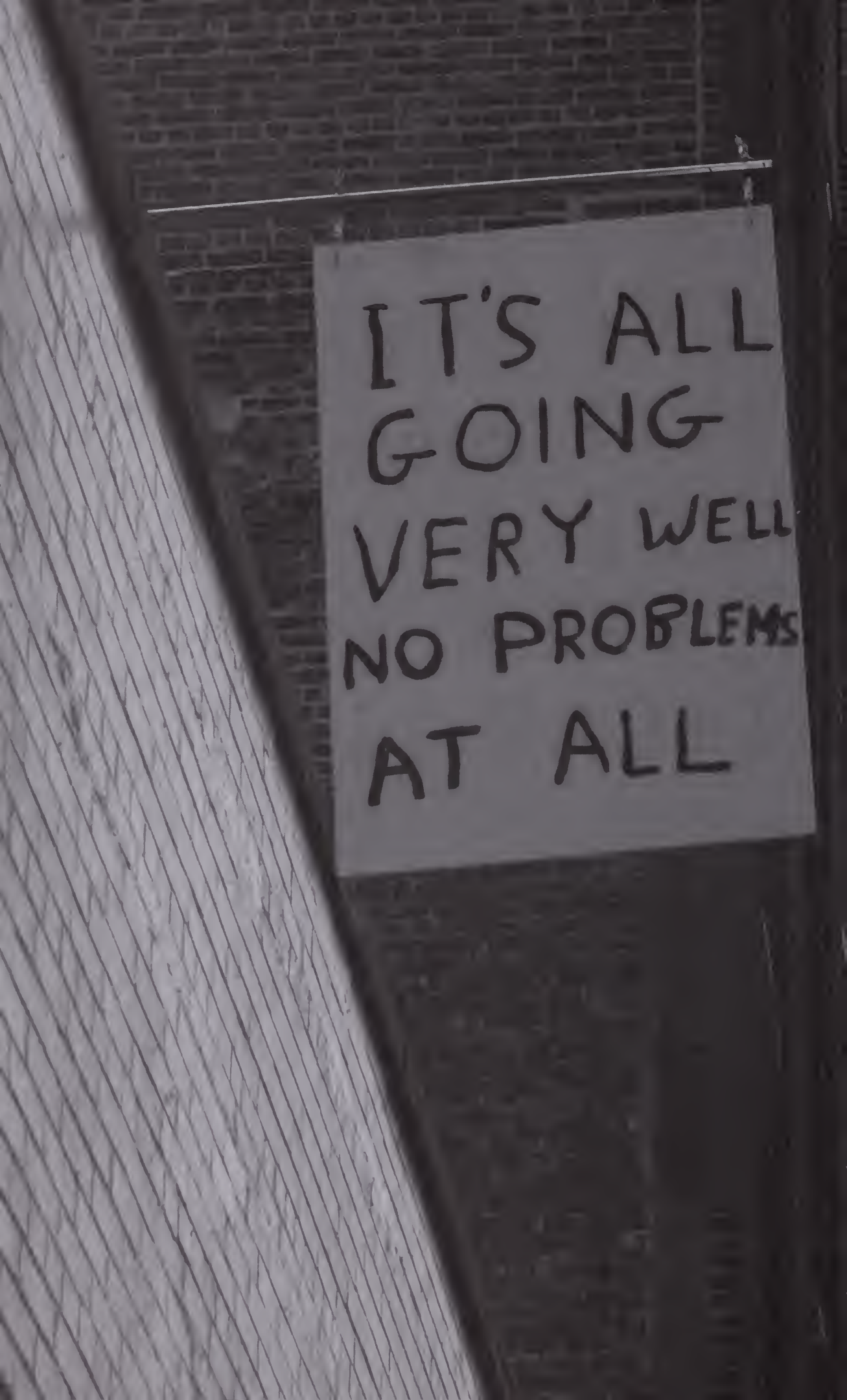
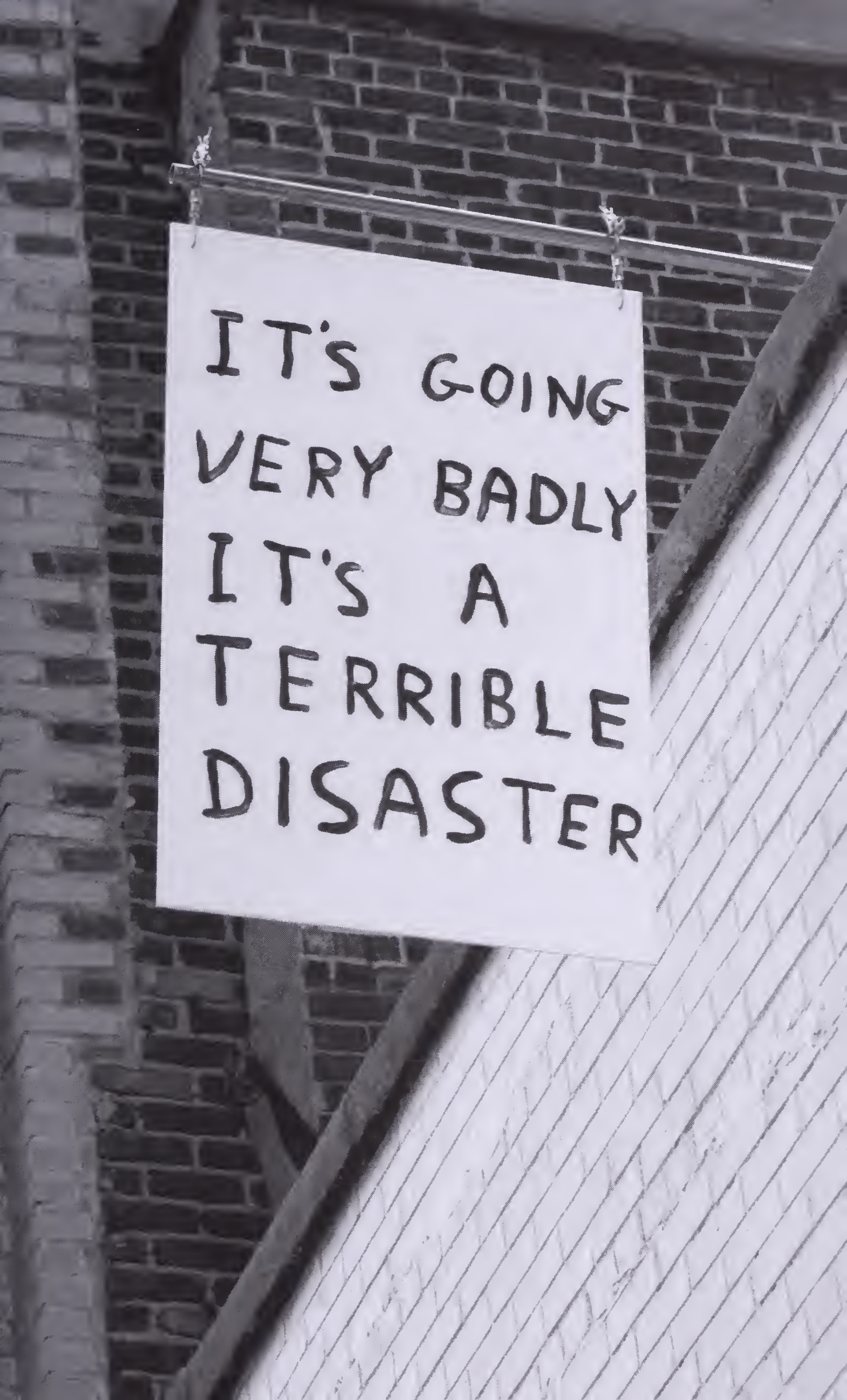
This page and following spread: David Shrigley, *It's All Going Very* , 2010. Plexiglass and enamel paint, 36 x 24 x 1/4 in. (91.4 x 61 x 0.6 cm). © David Shrigley, courtesy Anton Kern Gallery, New York

David Shrigley

David Shrigley is a Glasgow-based artist and cartoonist whose work focuses on drawings, sculptures, and animations. Outside the gallery context, his works are commonly found in the format of small books, postcards, and insertions in news magazines. Shrigley's depiction of the world is more complex and elusive than the irreverent tone of his work might initially lead us to expect. Using humor subversively, his work uncovers some of the most remote recesses of the human psyche. This macabre and humorous style visualizes the unspoken rules and taboos of our contemporary society and opens up reflections on how power relations impact social behavior. Shrigley's narrative operates in small fragments, each of which can be read as openly and literally as one desires.

The work *It's All Going Very . . .* (2010), a painted sign, introduces the analytical framework of the exhibition. One side of the sign states "It's all going very well no problems at all," while the other side states "It's going very badly it's a terrible disaster." This dual nature points to the contradictory reactions that can be produced from the same moment of rupture. This work was first shown during the fall of 2010 outside Anton Kern Gallery in New York, a city haunted by the financial crisis. Within the context of this exhibition, the word *foreclosure* is treated in a similar fashion to Shrigley's sign, placed between crisis and possibility.


IT'S ALL
GOING
VERY WELL
NO PROBLEMS
AT ALL


IT'S GOING
VERY BADLY
IT'S A
TERRIBLE
DISASTER

Public Plat-forms

Forgotten Spaces

How does *The Forgotten Space*'s excavation of the maritime world help us understand what is foreclosed from dominant narratives of the global economy? How does the structure of the essay

film reflect the fragmentation and discontinuities of global capital? What is the relationship between capitalism and uneven geographical development?

This platform introduces the exhibition's field of investigation by setting the stage for a public interrogation of the complex spatial networks through which capitalism currently operates. It features the U.S. premiere of *The Forgotten Space* (2010)—an essay film directed by Allan Sekula and Noël Burch, which was awarded the Special Jury Prize at the Orizzonti Competition at the Venice Film Festival. This screening will be followed by a conversation between Sekula and the geographer David Harvey, in order to draw out intersections between the artists' cinematic work and Harvey's recent academic research.

The Forgotten Space focuses on the maritime world as a space that is often foreclosed from the dominant narratives of the global economy. Moving between the four port cities of Bilbao, Rotterdam, Los Angeles, and Hong Kong, the film reinscribes the sea as a crucial site within complex networks of global capitalism. The essay film is a genre that Burch first conceptualized more than forty years ago as a response to the linearity of classical

documentary. Deploying this cinematic approach, *The Forgotten Space*'s fragmented narrative is made up of the stories of the people who sustain the economy of the world's major harbors. By reclaiming the importance of the sea as a means to understanding capitalism's dramatic effects on people's everyday lives, Sekula and Burch oppose the neoliberal myth of a postindustrial society, in which exchange and communication are believed to occur solely through computerized networks or via air travel.

While Sekula and Burch have employed the essay film as a tool that generates visual frictions in order to communicate the discontinuities of capital, David Harvey's written work provides an understanding of the systemic character of neoliberal capitalism and its spatial implications. Harvey's work links the dynamics of capital flow with the uneven geographical development that *The Forgotten Space* illustrates. We hope that Harvey and Sekula's distinct perspectives and fields of inquiry will provide the audience with a better understanding of this moment of crisis as well as catalyze a debate regarding the possibilities that can emerge from it.

Allan Sekula

I have tended to construct narratives around crisis situations; around unemployment and work place struggles, situations in which the ideology fails to provide a "rational" and consoling interpretation of the world, unless one has already learned to expect the worst. What I have been interested in, then, is a failure of petit-bourgeois optimism, a failure that leads to either progressive or reactionary class identifications in periods of economic crisis.

—Allan Sekula quoted in Gary Dufour, *Geography Lessons: Canadian notes* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997)

David Harvey

In the same way that neoliberalism emerged as a response to the crisis of the 1970s, so the path being chosen today will define the character of capitalism's further evolution. Current policies propose to exit this crisis with a further

consolidation and centralization of capitalist class power. . . . Financial crises serve to rationalize the irrationalities of capitalism. They typically lead to reconfigurations, new models of development, new spheres of investment, and new forms of class power. This could all go wrong, politically. But the U.S. political class has so far caved in to financial pragmatism and not touched the roots of the problem.

—David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010)

Forgotten Spaces will take place Sunday, May 15, 2011, at 4 pm at The Cooper Union.

Foreclosure/ Foreclosed

What is the relationship between psychic foreclosure and property foreclosure? How can we recognize the ways in which these two conditions intersect in everyday life? Does foreclosure mark a

radical break in the psychological, social, and physical construction of American society?

Foreclosure is most commonly associated with the large-scale repossession of houses by lending institutions that occurs when homeowners are unable to pay their monthly mortgages. In promoting the "American Dream," neoliberal ideologues have made private property synonymous with "home" and individual freedom. Subsequently, the single-family household has become the primary signifier of the current economic crisis, obscuring the fact that this crisis is part of a larger systemic breakdown of capitalism.

In psychoanalytic terms, *foreclosure* refers to processes of exclusion, trauma, and psychic break. This platform focuses on precisely what is "foreclosed" in relation to the current housing crisis. Through this rearticulation of the term, we understand foreclosure as a psychological and emotional crisis, as well as an economic one. This platform locates what we consider to be the local manifestations of the foreclosure crisis, in addition to its effects on gender relations and familial relationships. By bringing together practitioners from the fields of psychotherapy, urban planning, and social work into the space of the exhibition, this platform draws generative connections between abstract understandings of psychic foreclosure and local experiences of displacement or home loss.

We will begin with a brief screening of Kamal Aljafari's film *Port of Memory* (2009), to create a bridge

between a work in the exhibition and the contributions of the following respondents: Harriet Fraad (psychotherapist), Ingrid Gould Ellen (New York University), and Maggie Russell-Ciardi (Tenants & Neighbors). The following excerpts reflect the respondents' research interests and further articulate this platform's field of investigation.

Kamal Aljafari

These old buildings that you see in my films, are vanishing. They are being destroyed. And for me they are a witness to a city [Jaffa] that existed. . . . So this becomes part of my role as a filmmaker, to capture something and to keep it. It becomes, in that sense, a document. The building stands there in the middle of the street. It's a witness to all this destruction . . . I treat this specific place exactly as I am treating my characters, and there is a cinematic attraction between them, these objects, and the characters. And the film is very much about place, being excluded from it, about being there and not being there at the same time. I know these buildings will vanish from reality, so at least I have them in my film.

—Kamal Aljafari, interview conducted by Nasrin Himada, "This Place They Dried from the Sea: An Interview with Kamal Aljafari," *Montreal Serai*, 2010

Harriet Fraad

Americans have lost both the financial dream of ever-increasing prosperity and consumption, and also the emotional family dream of a stable family connected by a present wife creating emotional connection and domestic order. In short, Americans have lost what was the comfort of home. . . . The current disaster did not just happen with the recent burst of the stock market and housing bubbles. Americans somewhere knew for a long time that we could not pay our credit card bills or our mortgages. Somewhere, unconsciously, we had to know that disaster was approaching. We responded with denial, withdrawal, depression, and dissociation

accomplished with the aid of extensive television viewing and preoccupation with scandals and celebrities.

—Harriet Fraad, "American Depressions," *Tikkun Magazine*, 2010

Ingrid Gould Ellen

As the national mortgage crisis has worsened, an increasing number of communities are experiencing declining housing prices and high rates of foreclosure. Central to the call for government intervention in this crisis is the claim that foreclosures not only hurt those who are losing their homes to foreclosure, but also harm neighbors by reducing the value of nearby properties and in turn, reducing local governments' tax bases. The extent to which foreclosures do in fact drive down neighboring property values, and how those impacts vary according to neighborhood characteristics and local housing markets, are thus critical questions for policy-makers as they struggle to address the rising tide of foreclosures throughout the country.

—Ingrid Gould Ellen, Vicki Been, and Jenny Schuetz, "Neighborhood Effects of Concentrated Mortgage Foreclosures," *Journal of Housing Economics*, 2008

Maggie Russell-Ciardi

Throughout New York, forces of gentrification are displacing low- and moderate-income people from their homes, changing the face of communities, and eroding tenants' rights. Tenants & Neighbors is fighting back by building a strong grassroots movement of tenants who are educated, empowered, and working to preserve affordable housing and defend and expand tenants' rights. Tenants & Neighbors works primarily with tenants living at-risk in project-based Section 8, Mitchell-Lama, and rent-regulated housing, helping them preserve their buildings as affordable housing for the long term as well as organize broader campaigns to address the underlying causes of loss of affordability. Tenants & Neighbors is also working on a major campaign to close the loopholes in the rent laws that encourage speculative investing in rent-regulated housing.

—Maggie Russell-Ciardi, email message, March 25, 2011

Foreclosure/Foreclosed will take place Tuesday evening, May 31, 2011, in the gallery space of The Kitchen.

City as Stage

How has the current economic crisis reconfigured and affected urban space, specifically in New York City? How have artists and urban planners responded to such moments of rupture, and what are the

effects of these interventions? How have contemporary artistic and urban practices engaged and impacted the social imaginary of the city?

Cities are both physical sites and imaginary constructs. While a minority owns space in the city, the city's social imaginary is shaped by the entire population. During each of the financial crises faced by this country, New York City has emerged as a highly visible site of contestation in which battles over ownership of, and access to, space have taken place. These conflicts over the built environment have occurred in tandem with battles over representations of the city, in which singular, harmonious images of space have functioned to foreclose multiple conflictual narratives, essentially excluding that which is unrepresented from social, political, and cultural recognition. While the agents and sites of these conflicts are multiple and shifting, the conflicts themselves always pertain to access to space and to representation in the city.

In New York City, artists have historically been at the forefront of struggles waged over urban space. During the 1970s, for example, in another instance of economic crisis, artists moved into downtown Manhattan's abandoned

industrial buildings; they redefined the spaces, while inventing new forms of art making. These artistic interventions and representations contributed to the transformation and reconfiguration of urban spaces and to the redistribution of capital throughout the city's boroughs, though not always in a manner commensurate with artistic intentions.

The economic crisis today brings into focus the socioeconomic disparities and cultural hierarchies characterizing contemporary conflicts over New York City. The city's physical and social fabric is an increasingly complex terrain within which artists and practitioners must operate—a result of increasing levels of immigration and shifting flows of capital. By bringing the disciplines of urban planning and design in conversation with artistic and curatorial practices, this platform considers the city as a stage of conflict played out between multiple interests and imaginaries, and hopes to generate interdisciplinary dialogue about the potentialities and possibilities that may emerge from the crisis today.

The platform will begin with a screening of Yto Barrada's video *Beau Geste* (2009), followed by a conversation between the following respondents: Tania Bruguera (Artist), Peter Marcuse (Columbia University), Damon Rich (Center for Urban Pedagogy), and Radhika Subramaniam (Parsons The New School for Design). The following excerpts reflect the respondents' research interests and further articulate this platform's field of investigation.

Tania Bruguera

As an artist I have believed, because I have seen it with my own eyes, that art can change society, perhaps not permanently, but towards a new and subsequent utopia. Art is a space where not only value notions are discussed, but where provisional social models may be implemented to be seen, analyzed, and, in the best of cases, copied by other disciplines and bodies in society, which will be the ones to negotiate their permanence and executive status. . . . I am interested in linking these searches with those in the world of art where there is a permanent bargaining between what

is seen and what is inferred, between the work you see and the work you imagine. One of the aspects in which I will focus is the relationship between the development of an artistic language and its exportation to the world of politics and vice versa.

—Tania Bruguera, "Long-Term Project Statement: *Immigrant Movement International*," working document, 2011

Peter Marcuse

What is called the "subprime mortgage crisis" reflects a fundamental crisis in the housing system and fundamental ideological blinders to the alternatives that the crisis suggests. The crisis is not a crisis of liquidity in the mortgage market, or a failure of regulation, nor is it the same as the crisis of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which is a different crisis, with which it is often confused. It is rather the result of the inability of the market to provide adequate and affordable housing for large numbers of Americans, and of the ideological commitment to home ownership as the incarnation of the American Dream for the masses.

—Peter Marcuse, "A (Radical) Approach to the Subprime Mortgage Crisis," *The Brecht Forum*, 2010

Damon Rich

A tremendous amount of local activism in American communities touches on questions of place. Working on issues such as housing, environmental regulation, and economic development requires grappling with the meanings of places, answering questions about which activities should occur in a location, who should use it, and how it should be developed—in a word, land use politics . . . . People who work with historic sites understandably have an interest in emphasizing the importance of place and its public interpretation; these sites are where we go to learn about our past, to physically connect with history, and to better understand ourselves.

—Damon Rich, "Finding the Civic in the Situation," a paper on techniques used by the Center for Urban Pedagogy

Radhika Subramaniam

What such erratic observations, ephemeral suspicions, rumours, [*sic*] and fragmentary tales demonstrated was not only the ways in which experiences, ideas, and histories entered individual and social systems of meaning but also the ways in which collective memory and historical imagination teeter on the sensory foundations of daily habit. These foundations, whose task is to apprehend the shocks of daily urban life in a state of distraction, function precisely at the crossroads of constant remembrance and a distracted forgetting.

—Radhika Subramaniam, "Urban Physiognomies" in *Sarai Reader 2002: The Cities of Everyday Life*, edited by Geert Lovink and Shudhabrata Sengupta (Sarai: The New Media Initiative, 2002), 12.

***City As Stage* will take place Saturday afternoon, June 11, 2011, in the gallery space of The Kitchen.**

Essays

Estuaries of Thought

Jennifer Burris

One–

"'Facts' . . . are always parts of the fallen facticity of the world, that is, they are sites of cover-ups and myths, of clandestine and concealed 'public' operations."[1] Describing Allan Sekula's *Fish Story* (1988–1994), a sprawling photographic and written excavation of the maritime world, critic Benjamin H.D. Buchloh draws attention to the ways in which Sekula undermines the assumed functions of documentary photography. On the one hand, Sekula adheres to the dictates of a representational art concerned with the economic, political, and material conditions of everyday life. On the other hand, he contests the reality

Two–

Friedrich Engels published *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, a study of living and labor conditions during the height of the Industrial Revolution, in 1844. "The Great Towns," a well-known chapter, begins with a reverie on the majestic appearance of London from the

of this representation by highlighting what Buchloh refers to as, "the spatial discontinuities and temporal gaps occurring in the production of these 'facts.'"[2] Deploying a formal structure based on a network of tangential relations between personal anecdotes, literary vignettes, historical articulations, and traditional documentary photographs, *Fish Story* depicts a world composed of infinite details that fail to cohere within either a teleological narrative or a continuous whole.

Sekula's use of disjuncture as an artistic strategy formally translates the inherent complexities and contradictions of his overarching subject; he brings together a vast archive of photographic and textual details in order to make the constructed nature of the advanced capitalist world apparent. This essay operates with a similar logic. The two opposing texts—Part One and Part Two—manifest the nonstructured, nonnarrative forms that history takes; this split structure highlights

perspective of a ship entering the Thames:

"The masses of buildings, the wharves on both sides, especially from Woolwich upwards, the countless ships along both shores, crowding ever closer and closer together, until, at last, only a narrow passage remains in the middle of the river, a passage through which hundreds of steamers shoot by one another; all this is so vast, so impressive, that a man cannot collect himself, but is lost in the marvel of England's greatness before he sets foot upon English soil."[11]

Engels later appends this passage with an asterisk, bemoaning the transition from this romantic époque of sailing vessels to a dismal collection of polluted steam ships. However, he initially perceives the expansive passage of the sea in direct opposition to the straitened alleys of London's slums and tenement housing. This distinction helps him differentiate the accelerated development of sea

discontinuities between explanations of reality (political and economic accounts) and the experience of it (artistic representations). Parallel to the way that Sekula's *Fish Story* addresses Marxist concerns of labor, class, and capital through a deployment of dialectical strategies, the task at hand is to interrogate similar concerns while investigating the idea of history as multilayered. Like estuaries of thought, these different social, political, representational, and economic structures collide with one another in chance encounters, forming correspondences and differences that help us understand both the constructed nature of reality as well as the possibility for difference through spontaneous interventions.[3]

The particular reality exposed in *Fish Story* is the expanded use of cargo containers to transfer material goods across national divides: a shift that helped facilitate the internationalization of the global economy. The

transport as a force of production from the stalled impasse of the social relations of production evidenced by urban crowding and squalor, thereby introducing an insight of historical materialism. The glorious vision of imperialism from a distance dialectically contradicts the experience of it from within: odorous streets befouled with the smell of unwashed flesh and animal refuse, an abdication of common humanity in the indifference and isolation of each body pressed up against the other.

Engels's passing adulation of the sea also reflects what was once a widespread understanding of the maritime world as a space of either preindustrial capitalism, or a space immune to capitalism altogether. In Allan Sekula's essay "Dismal Science," which accompanies his expansive photographic project *Fish Story* and which also begins with the above excerpt from Engels's text, one finds a manifestation of this belief:

details, in turn, are the daily experiences and living conditions of marginalized workers in waterfront spaces and hinterlands across the world, from Barcelona and Glasgow to Seoul and Hong Kong. Such Brechtian interventions disrupt the otherwise dominant mythologies of victimless wealth accumulation and instantaneous contact across vast distances. Divided into seven distinct chapters, the project archives forgotten spaces of the maritime world while simultaneously unraveling the legal, economic, and industrial developments that brought about their forgetting. As Sekula writes, *Fish Story* reveals "a world of gargantuan automation but also of persistent work, of isolated, anonymous, hidden work, of great loneliness, displacement and separation from the domestic sphere."[4]

The notion of the domestic sphere courses throughout each of the seven chapters; questions of home, home loss, and homelessness permeate

"It is in early seventeenth-century Dutch legal theory that the sea is emphatically understood to exceed and even resist terrestrial boundaries and national proprietary claims . . . a world that yields property but that in its idealized totality is irreducible to property."[12] Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. The ocean has long been a site of brutal capital production, as clearly evidenced by the transatlantic slave trade. At present, it is completely monetized, permitting a highly efficient exchange of goods worldwide. The sea is now conceived, except perhaps in instances of natural disaster, as an abstract and regulated field at the center of a system of transnational capital.

This transformation was largely brought about by two developments in the mechanical and legal operations of international shipping. The first development was the rise of the shipping container. Pioneered in the United States in the late

this world of floating ships and nomadic lifestyles. An epitaph of sorts to the project is a joke circulating through Poland circa 1990: "*They are building churches so that people can pray for homes.*"[5] Conflating longing with a gallows humor that mocks the failures of the government, this joke reveals a state of uncertainty so pervasive that the only solution appears in the form of a divine apparition. Thus removed from the possibility of permanent dwelling, migrant laborers and itinerant seafarers seek alternative modes of habitation in temporary structures located at the "limit zones" of industry and urban development.

One of these alternative structures can be seen in a pair of photographs from "True Cross," a chapter focused on the Mexican Gulf port city of Veracruz, which show a set of four abandoned cargo containers stacked in a symmetrical rectangular structure beside the rocky waterfront. Foregrounding

1950s, containerized shipping set a world standard for general cargo by the end of the 1960s. These uniformly sized metal boxes, capable of being mechanically transported from the berths of ships to a wide variety of land transport systems, resulted in a dramatic increase in economies of scale. This expansion led to the rise of the super-ship as well as the superport, both of which are citylike structures located at an unbridgeable remove from metropolitan consciousness. The second development facilitating this rapid growth was the creation of a flag of convenience system of ship registry in the late 1940s. This system created a loophole for industrialists in the developed world by allowing them to register their ships in particularly permissive countries like Panama, Honduras, and Liberia, thereby evading national labor and safety legislation. The flag of convenience system led, effectively, to the deregulation of

the image on the left is a rusted transport trolley painted blue. Behind the striated fence produced within this visual field by the trolley's metal bars is a view of a blot of colors resembling a flower vase. In the image on the right, the camera has moved beyond this makeshift blockade and entered a bounded zone of domestic space beneath open air. A man in a red baseball cap emerges from the lower right container. The door of the container is left welcomingly ajar. In front of the container, a flower arrangement adorns a dining table constructed from scrap wood. A profusion of pottery, cutlery, and Coke bottles transforms this otherwise desolate ground of sand and rock into an intimate zone of sustenance and conviviality.

In a short essay displayed alongside these photographs as a text panel, Sekula describes the arresting scene:

"Just outside the Veracruz container terminal, vendors sell sodas and international maritime labor markets.

These technological and bureaucratic developments dramatically impacted the socioeconomic conditions of those who depend on shipping for their livelihood; the rise of containerized shipping significantly reduced the required labor force. As Sekula charts throughout the seven chapters of *Fish Story*, the romanticized world of seafarers has disappeared alongside the mythical space of harbors. The cargo box, in turn, embodies a different myth: the "disavowal implicit in the transnational bourgeoisie's fantasy of a world of wealth without workers, a world of uninhibited flows."[13] This fantasy, which reaches its apex alongside the financial maneuverings of the shadow banking system, spills over and saturates the realm of shipyards and loading docks. The more rationalized and automated the maritime world becomes, the more it both conceptually and materially

beer to truck drivers. These entrepreneurs live, as one of them put it, 'without permission,' inside the empty forty-foot steel boxes, taking shelter from the rain and the unpredictable wind that blows down from the gulf. But the containers rest in one place for only a short time and the vendors constantly move their belongings from one box to the next, dodging the giant tractors, bantering with the dockers. On the checkerboard of international trade, these local nomads are displaced only a few meters at a time."[6] This narrative underscores the precariousness of such moments of domestic comfort, forged from discarded materials that link Mexico's peripheral zones to postindustrial countries like the United States.

A striking portrait from "Dictatorship of the Seven Seas," the final chapter, depicts a similar condition of precarity. Sekula identifies two figures standing in the long shadows of afternoon sun as "Mike and Mary, an

resembles the international capital markets.

Foreclosed from this myth of wealth without workers is the experience of countless manual laborers rendered superfluous by the ceaseless drive toward further mechanization. As one shipmate fatalistically predicts upon observing a permanently hunched dockworker: "First he lose [*sic*] his sanity, then his car, then his house."[14] Those workers lucky enough to retain their jobs suffer from substandard working conditions and political disenfranchisement. Faced with stringent competition and a deregulated labor market, their ability to rise up in mutinous protest or organized revolt is drastically diminished. For just as standardized systems strip the sea of its tempestuous indeterminacy, the de-territorializing operations of empire eradicate the image of the ship as a vessel of defiance and escape.

A second effect of these developments in shipping is the increased

unemployed couple who survive by scavenging and who, from time to time, seek shelter in empty containers."[7] Taken in South Central Los Angeles in 1994, this photograph undermines any attempt to delimit the prevalence of makeshift home construction to the global South. *The Forgotten Space* (2010), an essay film codirected by Sekula and Noël Burch, similarly contests this form of perceptual blanking in a scene that takes place in a "tent city" outside Ontario, California. Nothing more than a sparse collection of nylon tents, the tent city occupies a sliver of public space caught between the automated tracks of transport trains. Three of its residents tell their stories directly to the camera. Recounting heartbreak and frustrated possibilities, lost children, and hair loss due to malnutrition, these monologues reveal a glimpse of what it means to inhabit paralytic circumstances. In the words of one of the interviewees: "I don't

internationalism of commodity production. In search of cheaper labor and buoyed by the ease of transnational distribution, factories move to the geographical peripheries of global capital. This easy movement of industry belies the tightening restrictions of immigration law and refugee status, the fluid movement of cargo at sharp odds with the straitening of its producers. In times of economic hardship, such as the financial crisis that followed the 2008 collapse of the subprime mortgage market, jobs become scarce and popular appeal for stringent immigration policies increases. The system that produces crisis contains the ideological seeds for its own reproduction; those trapped behind the borders of exploitable peripheries find them almost impossible to traverse.

A potent case study of this chiasmic story of deregulation and escape, confinement and fantasy, is the city of Tangier. Located on the northern coast of

want to be like this any longer, I've been like this for years." Cutting to a shot of a jet plane flying directly overhead, the directors foreground the impassable distance between the myth of twenty-first century cosmopolitanism and the foreclosed narratives of those who have either nowhere else to go or no way to get there.

Falling into the latter category, Tangier's inhabitants are relentlessly asphyxiated by the political and economic net cast by the 1991 amendment to the Schengen Agreement (1985), which closed the Strait of Gibraltar to the majority of Moroccan citizens. Caught between a country of increasing poverty and the oceanic call of possibility, these citizens are trapped within a state of schizophrenic dislocation. Through her photographic and video practice, and in particular her series *A Life Full of Holes: The Strait Project* (1998–2004), Moroccan artist Yto Barrada mines this form of experience,

Morocco at the western entrance to the Strait of Gibraltar, Tangier is a mere nine miles from the southern border of Spain. In 1923, the city became an official International Zone: a supra-legal territory jointly administered by a committee of eight Western powers. An early microcosm of the deregulated world of global capital, Tangier soon entered the social imaginary as a space where behavioral norms and ordinary constraints no longer applied. As Brian T. Edwards comments in his literary and social history of the Maghreb during the mid-twentieth century:

"The Tangier Chamber of Commerce frequently ran an ad in the Paris edition of the *Herald Tribune* with the enticing tag 'Tangier knows no restrictions of any kind!' The reference was to the lack of any taxes and the free currency market; the implications extended into the social and sexual."[15]

The city was further fictionalized by the musings of expatriate Beat

which takes place on a subjective as well as national scale. This is not the experience of exile, but the anticipatory violence of a self-displacement that is often never actualized. Barrada describes the impression produced on her by the city as follows: "There's also desire here, a feeling of frustrated proximity. Wanting to leave is a form of revolt and transgression. . . . How does this temptation make itself visible in urban spaces, though? I'm looking to capture the basis of this mindset, of those who are permanently on the verge of leaving."[8]

Themes of desire, revolt, and transgression saturate the myth of Tangier. During the years of the International Zone, iconoclastic figures like Jean Genet would press up against the Spanish border, longing to enter this fictionalized realm of licentiousness: "I would have liked to embark for Tangiers. Movies and novels have made of this city a fearful place, a kind of dive where Generation writers drawn to this mirage of libertarianism. As William S. Burroughs proclaimed in a 1955 letter to Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, "Tanger is the prognostic pulse of the world, like a dream extending from past into the future, a frontier between dream and reality—the 'reality' of both called into question."[16]

By 1959, the International Zone was fully absorbed into a newly independent Moroccan state, formed three years prior. Despite this geopolitical reordering, the strait remained a fluid site of easy, transversal movement and exchange between Europe and North Africa. This situation was dramatically reversed following the 1991 amendment to the Schengen Agreement, in which Spain and Portugal joined legislation that enables the free movement of people between select European countries, thereby closing the waterway to the vast majority of Moroccan citizens. The seemingly

gamblers haggle over the secret plans of all the armies in the world . . . to me this city represented Treason so accurately, so magnificently, that I felt I was bound to land there."[9] Roland Barthes similarly recalls his time in the city as a kind of erotic diary of listless homosexual encounters and salacious bargaining for sensation and experience.

Despite drawing from a similar repertory of myths, Barrada succeeds in subverting this Western account. Where Genet's *The Thief's Journal* (1949) and Barthes's posthumously published *Incidents* (1987) are fundamentally modernist travelogues—self-escape in a foreign space—Barrada's photographs highlight the impossibility of such freedom for the people who merely function as the scenery for these narcissistic odysseys. Transgression here becomes an act of negation that redoubles upon the subject, laying bare the abjection of political disenfranchisement

progressive move toward an opening up of intra-European divides benefitted residents of developed countries, whose increasingly transnational lifestyle appears to have demanded the exclusion of those living outside its collective border. At present, the strait serves two primary functions: it is a legal conduit to North Africa for Europe-based tourism, as well as the main gateway for undocumented immigrants attempting to enter Europe from North Africa. The Moroccan artist Yto Barrada, who lives and works in Tangier, describes the situation produced by this uneven exchange: "A generation of Moroccans has grown up facing this troubled space which manages to be at once physical, symbolic, historical, and intimately personal. The word *strait,* like its French—and as chance would have it, Arabic—equivalent, combines the sense of narrowness and distress palpable here."[17]

The aggressive constriction of Tangier's

Yto Barrada, *Advertisement Lightbox* (ferry port transit area) Tangier, 2003. Chromogenic color print, 23 6 x 23 6 in. (60 x 60 cm). Courtesy the artist and Galerie Polaris, Paris

and economic foreclosure. *Advertisement Lightbox*, a photograph from 2003, shows the blackened outlines of two children prostrating themselves against the illuminated image of a streamlined cruise ship. Their bodies become literal blank spots in the representational iconography of desire, subjectivities swallowed whole by the artificially brightened colors of leisure travel. This elliptical quality also structures Tangier's landscape. In her recent work, Barrada increasingly focuses attention on this uneven terrain of economic development, most notably in the photographic series *Iris Tingitana* (2007). This growing fascination with vacant lots and interstitial territories is directly linked to her previous preoccupation with politically induced schizoid experience. As Barrada explains, "These people, like all the spaces in the city that don't appear on any maps, have been largely abandoned by the state. So it's a city full of holes."[10] *Beau Geste*, previous internationalism echoes the violence enacted on its physical terrain in the name of economic development. Landslips, fissures, security walls, and construction zones scar the city and are evidence of various real estate companies' heavy investment in tourist infrastructures and industrial parks. The symbolic, political, and maritime barrier of the strait is replicated in the form of physical barricades that slice the city into zones of privatization and exclusion. Foreclosed from both within and without, Tangier's inhabitants are cast into a situation of simmering violence, a prerevolutionary condition suspended at the limit of explosion and possibility. As Antonio Gramsci writes in his *Prison Notebooks* (1929–1935), which he composed while in a state of similar forced immobility, "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms

a short 16mm film shot in 2009, stages an activist intervention in two such holes. The first of these is a vacant city lot where in a single palm tree—a *Phoenix canariensis*—bears evidence to the house and garden that once stood there. The second hole is a fatal notch inflicted at the base of the tree by an impatient owner who must wait for it to fall before building an apartment complex. The Sunday afternoon intervention, performed by three men and narrated by the artist's voice, occurred as follows:

"We cleaned the trash from the hollow of the trunk and washed the cavity carefully to prevent infection. We dug down to lay a semicircular foundation using available stones. Building on the foundation, we filled the cavity tightly with a pyramid of smaller stones, which we hoped would bear half the weight of the tree. We sealed the cavity with concrete, being careful to waterproof the seams to avoid new rot. The tree

appear."[18] The potential outcomes of this symptomatic state of rotting suspension are not predetermined and should not be ignored.

will have a fifty-fifty chance of survival if it remains unmolested. At least, the owner will have a little more difficulty when he removes the tree in the end."

While Barrada's narrative concludes with a sigh of defeat to the forward march of displacement, her intervention in the urban landscapes poetically transforms forgotten spaces through an act of structural resistance, seeding revolt against ceaseless constriction from every angle. This artistic action highlights the revolutionary potential of the material encounter, the element of chance in an otherwise defeating teleological account of history. In every moment, in every cultural context, there are a number of possibilities to produce an event or a rupture.

This page: Yto Barrada, stills from *Beau Geste*, 2009. 16mm film transferred to digital video, color, sound, 3 min. Courtesy Galerie Sfeir Semler, Hamburg and Beirut, and Galerie Polaris, Paris

1 Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Allan Sekula: Photography Between Discourse and Documentary," *Fish Story* (Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, 2002), 199.

2 Ibid.

3 This attempt to draw together Marxist arguments without the dialectic or the teleological draws from Louis Althusser's notion of "aleatory materialism," which is developed in his posthumously published collection of essays *Philosophy of the Encounter: Later Writings, 1978–1987* (New York: Verso, 2006).

4 Allan Sekula and Debra Ringer, "Imaginary Economies: An Interview with Allan Sekula," *Dismal Science: Photo Works 1972–1996* (Illinois: University Galleries, 1999), 247.

5 Sekula, *Fish Story*, 187.

6 Ibid., 166.

7 Ibid., 182.

8 Yto Barrada, "A Conversation between Yto Barrada and Philosopher Nadia Tazi (Extracts)," *A Life Full of Holes: The Strait Project* (London: Autograph ABP, 2005), 59.

9 Jean Genet, *The Thief's Journal* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), 83.

10 Barrada, "A Conversation between Yto Barrada and Philosopher Nadia Tazi (Extracts)," 59.

11 Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, edited with a foreword by Victor Kiernan (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1987), 68. Sekula refers to this moment in Engels's text throughout *Fish Story*, and begins his related essay "Dismal Science" with this exact quotation. Much of Part Two's account of the rise of international shipping is drawn directly from his writing.

12 Sekula, *Fish Story*, 43–44.

13 Ibid., 137.

14 Ibid., 77.

15 Brian T. Edwards, *Morocco Bound: Disorienting America's Maghreb, From Casablanca to the Marrakech Express* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 122.

16 William S. Burroughs, quoted in Edwards, *Morocco Bound*, 121.

17 Yto Barrada, "Artist Project: A Life Full of Holes," *Cabinet* 16, January 2005, 68.

18 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: Progress Publishers, 1971), 276. In Barrada's interview with the philosopher Nadia Tazi, she deploys Gramsci's description of "morbid symptoms" to describe the "deaf, creeping violence" of Tangier.

Staging: Experiments in Social Configuration

Sofía Olascoaga

How can we learn to look deep into each other's eyes and to recognize the complex spectrum of feelings that the Other provokes within us? If we succeed in recognizing this complexity and difficulty, as well as the affects provoked by the prohibited, the different, and the intolerable, can we then talk about them as previously foreclosed? Is that even possible? When thinking of this operation among individuals, and then among different social groups, might we speak of foreclosed identities? And, finally, is there a means of addressing those who have been foreclosed?

This essay focuses on the work *Immigrant Movement International (IMI)* (2011–), a long-term project currently in its first year of development by the artist Tania Bruguera, and delves into the concept of staging in order to analyze how the artist deals discursively and practically with notions of political visibility and invisibility. The *IMI* project constructs a direct negotiation with political and social organizations, and investigates the perception, recognition, and representation of immigrants by means of an artist-initiated, sociopolitical movement. The purpose of my inquiry is to examine the strategies with which Bruguera seeks to create spaces for public discussion and political transformation. With the *IMI*, she establishes a field of

investigation of everyday interaction and experience and a testing ground for models of social organization. By doing so, the project addresses the silenced unseen and negotiates, from a cultural perspective, the political construction of what or who is visible. This analysis excavates a notion of invisibility as parallel to the term *foreclosure*. Invisibility is understood not only as a lens of the subjective but also as a useful framework for viewing the use of power and exclusion within cultural processes.

Immigrant Movement International

Tania Bruguera's project *Immigrant Movement International* seeks to bring to public discussion and, more importantly, to political debate, a notion of immigrants as an identity-based category, which, beyond national denominations, encompasses a rapidly growing number of individuals and groups across the globe. The artist states, "Immigrants are the social class par excellence in the twenty-first century. A social class in search of its identity in its differences and for a voice with which to set forth their knowledge and demands."[1] For Bruguera, the *IMI* project explores new models to visualize and test forms of political representation for immigrants who "are endowed with a strong but invisible political presence."[2] What is more, Bruguera seeks to consider "the bargaining between what is visible and what is sub-visible, between the impossibility of ignoring their presence and the clear decision of obviating it, between what is political and what is worldly."[3]

Although first conceived in 2006, this endeavor began its realization in January of 2011 under the auspices of Creative Time, a New York-based nonprofit, and the Queens Museum of Art. For this residency, Bruguera moved into a house in a multinational, residential area of Corona, Queens, where she set up a storefront as the headquarters of the Movement. Her decision to locate herself in an actual neighborhood allows Bruguera, in her own words, "to remain immersed and concentrated in

Tania Bruguera, *Useful Art Association* logo. Dimensions variable. Courtesy Studio Bruguera

Tania Bruguera, *Generic Capitalism*, 2009. Performance. © Tania Bruguera. Photograph by Rainer Ganahl; courtesy Studio Bruguera

the development of the project." The project, so far, has initiated a series of what Bruguera refers to as "actions"; that is, workshops and events for the public, which provide different platforms or stages to work with immigrants to analyze and discuss issues of visibility over the course of a year. In addition to organizing these events, Bruguera's activities range from physically setting up the headquarters and maintaining a daily work schedule to contacting community leaders and scheduling sessions with local political advisors. To establish connections and an ongoing dialogue with the local community, Bruguera shares a room in her new home with local families, allowing her to further uncover the issues facing immigrants and to help inform the future development of the project.

Bruguera frames this project in the context of "Useful Art" (Arte Útil), which has been a guiding principle for her practice in recent years. With this concept, she intends to investigate "the implementation of art in society, . . . addressing the disparity of engagement between informed audiences and the general public, as well as the historical gap between the language used in what is considered avant-garde and the language of urgent politics."[4] As critic Claire Bishop explains, "for Bruguera, useful art denotes a conjunction of political action and illegality—understood here as pushing against the boundaries of what those in power define as legal and acceptable, and being willing to embrace the criminal if necessary—so that art might achieve something in the social field (be this civil liberties or cultural politics), as well as taking a position within the long history of such artistic gestures."[5]

With the *IMI*, Bruguera intends to avoid a final outcome or product, and to recognize the overall process as part of the open articulation of this initiative. Nevertheless, a set of media-focused elements integrated into the project aim to provide an ongoing register throughout its development: a website will supply general information about the organization's objectives and activities, and the artist will post her working diary on a blog. Each of these activities proposes a different approach to reading,

informing, and interacting; each connects with and provides for different audiences. Together, they offer different ways of making the project public, visible, and accessible; that is to say, they constitute various forms of staging.

Staging as a Strategy

With a background in performance-based practices, Bruguera has used her body as the focus of her early pieces. In the last decade, she has created a series of recurring works that involve staged situations, or, as she terms them "contexts." From its general definition, *staging* is understood as an instance of organizing a public event or protest.[6] It is also a term most commonly associated with theater and the performing arts. It is apparent that the *IMI* incorporates some of Bruguera's previous skills and experiences on the "stage." To make visible tensions produced by a state of invisibility, Bruguera has utilized public events to stage interactions and enable conversations.[7] In several other of her recent proposals, staged situations have taken the form of panel discussions, such as *Generic Capitalism* (2009); press conference events, as in *Autosabotage* (2009); speech scenarios, as in *Tatlin's Whisper #6* (2009); and public encounters that test audience reactions to a set of provocations, as was the case in *Tatlin's Whisper #5* (2008). As Carrie Lambert-Beatty has written: "her craft is confrontation."[8] Following the structure of these earlier projects, *Immigrant Movement International* deliberately names not only its objectives but also its audiences.

When examining the *IMI* in terms of its staging of moments, spaces, and actions, it is useful to recall other resonant attempts within the theatrical field. Drawing from the tradition of Brazilian popular theater, Augusto Boal developed the *Legislative Theatre*, a theatrical form conceived to intervene in Rio de Janeiro's political processes. Boal wrote that particular Brazilian popular theater traditions were created "from the popular

Tania Bruguera, still from *Tatlin's Whisper #6*, 2009 (performance view, Havana version). © Tania Bruguera; courtesy Studio Bruguera

Tania Bruguera, *Tatlin's Whisper #5*, 2008 (performance view, UBS Openings Live—The Living Currency) Performance Photograph by Sheila Burnett, courtesy Tate Modern

perspective but aimed at another audience."[9] He states, "Our mandate's project is to bring theatre back into the centre of political action—the centre of decisions—by making theatre as politics rather than merely making political theatre. In the latter case, the theatre makes comments on politics; in the former, the theatre is, in itself, one of the ways in which political activity can be conducted."[10] Following this historical description, it seems pertinent to question if the *IMI* is currently attempting a similar operation. In a kindred vein, Bruguera has commented: "the point of view of the piece is from the perspective of the immigrants even when the target audience is the elected officials."[11] Furthermore, she expresses: "I would like with the project to help change the negative image of immigrants in order to create new ways for them to achieve social recognition."[12] This utopian drive functions as an engine for this particular project, as well as for Tania Bruguera's life practice as a whole.

Bruguera's instigating role in this ambitious artistic venture is reminiscent of what Boal refers to as the dream of theater artists: "We require the spectator to verify the existence of the show: in the dream, the spectator is the dreamer him- or her-self [*sic*]. More than 'watching' the dream, the dreamer is, at the same time his or her own dramaturg, director, lead actor, sound operator: an accumulation of functions which is every theatre artist's dream. . . ."[13] One of the core dimensions of the *IMI*'s development is Bruguera's own active participation at every stage, including: her moving to Queens; living in a family house; meeting neighbors; collaborating with political and cultural organizations alike; setting up an office; occupying the space regularly; answering the phone; publishing on Facebook; communicating through Twitter; writing the *IMI* blog. The central question to be asked vis-à-vis the *IMI* is how Bruguera's "dream"—her discursive principles, planned activities, as well as her meticulous registration of both—will successfully cohabitate with the dreams of her intended audiences.

Interrogating Visibility and Foreclosure

While staging invokes visibility by delivering recognition to the audience it addresses, the question of that which remains invisible is ever present. Despite the participation of some people, others remain offstage. Moreover, in this representation, certain things are necessarily foregrounded, while others are omitted. When perceived, some aspects of the Other can be registered, while other parts are neglected. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has sharply insisted, loss is inevitably part of all encounters.[14] This bears upon not only the *IMI* but also the overarching framework of the exhibition within which this instantiation of the Movement is represented. It is therefore important to reflect upon the consequences, contradictions, and paradoxes integral to ideas of visibility.

The notion of the Other—and of ourselves—is constructed through daily social interactions and loaded with the imbalance of power and powerlessness. Perspectives are formed based on how individuals address and regard one another, by what they choose to recognize and *not* to recognize. It is through the act of speaking and generating dialogue that we begin to understand how we stand in relation to the Other. The process of imagining the social is framed in political structures that separate groups from one another. Power relationships are at the core of defining which values are acknowledged within a collective imaginary and which are excluded.[15] Among the many different activities in which the social is constructed, the act of speech is a means of inscribing identity. How and where we situate ourselves determines the ways in which we establish a relationship with those we intend to speak to. Charles Taylor states "the mode of address says something about the footing we stand on with our addressees." Taylor goes on to say that the way in which we address other people can be a loaded, somewhat violent act: "the action is forceful; it is meant to impress, perhaps even to threaten certain consequences if our message is not heard. But it is also meant to persuade; it remains

this side of violence. It figures the addressee as one who can be, must be, reasoned with."[16] Therefore, among the essential processes in which the imaginary is constituted, the act of addressing others plays a fundamental role. This occurs within the public sphere, the field where visibility is negotiated; and, by comparison, the field in which the effect of invisibility is exercised.

What is not acknowledged in a field of representation may also be referred to as foreclosed. Although it is by no means an equivalent relationship, there is a link between what is invisible and what is foreclosed. One of the many ways in which the term *foreclosure* is explained is "a withdrawal of significance—a refusal to lend meaning to what is perceived."[17] That is, to take away the symbolic value of something or someone experienced. As a psychoanalytic term, *foreclosure* is a subjective process related to psychosis. However, in addition to this definition, the meaning can be elaborated in terms of similar processes that occur between individuals. Consider forms of social interaction in which specific groups refuse to lend meaning to each other. Foreclosure may be a useful term to describe a cultural process. If so, we would need to observe the relationship between what is perceived and recognized as visible, and what is rejected, or made invisible. Furthermore, the term can be applied to the interaction between groups within a shared context that either acknowledge or refuse each other.

In political terms, the negotiation of representation involves an operation in which the visible and the invisible compete for a privileged position—the first, by exercising power, and, the second, by claiming it. It is important to acknowledge the complexity of this relationship and particularly to recognize the flawed expectation that these positions can somehow become equal. We must then understand that it is not only a matter of simply granting inclusiveness, lending visibility to the invisible, which is in itself problematic, but to recognize the richness of the encounter between these positions and the importance of the address itself. In other words, visibility cannot become

total; something will always remain invisible and thus foreclosed for all of the involved parties. Nevertheless, instigating an encounter is undoubtedly necessary. In this regard, the *IMI* is an ambitious experiment.

Summary: The Show and the Dream[18]

Some of the questions posed throughout this essay, as well as in following paragraphs, may be answered only with the passage of time. As of the writing of this text, the *IMI* project is still in its embryonic phase and no public events have yet transpired, leaving many questions presented in this essay open. They can thus be perceived as an interrogatory road map for future developments. By raising these questions, a critical framework for understanding the developments of the *Immigrant Movement International* and its outreach has been established. It is my hope that these questions will be revisited throughout the project, as well as retroactively, with the clarity that temporal distance can provide. The following questions, for which I have attempted some tentative responses, are intended for this purpose.

Given the multiplicity of modes of outreach, how can one develop a complex understanding of the spatial and temporal matrix of the *IMI*? A multilayered and networked structure provides a constantly changing frame within which activities are deliberately continuous, thereby resisting classification. It is important to consider at this early stage whether a systematic registration of all of the projects' components succeed in providing a holistic understanding of the project in its entirety. In some of Bruguera's past works, documentation has been avoided as the material referent of an action or event.[19]

For whom is this project intended? It is clear that the audience is conceived not as an external vantage point but as an integral component of the *IMI*. For the events taking place in the Movement's headquarters in Queens, workers, neighbors, and other local people are cast as the

primary audience. It is important to consider that this locale is at a remove from the mainstream spaces of artistic activity and, therefore, not readily accessible to most art audiences. The intended participants of the organized events are the actual inhabitants of the community, in addition to those reached by the *IMI*'s programs, including academics, art publics from diverse specializations within museum, gallery, university, and art school circuits. How and to what end will the encounter between these varied groups unfold? It is also crucial to examine how the project will negotiate the position of the artist in relationship to the interpellated community groups, particularly with regard to the preexisting power valences associated with each.

What level of visibility will the *Immigrant Movement International*'s initiatives achieve? Moreover, how should the success of these in turn be evaluated? What processes of political negotiation will this staging of immigration enable? Will the artist's objectives become an engaging provocation for groups to begin to articulate and exercise different social formations? How will the urban context and lives of its immigrant participants be recognized and activated within the artistic space? What kind of meaning will be lost with this translation? How will strategies of staging and visibility work through and counter realities being foreclosed? Finally, what will the artist's role in this stage play be? Perhaps she is an actor who negotiates visibility among different and opposite imaginaries. In that case, what are the possibilities and pitfalls of this action?

In the spirit of the project, I want to end, not with a conclusion, but with a proposal to think of future possibilities. Augusto Boal reminds us of the potential that artistic practice can offer: "we would be trying to analyse [*sic*] how certain human beings are able to translate a thought, emotion or sensation into a thing. And how this thing—the work of art, a dream!—has the capacity to awaken in the viewer his or her own dream. The work of art—the thing—is not necessarily capable of awakening in the viewer the same dream as the artist's: the important thing is that it has this aesthetic property of unloosing dreams. The work

of art is the path and the link between one dream and the other."[20] As I have suggested, foreclosure, like the process of rendering invisible, is inherent to social relations and therefore cannot be prevented. Nevertheless, as I have also proposed, it is a process that demands ongoing examination and critique. In this vein, the purpose of *Immigrant Movement International* might be to stage a dream of visibility—one that temporarily and incompletely but by necessity confronts the waking life of foreclosure.

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1 Tania Bruguera, "Ideas of My Work: Immigrant Movement International" (working document, New York City, 2011).

2 Tania Bruguera, "Immigrant Movement International" (working document, early project statement, 2010).

3 Ibid.

4 Tania Bruguera, *Immigrant Movement International*, press release, presented by Creative Time and the Queens Museum of Art, New York City, March 23, 2011, http://www.queensmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/bruguera-immigrant-movement-international-release1.pdf (accessed March 26, 2011).

5 Claire Bishop, "Speech Disorder: Claire Bishop on Tania Bruguera at the 10th Havana Biennial," *Artforum*, Summer 2009, 121–122.

6 "An instance of organizing a public event or protest." The Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.v. "staging," http://oxford-dictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_us1293741#m_en_us1293741 (accessed March 26, 2011).

7 Bishop, 121–122.

8 Carrie Lambert-Beatty, "Political People: Notes on Arte de Conducta," *Tania Bruguera: On the Political Imaginary* (Milan: Charta, 2009), 37–45.

9 Augusto Boal, *Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to Make Politics*, trans. Adrian Jackson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 222.

10 Ibid., 20.

11 Bruguera, "Ideas of My Work: Immigrant Movement International."

12 Ibid.

13 Boal, 189.

14 When explaining the notion of "the exceptional subaltern," Spivak presents the sense of loss that is inherent to the process of translation from one cultural context to the other; the loss exists for both sides. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and The Interpretation of Culture*. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds. (London: Macmillan, 1988).

15 Philosopher Charles Taylor uses the term *social imaginary* to approach the construction of perception between individuals, and how perception is expressed. "By social imaginary. . . . I am thinking . . . of the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations." Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004).

16 Ibid.

17 J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1967), 166–169.

18 Chapter title taken from: Augusto Boal, *Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to Make Politics*, trans. by Adrian Jackson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 187.

19 For *Tatlin's Whisper #5* (2008), in the commission agreement with Tate Modern, the artist established that documentation of the piece would be made, owned, and circulated freely by any person.

20 Boal, 187.

Construction/ Destruction in Cinematic Spaces

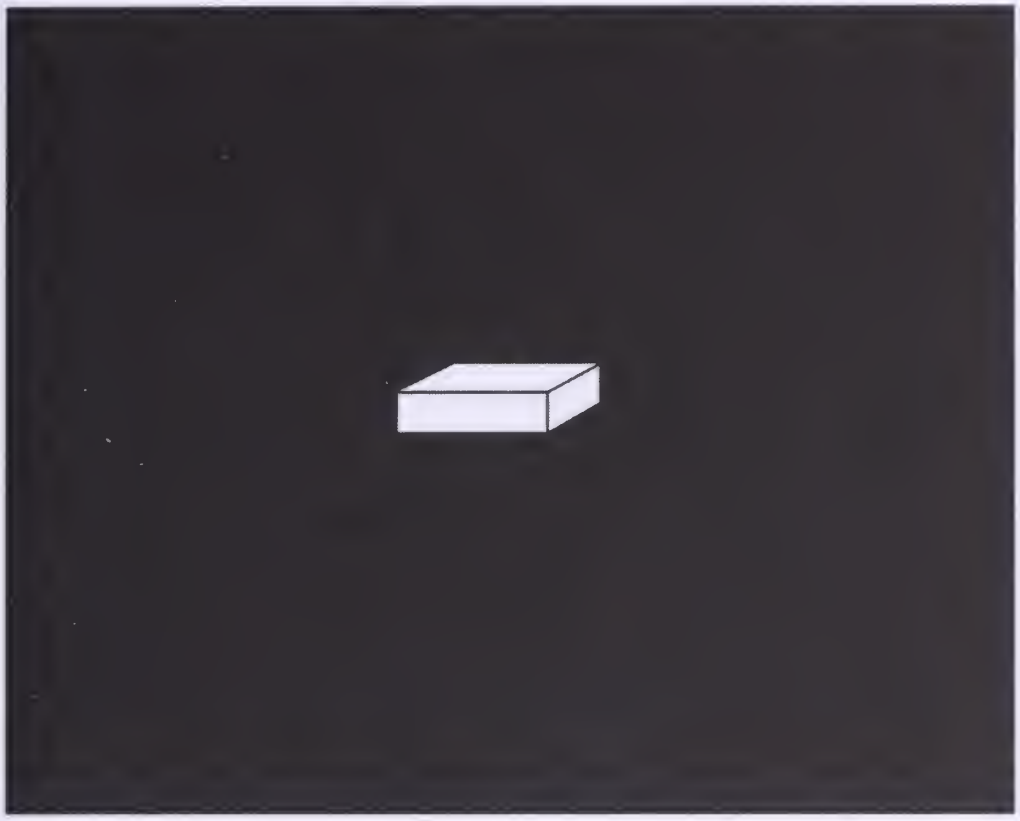
Sadia Shirazi

Harun Farocki's film *In Comparison* (2009) and Kamal Aljafari's film *Port of Memory* (2009) engage dialectically with construction and destruction at the intersection of cinematic representation and production of space. Construction and destruction are understood as mutually informed positions whose effects register on multiple indices of space and time. Both films generate cinematic counter-narratives that contradict specific dominant historical narratives. *In Comparison* studies brick production and construction in different societies and geographic sites around the world—this macro-cinematic narrative deconstructs the linear technological teleology that understands modernity as a movement from pre- to postindustrial societies (code: traditional to modern). *Port of Memory* explores destruction by reflecting on the historical and psychic representation of Palestinian subjectivity within Israel—this micro-cinematic narrative draws a connection between the expropriation of Palestinian property in Jaffa and cinematic representations of the city. The foreclosure of particular histories and subjectivities within these films is connected in this paper through an understanding of the ways both works engage with and resist the loss of a spatial[1] and temporal continuum.[2]

> A whole history remains to be written of *spaces*—which would at the same time be the history of *powers* . . . from the grand strategies of geopolitics to the little tactics of the habitat.
> —Michel Foucault, 1967[3]

In Comparison extends Farocki's project of deconstructing vision and representation in images from film and media to deconstructing modes of brick production and assembly in geographic sites around the world. The film meditates on the way that the brick, a basic building material in every society, is defined by the time and scale of its production, simultaneously demonstrating the imbrication of building materials in changing societal conditions of labor and in the production of space. The film moves from Burkina Faso to sites in India, France, and Germany, then back to a different site in India, and to another site in Germany, to Austria, another location in Burkina Faso, and then finally ends in two places in Switzerland. The linear movement from pre- to postindustrial society is ruptured as the film progresses and begins to connect sites through ideas and images that defy this simplistic understanding. The footage of brick making, transport, and, at times, assembly, from each location is paired with a diagram emblematizing the brick technology of the respective site that is sometimes also accompanied by text. Measuring Farocki's project against Henri Lefebvre's injunction, *In Comparison* engages in a "successful unmasking of things in order to reveal (social) [and spatial] relationships."[4]

In Comparison begins with a white orthographic diagram that depicts a single, solid, rectangular brick against a black background. Text overlaid onto the next frame tells the viewer that the location is Gando, Burkina Faso. A woman carries a plastic container filled with water on her head along with a child on her back. She passes the jug to a man who pours the water into a pit where it is mixed with soil, then shaped with a wooden mold into bricks



Harun Farocki, still from *In Comparison*, 2009. 16mm film, color, sound; 61 min.
Courtesy Harun Farocki Filmproduktion, Berlin

that are left to bake in the sun for hours. The community in Gando is building a clinic and, in two days, men, women, and children have erected the clinic's tall, load-bearing adobe brick walls.

The next location of brick production is Hinjewadi, India, where the same brick-mold technology is used, albeit on a different scale of production. A woman's smooth, efficient gestures are framed, as she primes the metal mold with water, packs it with adobe, and skims the top to level it. A man transports the mold and releases the quivering bricks, laying them side by side to dry in the sun. These motions are repeated. In the last frame of this sequence, the camera pulls back to reveal the production site—myriad

women and men are molding bricks, which are carried and stacked, making an open grid stretching in all directions in a field. The scale of brick production has multiplied, but the technique has remained the same. This location is now only a site of production. The bricks are transported to Powai, a suburb of Mumbai, for assembly. At this location, poured concrete frames of multistory buildings populate the background of the site, skeletons waiting to be infilled with bricks and later filled with people. This focus on construction presages the inevitable deconstruction that follows the cyclical geographic movement of the flow of capital as it re-territorializes and de-territorializes.[5] Women and men are still present at the construction site, with women carrying building materials and sometimes caring for children and men hoisting materials and laying brick walls.

In later scenes in the film, the viewer is shown that the pattern of separate sites for production and assembly, characteristic of some of the Indian construction practices, is also found in Germany. What distinguishes the German sites from their Indian counterparts is the larger scale of production, the increased automation of labor, and the further specialization of tasks. Earth is transported, sifted, and mixed exclusively by machines in a factory. People sparsely populate this veritable maze of conveyer belts and assembly lines. A solitary worker in overalls and a brimmed cap, seated on a dais in front of a motherboard, operates the entire automated system by pushing buttons. At times, he moves within this nucleus to better oversee the operations, and, at other times, he sits on his chair with his arms folded, appearing listless and dulled by his work. This man is an iconic illustration of the alienation of workers and reification of labor in industrial societies.

The last sequences of the film take place at two sites in Switzerland. A machine's robotic arm—twice the height of a human—swivels back and forth between a concrete dispenser and a wall of irregularly stacked bricks the machine is assembling. The standardization of mass production in Germany is replaced with mass customization in Switzerland. Except for their part in the programming

This page: Harun Farocki, stills from *Comparison via a Third*, 2007. 16mm film, double projection, color, sound; 24 min. Courtesy Harun Farocki Filmproduktion, Berlin

of these systems, humans are even less present as fabrication processes become fully automated. An architect—who is inferred but invisible—has created a system for an architectural façade, in which one brick represents one pixel. CAD/CAM (Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing) technology allows the translation of this two-dimensional image into a three-dimensional material pattern. Here the film demonstrates "the gradual automation not only of labor . . . but of seeing and imaging, too."[6] The brick façade is first assembled by a robotic arm in the Zürich laboratory and then transported to Fläsch. The frame of the building in Fläsch bears an uncanny resemblance to the mass-produced skeletal structures in India, except that the brick pattern is decorative and not functional, and the bricks are not covered as they would be in India but left exposed. The stylized brick façade alters one's visual perception, transforming the hard bricks into something soft. From afar, the façade looks like a textile frozen in time after having been blown in various directions by the wind.

In Comparison illustrates how in industrialized societies the increased automation of labor reflects a kind of ossification of a system of production into a very precise but rigid, unalterable form. If such a system, manned by a limited number of human operators, were to partially or totally malfunction, it would produce failures proportionate to the scale of production. In German factories, bricks are identical productions, precisely calculated parts of a highly precise system of construction. In comparison, a group of laborers in Toutipakkam, India, create an innovative new system where unbaked bricks, stacked inside an unfinished building, are fired together with the building. The sale of bricks can help to finance the continued construction of the building, according to the film's captions. Failure within this system also has results proportionate to its scale of production, but the system of production is flexible and workers' roles are more dynamic. Most importantly, workers can feed information back into their system of production to alter and improve it, as necessary. Efficiency

is suddenly relative; it can refer to the precision with which German factories manufacture identical bricks or to the innovation of workers in India who combine two operations into one, while providing revenue for further building construction. What strongly differentiates these juxtapositions is that a malfunction in the German system would result in catastrophic failures because of the inflexibility of its particular mode of production, whereas the Indian example illustrates a supple, alterable system of production.

As scale of production increases and labor becomes more automated, regulation and identity seem to cohere more strongly within the workplace. Construction boots and hard hats replace sandals and sun hats, even though the physicality of labor is decreasing. Industrial societies require a highly specialized and routinized labor force; for example, a worker in a German factory strikes bricks that run past him on a conveyer belt, listening to the sounds they emit in order to locate any flaws in the bricks.[7] At a construction site in another part of Germany, workers use hand signals to communicate with their colleagues, who are operating machinery as they assemble prefabricated components on-site; the sound of machinery creates a backdrop for their motions. In comparison, men, women and children all participate in the construction of a clinic in Gando, Burkina Faso, each fulfilling particular roles. Men are shown laying the building's brick walls, which women then plaster over. The sound of the workers' conversations peppers the footage, culminating in the women singing in unison as they pack the earthen floor of the clinic. Women are minimally present in factories in France and Germany, and children are wholly removed from construction sites. What is striking is the differentiation of labor, temporality, identity, and social relations across these societies. Through the non-hierarchical film sequences that begin to link disparate sites, concepts, and images as the film progresses, Farocki disrupts a narrative movement from "traditional" to "modern" societies, reconstruing modernity as multiple[8] and challenging technological teleology.

Destruction/Construction

> In the state of siege, time becomes place
> Fossilized in its eternity
> In the state of siege, place becomes time
> Lagging behind its yesterday and its tomorrow
> —Mahmoud Darwish, 2002[9]

In his film *Port of Memory*, Kamal Aljafari is concerned with reconfiguring time through space and framing an unstable present against the past while insisting on the future.[10] Focusing on the city of Jaffa, where Palestinians are excluded from representation and the city is expropriated in physical and cinematic space, the film explores the entanglement of space in time and memory, as well as resists the physical destruction of the city by constructing new subjectivities through its cinematic representation. The film follows two Palestinian families: Aljafari's extended family, who face the imminent threat of eviction from their homes,[11] and their neighbors, who at one point in the film find their living room wall has been "accidentally" torn down. The film's structure is fragmented, moving from domestic interior spaces, to the ever-tightening public spaces in which the Palestinian residents seem to live and work, to the continuous construction occurring along the coastline, and then to montage sequences from other films shot in Jaffa. Through his film, Aljafari claims "permission to narrate," because, as Edward Saïd argues, "Facts do not at all speak for themselves, but require a socially acceptable narrative to absorb, sustain, and circulate them . . . . as Hayden White has noted in a seminal article, 'narrative in general, from the folk tale to the novel, from annals to the fully realized "history," has to do with the topics of law, legality, legitimacy, or, more generally, *authority*.'"[12]

The film opens with a scene in which Aljafari's Uncle Selim visits a lawyer to discuss an order of evacuation that he has received, which accuses his family of squatting illegally in their home. We never see the lawyer's face, but we hear his voice as he tells Selim that he has

This page: Kamal Aljafari, stills from *Port of Memory*, 2009. 16mm film, color, sound; 63 min. Collection of the artist; courtesy the artist

misplaced the family's land title, which was entrusted to him ten years earlier when the family faced a similar legal situation. This focus on legality in relation to the dwellings of Palestinian citizens of Israel complicates the dominant media and cinematic representations of noncitizen Palestinians. In lieu of spectacular representations, Aljafari focuses his lens on the minutiae of daily life, imbuing these lived gestures with elegiac and defiant tones. This repetition of particular gestures structures the film and guides its episodic narrative. One such series that punctuates and provides the temporal rhythm of the film includes long takes of the filmmaker's aunt systematically and ritually washing her hands. As the film progresses, the motions of the two families take on an excruciatingly pained beauty. The expression of the characters' gestures clearly holds crisis at bay. *Port of Memory* locates the home as a site of conflict, and inhabitance becomes a form of resisting dispossession. Henri Lefebvre writes that the city is a setting of struggle and the stake of that same struggle, as a place where power resides.[13] Aljafari mutually locates physical and cinematic space as sites of conflict over power and memory.

Jaffa has a peculiarly rich presence in contemporary film history. The city was used as a set for a number of American and Israeli films from the 1960s through the 1980s, representing war-torn cities ranging from Beirut to Baghdad. Palestinians were excluded from cinematic representation in these films.[14] The personal story of one family's home loss parallels the incremental disappearance of the city of Jaffa, along with the foreclosure of Palestinian residents from the city's cinematic history. Aljafari refers to this phenomenon as the "cinematic occupation of Jaffa."[15] The filmmaker explains, "I know now that there were many films shot in my hometown, using my hometown as something else and excluding me from it, erasing my history from these images and from these films. I have a good reason to film this place the way I see it. And [through] cinema . . . with framing and by shooting something for a long time, you can claim it. . . ."[16] Montaged footage from *The Delta Force* (1986), a Hollywood blockbuster film

starring Chuck Norris, appears in Aljafari's film in different guises. In one scene, we see the back of a man's head as he watches the film on TV in a café, rewinding and replaying scenes that were shot nearby.

Jaffa's cinematic image, to paraphrase Roland Barthes, was not just an intimation of death[17] but literally contributed in the city becoming a specter. *The Delta Force*, for example, used the city as a live set. The last sequence of images in *Port of Memory* includes scenes from this film, in which we see a tank hurtling down a pedestrian street hugged tightly by the old stone walls of residences. Weapons are fired and buildings absorb the impact of ammunition and collisions. This sequence of images directly precedes a scene in which Selim steps down the very same street. Toward the end of the film, Selim gazes longingly at the sea through a mesh wire fence. The camera then pans to a grainy shot of the sea and a man is heard singing, "There is a place beyond the sea, where the sand is white and home is worn, where the sun shines, over the market, the street and the port. . . ." These scenes from the Israeli film *Kazablan* (1974) show a man walking along the shoreline of the Mediterranean and then through the narrow pedestrian streets of Jaffa. In a strange montage sequence, Aljafari's uncle enters into the space of this film, walking in front of the main actor and then eerily traversing spaces within the film. A solitary character, he wanders in the film's unpopulated spaces of the port, which no longer exist in reality but which he knew from his childhood.[18] This scene produces spaces of a past-future, in which reality is supplanted temporarily by hope and desire. Selim is then shown waking from sleep. It is unclear whether the previous scenes were part of a dream sequence or a drifting remembrance as he gazed at the ever more distant sea. The film ends with a sequence of images that repeat the rest of the film's structure: night descends, construction along the coastline greets the morning, Aljafari's aunt commences washing her hands, his uncle gazes again at the sea from his rooftop, as night falls. Then the screen turns to black.

Aljafari is intent on reclaiming spaces of the city of Jaffa for its Palestinian residents, as film now offers the only access to these sites that no longer exist. Yet Aljafari cultivates what Saïd has referred to as a "scrupulous . . . subjectivity" in which the filmmaker refrains from extolling a triumphant ideology or establishing a counter-normative narrative system.[19] Instead Aljafari moves between subjective and objective registers in the film's hybrid form of fiction-documentary. The filmmaker's blurring of the boundaries between fiction and documentary takes up Jean-Luc Godard's challenge in his film *Notre Musique* (2004) that all that is left to the Palestinians is documentary and to the Israelis, fiction. *Port of Memory*, as Spivak remarked of the task facing subaltern historiography, " . . . articulates the difficult task of rewriting its own conditions of impossibility as the conditions of its possibility."[20] Aljafari's work can be said to create a space of reconstituted identity for the Palestinian subject in Israel who finds herself doubly erased—on the one hand by the imminent threat of dispossession, and on the other, by her erasure from cinematic archival records.

While Farocki's film represents space temporally through the "time of the brick," Aljafari's represents time spatially, which is best characterized by his film's title: *Port of Memory*. Habitation and dwelling concern both filmmakers; for Farocki the time of the dwelling is (de) constructed systemically, while Aljafari de(con)structs the space of dwelling subjectively. Set against the contemporary moment of crisis in which the future seems to belong to uncontrolled capitalism and development, the films register anxiety about the future in distinct ways. Through the repetition of the family's gestures in *Port of Memory*, Aljafari connects with the past, resisting the idea that this continuum of time might be broken by offering to reinscribe Palestinian subjects into Jaffa's cinematic archive.[21] *In Comparison* insists upon a more nuanced view of labor and modes of production by explicitly documenting brick fabrication, but also by implicitly referencing cinema through the questioning of the efficacy of the inflexible

systems of industrial production. Harun Farocki's *In Comparison* and Kamal Aljafari's *Port of Memory* are both filmic counter-narratives that attempt to hold back the teleological rush of history.

1 The following excerpt from Henri Lefebvre operates as a conceptual framework for this essay: "*(Social) space is a (social) product* . . . in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power. . . . Social space will be revealed in its particularity to the extent that it ceases to be indistinguishable from mental space . . . on the one hand, and physical space . . . on the other." Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1974), 26–27.

2 The idea of a temporal continuum as explained by Siegfried Kracauer in relation to the photograph is also especially pertinent to the film: "Photography presents a spatial continuum; historicism seeks to provide the temporal continuum." Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 49.

3 Michel Foucault, "The Eye of Power," preface to Jeremy Bentham, *Le panoptique* (1977), reprinted in Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. C. Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 149.

4 Lefebvre, 81.

5 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: Continuum, 2004), 281.

6 Hal Foster, "Vision Quest: The Cinema of Harun Farocki," *Artforum*, November 2004, 156.

7 This task illustrates a form of labor that cannot exist outside of its mode of production. Karl Marx writes: "Capital employs labour. Even this relationship in its simplicity is a personification of things and a reification of persons. . . . The social forms of their own labour—the subjective as well as the objective forms—or the form of their own social labour, are relations constituted quite independently of the individual workers; the workers as subsumed under capital become elements of these social constructions, but these social constructions do not belong to them. They therefore confront the workers as shapes of capital itself, as combinations which, unlike their isolated labour capacities, belong to capital, originate from it and are incorporated within it. And this assumes a form which is the more real the more, on the one hand, their labour capacity is itself modified by these

forms, so that it becomes powerless when it stands alone, i.e. outside this context of capitalism, and its capacity for independent production is destroyed."

8 The idea of multiple modernities is explored by Charles Taylor who asks the question: "Is there a single phenomenon here [in modernity], or do we need to speak of 'multiple modernities,' the plural reflecting the fact that other non-Western cultures have modernized in their own way and cannot be properly understood if we try to grasp them in a general theory that was designed originally with the Western case in mind?" Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 1.

9 Mahmoud Darwish, "State of Siege," *Al Ahram Weekly*, Issue no. 581, April 11–17, 2002. http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/581/bo7.ht (accessed March 21, 2011).

10 I would like to acknowledge my debt to Laura Mulvey, with whom I had a conversation that greatly inspired my thinking regarding Aljafari's film and its connection to Farocki's preoccupations regarding cinema and the continuum of time. March 9, 2011.

11 Amidar is a government-operated public housing authority that pursues an eviction lawsuit against Aljafari's family in the film, alleging that the family is squatting illegally. See also: Yigal Hai, "Protestors rally in Jaffa against move to evict local Arab families," *Haaretz*, April 7, 2007.

12 Edward Saïd, "Permission to Narrate," *London Review of Books*, vol. 6, no. 3 (February 16, 1984), 13–17.

13 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 386.

14 In *The Delta Force* (1986), even the opportunity to play Arab "terrorists" was only granted to Israeli Mizrahi Jews. See interview with Kamal Aljafari conducted by Nasrin Hamada, *Montreal Serai*, 2010. http://montrealserai.com/2010/09/28/this-place-they-dried-from-the-sea-an-interview-with-kamal-aljafari/ (accessed March 1, 2011).

15 Kamal Aljafari, conversation with author, January 20, 2011.

16 Kamal Aljafari, interview conducted by Nasrin Hamada, *Montreal Serai*, 2010. http://montrealserai.com/2010/09/28/this-place-they-dried-from-the-sea-an-interview-with-kamal-aljafari/ (accessed March 1, 2011).

17 The cinematic image is considered akin to the photographic image. See Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 14. ". . . the Photograph represents that very subtle moment when, to tell the truth, I am neither subject nor object but a subject who feels he is becoming an object: I then experience a micro-version of death (of parenthesis): I am truly becoming a specter."

18 Kamal Aljafari, conversation with author, January 20, 2011.

19 Edward Saïd, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 141–147.

20 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and The Interpretation of Culture.* Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds. (London: Macmillan, 1988), 271–313.

21 "Foreclosed" here refers to the use of the psychoanalytic term *foreclosure* in postcolonial theory, which highlights the term's ethical underpinnings. "I shall docket the encrypting of the name of the 'native informant' as the name of Man—a name that carries the inaugurating affect of being human . . . I think of the 'native informant' as a name for that mark of expulsion from the name of Man—a mark crossing out the impossibility of the ethical relation." Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 5–6.

Abstract Patterns, Material Conditions

Gaia Tedone

In the 1987 film *Wall Street* directed by Oliver Stone, the character Gordon Gekko, played by Michael Douglas, delivers a now-famous speech to a group of shareholders. In the speech, he enthusiastically promotes greed, extolling it as a kind of virtue, and describes it as "the essence of the evolutionary spirit" and as what "has marked the upward surge of mankind."[1] In the 2010 sequel, *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps*, a new Gordon Gekko, seemingly reformed after having served prison time for insider trading, shares a rather different opinion on the subject, which sheds light on the events leading up to the 2008 financial crisis:

> Someone reminded me the other evening that I once said, "greed is good." Now it seems it's legal. But, folks, it's greed that makes my bartender buy three houses he can't afford with no money down. And it's greed that makes your parents refinance their $200,000 house for $250,000. Now they take that extra $50,000 and go down to the mall so they can buy a new plasma TV, cell phones, computers, and a SUV. And, hey, why not a second home while we are at it, cause, gee whiz, we all know the prices of houses in America always go up, right? And it's greed that makes the government of this country cut interest rates down to one percent after 9/11 so we can all go

> shopping again. They got all these fancy names for trillions of dollars for credit, CMO, CDO, SIVs, ABSs. You know, I honestly think there are only 75 people in the world who know what they are.[2]

Two films and one economic crisis later, the Machiavellian speeches of Gordon Gekko and his mercurial behaviors crystallize the image of Wall Street as the epicenter of capitalism's most effective, yet fictitious narratives. These narratives, ranging from the celebration of personal gain and endless accumulation of capital to the understanding of economic crisis as the responsibility of a single company or resulting from one man's misdeeds, encapsulate a number of the false assumptions upon which free market ideology and the financialization of neoliberal capitalism have built their own myth.

Foreclosed: Between Crisis and Possibility investigates the ways in which artistic practices examine or challenge these assumptions by exposing the abstract patterns and material conditions that inform the neoliberal myth. According to geographer David Harvey, neoliberalism, a theory of political economic practices characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade, has become hegemonic as a mode of discourse and has had pervasive effects on the ways in which people interpret, live in, and understand the world.[3] Oliver Stone's antihero offers some useful insights that provide a preliminary road map to a number of the narratives explored by the artists in the exhibition.

The first narrative revolves around the role of information as one of the most valuable commodities. The recent crash of the real estate market and the current wave of foreclosures in the United States have revealed the structural inefficacy of the economic system, in particular, its failure to provide reliable and decipherable information. The work of Claude Closky makes visible the contradictory patterns and distortions of economic data within the system by providing an abstract representation of its mechanisms. Closky's distinct aesthetic language

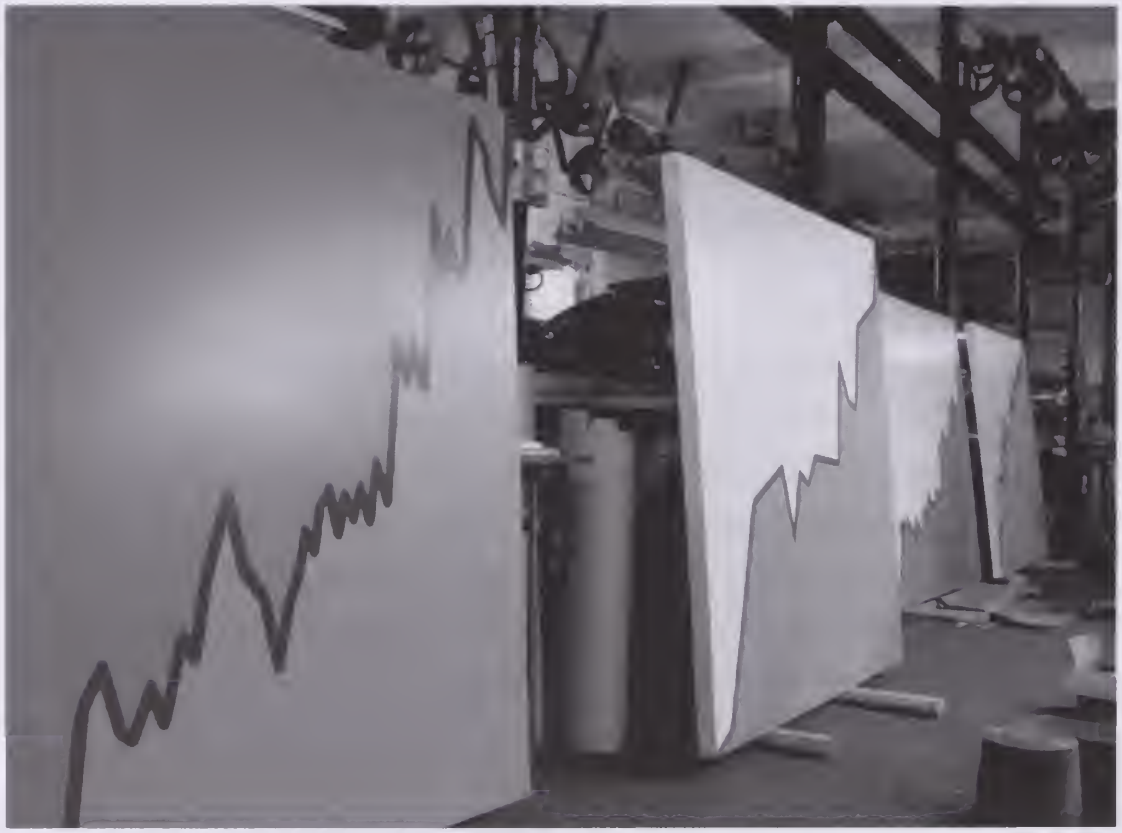
rearticulates the visibility and access to this information and turns it into pure representation. Another important narrative concerns the elusive character of financial capital whose immaterial modes of circulation give rise to the false sense of living in a world somehow beyond material labor. By looking back at and to the sea as a primary site of trade and exchange that is often forgotten within the dominant narrative of the global economy, Allan Sekula challenges this false consciousness. Finally, there is the narrative concerning the crisis itself and the relation between greed and time. Against the inexorable movement of time, greed feeds the unstable acceleration of financial speculation that often leads to ruptures and breaks within the capitalist system. David Shrigley's work unmasks the dual and paralyzing rhetoric of crisis by using humor as a subversive strategy. All of the narratives explored expose what is made invisible by the neoliberal myth and reinscribe the abstract patterns and material conditions upon which this ideology is constructed.

Abstract Patterns

> My work is about communication. How we create and read signs. How we organize them to make sense. Art is not about assimilation. . . . On the contrary, it is about distance. Making a piece can literally be offering a "point of view."[4]

Claude Closky's approach to art production is often an exercise in distancing and abstraction. Measurements and statistics help inform his creative process as well as the formal and conceptual structure of the work. His use of pie charts,[5] histograms, and graphs highlight how the visual landscape of consumer culture is shaped by a specific aesthetic that quantifies and measures every form of one's life experience. Closky's work is feverish; it simultaneously occupies different times and spaces and manifests itself across a wide range of media, from highly

Allan Sekula and Noël Burch, still from *The Forgotten Space*, 2010. Essay film/feature documentary, color, sound; 112 min. Produced by DocEye Film, Amsterdam, in coproduction with WildArt Film, Vienna. Courtesy DocEye Film, Amsterdam



Claude Closky, *Untitled (MS MI-26-10-99-09-03-00), Untitled (GASI MI-26-01-03-18-02-03), Untitled (FIA MI-14-01-98 06-04-98), Untitled (AGL MI-20-09-01-30-04-02)*, 2003 (installation view, Claude Closky Studio) Acrylic on canvas, each 71 x 71 in (180 x 180 cm) Photograph © Joséphine de Bère, courtesy the artist

material paintings to the virtual world of interactive blogs and websites. Within the same work, multiple layers of information coexist, and their organization triggers an investigative process that has a clear beginning and an unpredictable end. What one sees at first in Closky's art is only the tip of the iceberg—what appears flat is eventually revealed to have a vast and intricate nature. The complex relationship between information and meaning in Closky's work is investigated through the exposure and visualization of systems and modes of communication. Consisting of industrially produced wallpaper in an unlimited number of editions, *Untitled (NASDAQ)* (2003) plays with the endless flow of data generated by the stock market. When looking at the piece, the viewer is confronted with the abstraction of a financial system that rules the world economy. By presenting in visual form the fluctuation of these figures, Closky turns the financial information into decorative patterns that reveal their interconnectedness as well as their complexity. The artist offers a representation of the stock market as a place of contradictions, where volatility is not conceived as a danger, but as an instrument to serve the speculative drive that produces fictitious wealth. By playing with the iconic stock market figures that represent monetary value, the wallpaper represents "the spirit of an era in which the omnipresence of economic criteria is generating its own aesthetic language."[6]

By freezing the flow of information the instant it is represented, Closky also illuminates the correspondence between money and time. Writers Paul Mattick and Katy Siegel offer an eloquent description of this correspondence:

> Money is a representation of time, more specifically, of the social nature of labour time. In a society in which goods are produced as commodities, for exchange against money, and in which the ability to labour itself therefore becomes a commodity, there is a tendency to measure all uses of time in money and monetary terms, and thus to make them seem interchangeable.[7]

Their argument suggests that the exchanges taking place in the financial market hide the specificity of material labor, as goods and services are reduced to money. In order to challenge this argument, Allan Sekula returns to the liquid surface of the sea.

In his photographic essay *Fish Story* (1988–1994), he reveals how capitalism's dynamics are in fact the result of forms of materiality and abstractions. "The sea is money,"[8] Sekula argues, and it is the space in which the real economy and the financial economy touch. He parallels the physicality of labor and trade with the fluidity of monetary exchange:

> What one sees in a harbor is the concrete movement of goods. This movement can be explained in its totality only through recourse of abstraction. Marx tells us this, even if no one is listening anymore. If the stock market is the site in which the abstract character of money rules, the harbor is the site in which material goods appear in bulk, in the very flux of exchange.[9]

Sekula's examination of the relationship between geography and money begins with an earlier project and book entitled *Geography Lessons: Canadian Notes* (1986). In this work, the artist focuses on the relationship between images of a landscape altered by mining, the architecture of banks, and the iconography of Canadian money to make visible how "the mythologies we each build of national identity, labour [*sic*], wealth and power are infused—if not completely determined—by the images we attach to representations."[10] Following this impulse to uncover the abstract patterns and material conditions of advanced capitalism, the artist shifts his focus to the maritime world in *The Forgotten Space* (2010), an essay film he codirected with Noël Burch. This film shows how the networks of exchange between producing and consuming countries are based upon the exploitation of inexpensive labor and are made possible through the global movements of ships—the floating warehouses of our time.

Closky and Sekula employ two distinct strategies to expose the distortions produced by the standardization of values in the form of monetary exchange. While Closky borrows the quantitative forms and symbols of the marketing and media industries to represent the distortions of a system based upon abstract information, Sekula exposes how excessive abstraction reinforces the erroneous belief that global exchange occurs only high in the sky or in a virtual dimension, via the internet and email.

Material Conditions

A symmetrical stack of virtually identical, colorful container boxes forms a platform in front of the vast ocean. In their visual anonymity, each filled with several tons of unidentified contents, they represent the physical units of international trade.

This evocative image from *The Forgotten Space* (2010) captures the suspended condition of the maritime world, a space described in the film as "out of sight, out of mind." The film excavates the disorientation, violence, and alienation that contemporary capitalism produces as it binds the world together through trade. Sekula and Burch follow the containers and their hidden cargo as they are transported from the open sea to centers of commerce through the movement of the ships, river barges, trains, and trucks that physically connect the abstract networks of the global economy. The living and working conditions of the people sustaining the incessant activity in the port cities are explored in the micro-narratives that are spliced throughout the film. Like the photographic essay *Fish Story* (1988–1994), the film is constructed in different chapters, each of which focuses on the everyday life of the people living in different harbors across the globe, from Bilbao and Rotterdam to Los Angeles and Hong Kong. As the narrative unfolds, it challenges the assumption produced by neoliberal ideology that material labor is no longer a driving force behind the global economy of the twenty-first century. Sekula explains his position as follows:

This page: Allan Sekula and Noël Burch, stills from *The Forgotten Space*, 2010. Essay film/feature documentary, color, sound, 112 min. Produced by DocEye Film, Amsterdam, in coproduction with WildArt Film, Vienna. Courtesy DocEye Film, Amsterdam

> My argument here runs against the commonly held view that the computer and telecommunications are the sole engines of the third industrial revolution. In effect, I am arguing for the continued importance of maritime space in order to counter the exaggerated importance attached to that largely metaphysical construct, "cyberspace," and the corollary myth of "instantaneous" contact between distant spaces.[11]

Sekula's argument confronts a series of misconceptions concerning time and space generated by our culture's lost sense of materiality. In the area surrounding Los Angeles's harbor, Sekula and Burch interview a driver who is moving cargo containers with a truck. The camera's focus shifts from a rearview mirror pointing to the highway to a window opening onto the harbor and then back to the driver's face. With one hand comfortably on the steering wheel, the driver talks about the hours he works and his own perception of time. Despite his passion for driving, he describes how stressful and frustrating it is to sit in traffic for hours, as the delay causes time and money to be wasted.

The Forgotten Space is a visual journey that illustrates how the physical distance between spaces cannot always be instantaneously overtaken. In a world in which not everything can simply be automated, the acceleration that capitalism produces does not always correspond with the pace of hard facts. The rapid shift in time-space relationships caused by the intensification and expansion of financial transactions contributes to the formation of speculative bubbles and cyclical crises. The management and manipulation of these crises, according to David Harvey, is a fundamental feature of neoliberalism's dynamic, which has resulted in the uneven redistribution of wealth across the globe. The economic growth that capitalism generates in order to survive is ultimately not a sustainable option. As Sekula and Burch state at the end of the film, "More and more is not the answer."

Between Crisis and Possibility

David Shrigley's *It's All Going Very . . .* (2010) captures the sense of volatility that characterizes the current political and economic climate. The work plays with the fluctuating notion of time, as well as with reverse meanings. The handmade sign, originally produced for the artist's solo exhibition at Anton Kern Gallery last autumn, was hung outside the gallery's main entrance, above normal eye level, so that it could be easily missed. In its clumsiness, it proved both timely and humorous. As in many of Shrigley's works, the immediacy of the message and the form it takes not only trigger therapeutic laughter but also invite a quiet moment of reflection. While the former is generally achieved through the use of subtle and dark humor, the latter entails a confrontation with, and subsequent acknowledgment of, a straightforward, yet deeply uncomfortable, narrative. The exposed narrative generally discloses reflections about the banality of everyday life and the fear of death, as well as the dynamics behind power relations and what may be described as ideological nonsense. *It's All Going Very . . .* suggests the conflicting reactions that a moment of rupture can generate, mirroring the simultaneous optimistic and pessimistic nature of narratives of crises. It also offers a double reading of the same event, questioning its effective meaning and repercussion, as each side of the sign contradicts the other. The work's original exposition site seems to appropriately locate this message within a specific place in time—in the heart of New York's economic life, in a city haunted by the foreclosure crisis. Whether or not the openness of Shrigley's work invites multiple readings and interpretations, it is within the context of *Foreclosed* that the piece seems to comment on the contradictory nature of crisis narratives. As Harvey suggests, economic crises might be seen as opportunities, but only for those few people who are able to exploit them for their own advantage in order to pursue further capital accumulation.

Shrigley's use of opposition and duality as strategic devices parallels the contradictory impulses of neoliberalism, both as an economic reality and as an ideological construct. With a shift in gaze, the sign can be flipped and a different narrative becomes visible. The sudden change of significance within Shrigley's work also echoes the role performed by the media in altering public opinions and reinforcing the paralyzing rhetoric of crisis.

Within the framework of the exhibition, the word *foreclosure* operates in a similar fashion to Shrigley's sign, positioned between crisis and possibility. The definition of *foreclosure* that comes to mind as a result of the recent burst of the housing bubble in the United States is flipped to expose other meanings of the word, including disavowal, psychic break, refusal, and expulsion of meaning. These other meanings invite reflection on the narrative of the foreclosure crisis itself, a narrative that refuses to face the structural failures of the economic system in order to preserve the neoliberal myth of ever-increasing prosperity. The faulty algorithms of financial capitalism have produced a crisis that equally targets the personal and the systemic, offering a concrete example of the impact of uneven international networks on specific local realities. *Foreclosed: Between Crisis and Possibility* attempts to explore this intersection by looking at the housing crisis as both symbol and symptom of a larger breakdown. In order to fulfill this ambitious task, the exhibition aims to unmask some of the founding assumptions of the neoliberal myth, which like every myth, is neither a lie nor a confession, but simply a distortion.[12]

TIME TO REFLECT

David Shrigley, *Time to Reflect*, 1999. Ink on paper, 12 x 8 1/4 in. (30 x 21 cm), excerpt from *The Beast is Near* (London: Redstone Press, 1999). Courtesy the artist and Anton Kern Gallery, New York.

1 "Gordon Gekko's Speech About Greed Being Good," *Wall Street*, DVD, directed by Oliver Stone (1987; Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox, 2010).

2 "Gordon Gekko's Speech About Greed Being Legal," *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps*, DVD, directed by Oliver Stone (Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox, 2010).

3 David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2–3.

4 Montse Badia and Andreas M. Kaufmann, *Paisatges Mediàtics* (Barcelona: Editions Fundació "la Caixa," 2004), 41.

5 For Closky's use of pie charts, please refer to the series of works entitled *sans titre* (2005), acrylic on canvas, Ø 210 cm, Galerie Edward Mitterrand, Geneva.

6 Franziska Nori, *Arte, Prezzo e Valore: Arte Contemporanea e Mercato=Art, Price and Value: Contemporary Art and the Market*, (Cinisello Balsamo, Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2008), 90.

7 Paul Mattick and Katy Siegel, "Money" in *Claude Closky: Exposition* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2006), 58.

8 Allan Sekula, *Fish Story* (Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, 2002), 108.

9 Ibid., 12.

10 Gary Dufour, *Geography Lesson: Canadian Notes* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 72.

11 Sekula, 50.

12 Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" in *Mythologies* (New York: Noonday Press, 1972), 129.

Works/ Biogra- phies

Kamal Aljafari

Port of Memory,
2009
16mm film transferred to DVD; 63 minutes, looped
Courtesy the artist

In Praise of Bystanders,
2011–
Installation: one photograph and mixed media, including approximately 5,000 3 x 5 in. (7.6 x 12.7 cm) cards with printed photographic images
Courtesy the artist

Yto Barrada

The Smuggler Tangier,
2006
Video, silent; 11 minutes
Courtesy Galerie Sfeir-Semler, Beirut

Terrain vague (Vacant lot),
2001
Color photograph, 23 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. (60 x 60 cm) Private Collection, New York

Tania Bruguera

Immigrant Movement International (IMI),
2011–
Installation: vinyl text, red telephone with speed-dial connection to IMI headquarters in Queens, registration forms
Courtesy Studio Bruguera

Immigrant Movement International (IMI),
2011–
Performance: June 7, 2011, The Kitchen Auditorium
Courtesy Studio Bruguera

Claude Closky

Untitled (NASDAQ),
2003
Wallpaper, silkscreen printing
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

Harun Farocki

Comparison via a Third,
2007
16mm double projection; 24 minutes, looped
Courtesy Greene Naftali Gallery, New York

Allan Sekula

True Cross
(1994) Chapter 6 from
Fish Story
(1988–1994)
Thirteen photographs and four text panels: three dye destruction prints, each 24-3/4 x 31-1/4 x 1-3/4 in. (62.8 x 79.3 x 4.4 cm); five diptychs, black-and-white photographic prints mounted on alu-dibond, each 24-3/4 x 57-1/4 x 1-3/4 in. (62.8 x 145 x 4.4 cm); four text panels, each 40 x 28 x 1/2 in. (100 x 71.1 x 1.2 cm)
Courtesy the artist and Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica

David Shrigley

It's All Going Very . . .,
2010
Plexiglass and enamel paint, 36 x 24 x 1/4 in. (91.4 x 60.9 x 6.3 cm)
Courtesy Anton Kern Gallery, New York

Kamal Aljafari
(Artist + Respondent)

Kamal Aljafari is a Palestinian filmmaker and visual artist and a graduate of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. His films include *The Roof* (2006), *Balconies* (2007), and *Port of Memory* (2009), the latter of which received the Prix Louis Marcorelles given by CulturesFrance of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has been screened at The Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Tate Modern in London, in addition to other film festivals. He was a featured artist at the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar (2009). From 2009 to 2010, Aljafari was the Benjamin White Whitney Scholar at Harvard University's Radcliffe Institute.

Yto Barrada
(Artist + Respondent)

Yto Barrada grew up between Paris and Tangier, Morocco. She studied history and political science at the Sorbonne and photography at the International Center of Photography in New York. Recent exhibitions include the Fowler Museum in Los Angeles, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Jeu de Paume in Paris. Since 2006, Barrada has been the director and cofounder of the Cinémathèque de Tanger in Morocco. Her 2011 exhibitions—of photography, film, publications, prints, and sculptures—include her artist-of-the-year show at the Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin, and the Venice Biennale.

Tania Bruguera
(Artist + Respondent)

Born in Havana in 1968, Tania Bruguera is a leading political and performance artist. Her work investigates the ways in which art can be applied to everyday political life by focusing on the transformation of the condition of "viewer" into one of "citizen." Bruguera uses the terms *Arte de Conducta* (conduct/behavior art) and *Arte Útil* (useful art) to define her practice. Her works appropriate resources of power to create political situations through art.

Jennifer Burris (Curator)

Jennifer Burris was born in Hawai'i in 1982. She holds a BA in Comparative Literature from Princeton University and a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, King's College. Her graduate studies were fully funded by the King's College Studentship, the Overseas Research Studentship, and the Allen, Meek, and Read Award. Her recent publications include articles in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* and *Studies in French Cinema*.

Claude Closky (Artist)

Born in Paris in 1963, Claude Closky is an artist who rubs shoulders with immateriality. Among the materials he uses, language seems to be the most direct instrument of appropriation. But this does not make his work any less concerned with its material specificity, its degree of visibility, with how it occupies the space. Closky takes hold of the most ordinary modes of everyday communication and lays open its forms by discreetly rearticulating it, or by redistributing visibility or words. He plays with the day-to-day rules, codes, and hierarchies that punctuate our existence. You think you are slipping into automatic actions, but in fact you have entered a maze. The result can be surprising, the disappointment is calculated, and a persistent throbbing remains. Closky's work can be seen at: http://ww.closky.info/ or at http://www.closky.info/

Harun Farocki (Artist)

Harun Farocki was born in 1944 in what is now called the Czech Republic. He attended the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie, a film school in Berlin, from 1966 to 1968 and was both editor and writer for the magazine *Filmkritik* in Munich from 1974 to 1984. Since 2004, he has held the position of visiting professor at the Akademie der Bildende Künste Wien in Vienna. Farocki has made close to ninety films, including feature films and documentaries, which

have been shown in numerous group and solo exhibitions, including *documenta 12* in Kassel, MUMOK in Vienna, Museum Ludwig in Cologne, Raven Row in London, and Kunsthaus Bregenz.

Harriet Fraad (Respondent)

Harriet Fraad is a practicing psychotherapist and hypnotherapist based in New York City. She is a founding member of the feminist movement and the journal *Rethinking Marxism (RM)*. For forty years, Dr. Fraad has been a radical committed to transforming personal and political life in the United States. She writes for *Tikkun Magazine*, *RM*, and *The Journal of Psychohistory*, among others. In 1994, she coauthored *Bringing It All Back Home: Class, Gender, and Power in the Modern Household Today* with Stephen Resnick and Rick Wolff. This book was recently republished under the title *Class Struggle on the Home Front: Work, Conflict, and Exploitation in the Household* (2009).

Ingrid Gould Ellen (Respondent)

Ingrid Gould Ellen is Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy at New York University's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and Codirector of the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy. She joined the Wagner faculty in the fall of 1997 and presently teaches courses in microeconomics, urban economics, and urban policy. Professor Ellen's research interests center on urban social and economic policy. She is the author of *Sharing America's Neighborhoods: The Prospects for Stable Racial Integration* (2000). She recently received a MacArthur Foundation grant to study the impact of foreclosures and housing instability on children in the United States.

David Harvey (Respondent)

David Harvey is Distinguished Professor at the City University of New York Graduate Center and director

of The Center for Place, Culture, and Politics. He is the author of numerous books, which include *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005), *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (2006), *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom* (2009), and *The Enigma of Capital* (2010). Harvey has taught Karl Marx's *Capital* for nearly forty years.

Peter Marcuse (Respondent)

Peter Marcuse, an urban planner and a lawyer, is Professor Emeritus of Urban Planning at Columbia University in New York City. He has a JD from Yale Law School and a Ph.D. in planning from the University of California at Berkeley. His most recent books, which he coedited with Ronald van Kempen, include: *Globalizing Cities: A New Spatial Order?* (1999), *Of States and Cities: The Partitioning of Urban Space* (2002), and *Searching for the Just City* (2009). Marcuse's current projects include a historically grounded political history of urban planning, the formulation of a theory of critical planning, including the attempt to make critical urban theory useful to the U.S. Right to the City Alliance, and an analysis and proposals to deal with the sub-prime mortgage foreclosure crisis in the United States.

Sofía Olascoaga (Curator)

Born in Mexico City in 1980, Sofía Olascoaga works at the intersection of art and education. Through artistic practice and curatorial initiatives, she seeks to activate spaces for critical thinking and to foster collective action. Olascoaga received her BFA from La Esmeralda National School of Fine Arts in Mexico City and was Director of Education and Public Programs at Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil in Mexico City from 2007 to 2010. She is a recipient of the FONCA Grant for Young Artists.

Damon Rich (Respondent)

Damon Rich is an urban designer and artist whose work encompasses design, policy, and public events. His exhibitions use video, sculpture, graphics, and photography to investigate the political economy of the built environment. His work has been exhibited internationally at venues including the Storefront for Art and Architecture and the SculptureCenter in New York City, the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst in Leipzig, the Venice Architecture Biennale, and the Netherlands Architecture Institute in Rotterdam. In 1997, Rich founded the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people understand and change the places in which they live.

Maggie Russell-Ciardi (Respondent)

Maggie Russell-Ciardi is Executive Director of Tenants & Neighbors, New York. She was previously Education Director at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, where she developed a wide range of programs to foster dialogue about social issues, such as housing and immigration. Her past work experience includes serving as the Strengthening Neighborhood Assets Program Coordinator at Citizens Committee for New York City, managing a $1.1 million program of grants, training, and technical assistance for organizations working to promote positive intergroup relations in communities with new immigrant residents. She has also led a city-wide education program on immigrant rights at the Center for Immigrants Rights and organized migrant farm workers with the Farm Labor Organizing Committee. Russell-Ciardi has a BA in Spanish and Labor and Trade Union Studies from Oberlin College and an MA in Latin American Studies from New York University.

Allan Sekula
(Artist + Respondent)

Born in Pennsylvania in 1951, Allan Sekula is an artist, writer, and photo theoretician based in Los Angeles, where he teaches at the California Institute of the Arts. His work has been shown in solo exhibitions at the Folkwang Museum in Essen, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the University Art Museum at Berkeley, Witte de With in Rotterdam, and the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. Recent solo exhibitions include *Ship of fools: Extra Muros: Allan Sekula* (2010) at MuHKA in Antwerp and *Polonia and Other Fables* (2010) at the Ludwig Muzeum in Budapest. He is the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the Getty Research Institute, among others. In 2010, he was awarded the Special Jury Prize at the Orizzonti Competition in Venice for his film *The Forgotten Space* (2010), which he codirected with Noël Burch.

Sadia Shirazi
(Curator)

Sadia Shirazi is an architect and curator whose work focuses on the intersection of art, architecture, and urbanism. She holds a MArch degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a BA from the University of Chicago. Shirazi was Editor of *Thresholds 33*, a peer-reviewed journal of architecture, art, and media culture. Her design and theoretical work has been published in various magazines and journals. Her research has been supported by the Architecture League of New York, the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, and the MIT Council of the Arts.

David Shrigley
(Artist)

In 1968, David Shrigley was born in Macclesfield, England. He studied Fine Art at Glasgow School of Art from 1988 to 1991. Shrigley's work encompasses drawing, sculpture, photography, animation, and music. Recent exhibitions include Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow,

Anton Kern Gallery in New York, Galleri Nicolai Wallner in Copenhagen, and Bergen Konsthall. His drawings have appeared in newspapers and magazines, including Japanese *Esquire*, *Donna*, *Arena*, *The Guardian*, *Le Monde*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, and the *New York Times*.

Radhika Subramaniam (Respondent)

Radhika Subramaniam is a curator, writer, and editor based in New York City. She is presently Director and Chief Curator of the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center at Parsons The New School for Design, where she is also Assistant Professor of Art and Design History and Theory. Her recent projects include *What Comes After: Cities, Art, and Recovery* (2006) at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, a major two-year initiative focused on art and culture in the aftermath of catastrophe; *Abecedarium for Our Times* (2008) at apexart; and *Rods and Cones: Seeing from the Back of One's Head* (2008) at the South Asian Women's Creative Collective.

Gaia Tedone (Curator)

Born in Italy in 1982, Gaia Tedone moved to London in 2006 to assist Tate Modern's curatorial department for the exhibitions *Pierre Huyghe: Celebration Park* (2006) and *Fischli & Weiss: Flowers and Questions* (2007). In 2008, she gradated from the MFA program in Curating at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and cofounded the curatorial collective IM Projects. As part of this group, she edited the book *A Fine Red Line (A Curatorial Miscellany)* (2008). From 2008 to 2010, she was Assistant Curator for the David Roberts Art Foundation in London. She has curated a number of independent projects, including the screening program *Every Story is a Travel Story* (2008) at the Candid Arts Trust in London, as well as the exhibition *Nervous System* (2009) at the James Taylor Gallery in London.

Foreclosed: Between Crisis and Possibility would not have been possible without the generous contributions and support of many friends, colleagues, and advisors. We extend our deepest thanks and gratitude to Ron Clark, director of the Whitney Independent Study Program, Sarah Lookofsky, Instructor for Curatorial Studies, and Okwui Enwezor, Cassullo Fellow during the 2010–2011 academic year. Their support, guidance, advocacy, patience, and good humor enriched and made possible every aspect of this project. We have benefited greatly from working with the ISP's program assistant, Amanda Parmer, whose insights and support were invaluable. We would also like to thank all of our colleagues in the Independent Study Program for their critical feedback and support. The ongoing discussions that took place at the ISP during the year have greatly informed this curatorial project.

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Last, but certainly not least, we convey our deepest appreciation to the artists and respondents participating in this exhibition. Your work and dedication inspire us, and we thank you for your enthusiasm, patience, and ideas throughout this project.

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