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ACCESS INEQUALITIES IN THE ARTISTIC LABOUR MARKET IN THE UK: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PRECARIOUSNESS, ENTREPRENEURIALISM AND VOLUNTARISM

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Access Inequalities in the Artistic Labour Market in the UK:

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Precariousness, Entrepreneurialism and Voluntarism

Abstract

This paper investigates the roles played by social enterprise and social activism in mitigating access inequalities in the artistic labour market in the UK. Our analysis focuses on underpaid internships as a primary form of access inequalities. By employing critical discourse analysis, this study contrasts the discourses of entrepreneurialism and voluntarism advocated by the government and social enterprises, with the counter-discourse of precarity advanced by social activists. The central argument is that precarity is not simply an innate characteristic of artistic labour, but is also a social construct and discourse which is directly linked to social class and the experience of less privileged creative workers.

1. Introduction

This paper investigates the role of social enterprise and social activism in the UK as responses to precarity in the artistic labour market since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008. It focuses on the precarity of creative work, as creative employment is "uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker" (Kalleberg, 2008:2). This refers to "all forms of insecure, contingent, flexible work –from illegalised, casualised and temporary employment, to homeworking, piecework and freelancing" (Gill & Pratt, 2008:3). Scrutinising the artistic labour market is important because it represents an exemplar social space in which to study flexible employment in the era of the global financial crisis, revealing the ways in which creative workers react to austerity by generating jobs through entrepreneurship, and new forms of social organisation that respond to precarity (Morgan et al., 2013; Throsby, 2012).

This research aims to contribute to the literature on the precariousness of artistic labour (Menger, 2014; McRobbie, 2016) by determining the conditions under which social enterprises are presented as a solution to precarity. Previous research has described social enterprises as hybrid organisations that balance financial sustainability with an embedded social purpose, including not-for-profit, charity and business organisations operating in public welfare fields (Doherty et al., 2014; Teasdale, 2011). Since the emergence of the creative industries framework in 1997 in the UK, social entrepreneurship has been promoted by government, initially by the New Labour (1997-2010) as a trigger for socio-economic development, and then by the Conservative Coalition governments (2010-2017) in terms of voluntarism and entrepreneurship.

The role of social enterprise is contested, especially in terms of tackling inequalities, as critical voices claim that they often do 'too little, too late', describing in particular government-driven initiatives that support entrepreneurship (McRobbie, 2011; 2016). In contrast, social activism, a voice reinforced during the recent financial crisis, exposes the impact of social organisations on firms to "make decisions in new ways, factoring in variables that once could be ignored" by applying activist pressure (Spar & La Mure, 2003:97). Activism as a form of resistance to inequalities provides "a fertile ground for distributed agency because the heterogeneous actors within a social movement are collectively interested in addressing some social problem" (Akemu et al., 2016:871). While existing research connects social activism with the creation of social enterprises, this paper questions 'how social enterprises and social activists respond to precariousness in the artistic labour market'.

Critical discourse analysis is employed as a method of analysing the discourses associated with social enterprise (entrepreneurship and voluntarism) and social activism (precariousness), as responses to unemployment and inequality in the artistic labour market (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2010; Grand & Hardy, 2004). When the discourses associated with social enterprise and social activism are placed in chronological order, three overlapping periods can be identified. In the first period (1997-2010), the meaning of social enterprise has been dominated by the discourse of entrepreneurship, as cultural policies appropriated social enterprise instrumentally as a vehicle for economic growth, employment, community enhancement and urban regeneration (Garnham, 2005; Gray, 2007; Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015). However, this version of social enterprise was instigated by the government in a top-down perspective which increased precariousness especially during the financial crisis (McRobbie, 2011; 2016; McQuilten & White, 2016). In the second period (2008-2017), social activists have developed the discourse of precariousness during the financial crisis. They were the first to expose and criticise access inequalities that exist in the artistic labour market, especially for young professionals coming from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds (McRobbie, 2016; O'Brien & Oakley, 2015). In the third period (2010-2017), social enterprises have internalised the discourse of voluntarism which was initiated in 2010 by the newly elected Coalition government, giving rise to arts employment charities drawing on support from various stakeholders, such as artists, entrepreneurs, policy-makers and philanthropists.

This paper contrasts discourses of precarity as expressed by social activists with voluntarism and entrepreneurialism as developed by the government and social enterprises. More specifically, social activists interpret voluntarism and entrepreneurialism as sources of precarity, criticising social enterprise as a means of reducing unemployment. Although social enterprises mitigate the conditions of precariousness, they cannot fully tackle inequalities or control the artistic labour market, as they lack the authority to enforce policies and rules. Arts employment charities emerged within a new political climate, in which the third sector took the concerns of activists into account in a neoliberal way. This paper introduces a conceptual framework which supports the view that new ways of collective organising initiated by social activists, in tandem with an enhanced role for government in regulating the artistic labour market, can ultimately tackle access inequalities. The central argument of this paper is that precarity is not simply an innate characteristic of artistic labour (Menger, 2014), but is also a social construct and discourse which is directly linked to social class and the experience of less privileged creative workers.

2. Precariousness in the Artistic Labour Market in the UK

2.1. The discourse and policy framework of the 'creative industries'

The new era for cultural policy in the UK inaugurated in the 1980s by the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher has been largely characterised by "the shift from state to market across the whole range of public provision" (Garnham, 2005:16), which has resulted in a drastic reduction of public spending on the arts (Pooke, 2011). Within an environment of increasing privatisation of the cultural domain, the Labour government elected in 1997 created the Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS), which introduced the 'creative industries' as a policy-making framework (Garnham, 2005). The term 'creative industries', as defined by the DCMS included thirteen industries, such as the visual arts, music, fashion, architecture, advertising and sport, among others (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007).

The 'creative industries' constitute a policy framework for economic growth, urban regeneration and innovation in the arts. In the late 1990s, they represented a New Labour political discourse which contributed to the rebranding of the UK as a 'creative nation' (Dinnie, 2015). At that time, the discourse of 'Cool Britannia' symbolised a period of optimism and ubiquitous creativity, in which British cultural products gained international attention and acclaim (While, 2003). Social enterprise was the backbone of 'instrumentalism' in the creative industries, integrating entrepreneurial endeavours in the arts with public support in order to achieve economic, social and political goals (Gray 2007; Oakley, 2009a). With regard to the artistic labour market, the creative industries ensure a continuous supply of 'creative workers' which enhances the UK's international competitiveness in cultural sectors (Garnham, 2005).

The 'creative industries' was initiated as an anti-elitist discourse, with the aim of controlling the production of culture, but its implementation was largely influenced by the vested interests of political and local business elites, which invested in certain art forms (i.e. contemporary art) and artists (i.e. Young British Artists) in order to promote the image of the country abroad (Garnham, 2005; Stallabrass, 2006). This version of social enterprise aimed to support the 'individual as an enterprise', shaping new conditions for employment in the creative industries, combining the freedom and self-actualisation of the cultural entrepreneur with lucrative business (McRobbie, 2016). Nevertheless, social enterprise is regarded as a continuation of the neoliberal policies pursued by previous governments, which prioritised self-employment and entrepreneurship (Garnham, 2005; McQuilten & White, 2016).

2.2. The social construction of precariousness in the artistic labour market

Artistic labour is defined as the subset of creative work that contributes to the production and consumption of art. In visual arts, artistic labour includes the work of artists, dealers, curators, art critics, conservators and other professionals, such as accountants, art advisers and insurers who operate in the artistic field. Artistic labour takes place within the 'commercial sector', as profit-making organisations employ art professionals; the 'not-for-profit sector', as arts workers contribute to the public sector or not-for profit organisations, including museums; and the 'community sector', which is often unpaid and driven by 'cultural, political and aesthetic reasons' beyond the boundaries of established organisations (Markusen, 2006).

Precariousness in artistic labour is conceptualised as an innate characteristic of creative work (Menger, 2014), as the majority of artists are self-employed (Menger, 1999; Oakley et al., 2008). Uncertainty is an integral characteristic of artistic labour as "its end point is neither defined nor guaranteed" (Menger, 2014:3). Artistic work is essentially 'immaterial labour', and includes the production of ideas and immaterial goods, such as services, cultural products, knowledge and communication (Hardt & Negri, 2000). Self-fulfilment, the freedom to self-actualise and the experience of a bohemian lifestyle are the main drivers for the selection of arts-related professions (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006; McRobbie, 2016; Menger, 2014). Perceived benefits are gained at the expense of precariousness in terms of risk and uncertainty, which are particularly intense for young professionals or career changers (Menger, 2014; Oakley, 2009). Therefore, becoming an artist is considered an individual choice, often made by taking into account the risks associated with an unpredictable career path (Menger, 2014).

However, the precariousness of artistic work is socially constructed, and relates to the power conditions in the artistic field, which operates based on a hybrid of aesthetic and economic logics that shape the conditions of work (Bourdieu, 1993; Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007). According to Arts Council England (2004, in Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009:419), the Young British Artists, Brit Pop and Brit Fashion in the late 1990s all represented a generation of "star" and "A List" artists who are also some of the UK's "most effective entrepreneurs". This is a neoliberal approach to the artistic labour market, as commercial success is the selection mechanism that distinguishes such "A List" and "star" art professionals from those "B List" creative workers who experience precariousness (Caves, 2000; Preece & Kerrigan, 2015). Often "A List" artists are selected by powerful intermediaries, such as art dealers, curators or collectors, thus amplifying existing hierarchies in the artistic field

(Bourdieu, 1984; Stallabrass, 2006). The hierarchical structure of the artistic field, in tandem with the over-supply of arts professionals, sets the socio-economic conditions for precariousness, which are fuelled by the relatively unregulated artistic labour market, as employment rights are unprotected by professional qualifications or unions.

Precariousness co-evolves with the discourse individualisation that was inaugurated in the late 1970s as part of the global neoliberal shift (McQuilten & White, 2016). Specifically, individualisation has triggered an increase within Western societies in the provision of freedom and independence to creatives, including "women for whom work is an escape from traditional marriage and domesticity, young people from whom it is increasingly important as a mark for cultural identity, and ethnic minorities from whom it marks the dream of upward mobility and a possible escape from denigration" (McRobbie, 2016:19). Although the discourse of individualisation has empowered creatives, it has also led to the erosion of collective action (Christopherson, 2008), constructing an archetypal cultural worker who is "self-reliant, risk-bearing, non-unionised, self-exploiting, always-on flexibly employed" (De Peuter, 2014:263).

Artistic labour is often seen as a means of economic development and regeneration of urban districts and cities which accommodate the social and professional lives of creative workers in proximity to economic capital of financial centres (Currid, 2008; Florida, 2002). The geographical clustering of creative workers in cities like New York or London enables participation in the local creative scene, including both formal and informal places that facilitate cultural production and consumption (Currid, 2008). While the existence of formal places, such as galleries, museums and auction houses, is of paramount importance in terms of framing, selling and evaluating art, informal places, such as cafes, bars and clubs, provide the social fabric in which creative workers, and often their audiences, mingle and interact (Currid, 2008). For instance, the economic recession in New York in the 1970s forced artists to cluster in cheap neighbourhoods, such as SoHo and later the Bowery and the East Village, where they fostered a bohemian lifestyle that came to define the identity of those neighbourhoods and attracted audiences with an appetite to consume 'cool', as well as investors who fuelled urban regeneration (Currid, 2008). Although creative workers still congregate in cultural and economic centres such as London or New York, these cities struggle to provide affordable housing, cheap working spaces and the conditions of socialising which are vital for the formation of creative networks. The identity and economic development of these cities are interwoven with the existence of creative workers, but they have become hostile to less

privileged creative workers who need to participate in the local scene with increasing precarity (Currid, 2008).

The contribution of creative workers to urban regeneration should be critically distinguished from the self-perpetuating imagined identity of the creative class. In relation to the latter, Peck (2005:756) argues that "the rise of the creative class both glorifies and naturalises the contracted-out, 'free-agent' economy, discursively validating the liberties it generates, and the lifestyles it facilitates, for the favoured class of creatives". Therefore, artistic labour exemplifies flexible employment, but the construction of the imagined self-perpetuating identity may lead to an acceptance of precariousness as a condition of joining the creative class. More broadly, precariousness in the artistic labour market is socially constructed, as it is predominantly artists who bear the risks and costs of creative work (Caves, 2000; Menger, 2014). Artistic work can hardly be compared with the career paths of professionals, whose wages increase over time, based on their accumulation of knowledge and experience (Baumol & Bowen, 1975). A changing attitude towards funding the arts which originates in the political field therefore has an impact on the artistic labour market which intensifies precariousness, as privatisation contributes to "greater economic inequality, insecurity, and instability" (Kalleberg, 2008:9).

2.3. Social enterprise and social activism as responses to precarious work

The global financial crisis in 2008 has increased precariousness in the artistic labour market, which in turn has led to the resurgence of social organisation in the artistic field. According to McQuilten and White (2016:52), "a broad popular rejection of the excessive profiteering that signalled the global economic crisis in 2008 has led to an increase in business and community projects that prioritise community interests over commercial returns". The recent economic crisis has set a new social agenda for struggle and resistance in the artistic labour market. New forms of solidarity have emerged, because "precarious cultural workers are voicing their grievances and engaging in direct action in the context of wider social movements" (De Peuter, 2014:263). Social enterprises and activists both respond to precariousness, but an ideological contest is unavoidable, as the former are often considered to be a by-product of neoliberalism, while the latter radically reject it (Lazzarati, 2009; McRobbie, 2011). A thorough investigation into the role of social enterprise and social action is required in order to understand the forces of compliance and resistance in times of austerity and crisis.

The social enterprise is "in line with an increasing convergence of public, private and non-profit sectors", and "as a result of this convergence an increasing number of hybrid organisations have developed that bring together business methods with the aim of producing social benefit" (McQuilten & White, 2016:20). Not-for-profit organisations, charities and business organisations that operate in the public welfare field are all considered to be social enterprises (DiDomenico et al., 2009; Kanter & Purrington, 1998; McQuilten & White, 2016). However, the meaning of the term 'social enterprise' is contested, as interpretations of social activities vary across contexts (Doherty et al., 2014; Teasdale, 2011; Teasdale et al., 2013).

For instance, the meaning of social enterprise in the USA is geared towards 'enterprise', entailing "market-based approaches to income generation and social change" (Doherty et al., 2014:420). In contrast, 'social' is more prominent in Europe, as the predominant objective of social enterprise is to trigger social action (Doherty et al., 2014; Teasdale, 2011). In the UK, according to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI, 2002:13), the term 'social enterprise' refers to "a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for the purpose of the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners". The meaning of 'social enterprise' in the UK shares elements of the American and European models, as a hybrid organisation that integrates business orientation with the purpose of triggering social action (Doherty et al., 2014).

In addition, the meaning of social enterprise changes over time, in tandem with socio-economic and political conditions. In times of crisis, in particular, artists are portrayed as model entrepreneurs generating new jobs, and as a force of resistance and social action against the neoliberal transformation of the artistic field (Gill & Pratt, 2008; Throsby, 2012). Before the financial crisis in 2008, the notion of social enterprise was government-driven, aiming to provide public support for private initiatives, which resulted in an increase in precariousness, as arts professionals from less privileged backgrounds encountered greater difficulties in accessing the artistic labour market (O'Brien et al., 2016; Teasdale, 2011).

Exclusion, based on social class, race or gender, triggered the response of activists who developed the discourse of precariousness to criticise inequalities, while declaring autonomy as a way of escaping from the neoliberal domination of the artistic labour market (Degli Antoni, 2016). More specifically, the ideological position of the precarity movement subscribes to the values of autonomous Marxism, rejecting social enterprise and the associated discourse of entrepreneurship which demonstrate the vested interests of the private sector and the

government (Gill & Pratt, 2008). Although the term 'precarity', used to describe the condition of uncertain labour, existed since the 1980s (e.g. Menger, 1983), its use as a term to describe the activities of social movements began in Western Europe in the early 2000s[1].

The precarity movement manifests autonomy in terms of creating 'art for art's sake', taking the form of political action to criticise the 'homogenisation of the labour process', by refusing the notion of 'labour', which reproduces the power structures of the artistic field and the divisions of society, in terms of gender, race and class (Hardt & Negri, 2000). According to this view, artistic practice is an 'occupation' instead of 'labour', drifting away from the established market which internalises discourses of neoliberal governmentality (Gill & Pratt, 2008). Social activists represent a 'new precariat' which has emerged as a result of the recent economic crisis, bringing "together the meanings of precariousness and proletariat to signify both an experience of exploitation and a (potential) new political subjectivity" (Gill & Pratt, 2008:3).

In 2010, David Cameron, the Prime Minister of the Coalition government, responded to the challenges of the financial crisis by introducing the idea of the 'Big Society' which integrated voluntarism and hierarchies (Dowling & Harvie, 2014). According to Teasdale (2011:100), "the policy enthusiasm for social enterprise has outlasted New Labour", as the First Cameron administration (May 2010-May 2015) "promised to support social enterprises to deliver public services in the era of the Big Society, although they have deliberately avoided saying what they mean by social enterprise". However, the political discourse of the 'Big Society' internalised the conditions of the financial crisis, and for culture, this meant greater austerity, lower public spending on the arts and more unpaid labour in the form of 'voluntarism' in the artistic labour market (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Dowling & Harvie, 2014; Teasdale et al., 2013).

According to Shade and Jacobson (2015:190), "precarious youth employment can be, in part, attributed to unpaid internships. In order to secure entry into the paid labour force by gaining work experience, many young people have accepted unpaid internships during their undergraduate and postgraduate years". Underpaid work is increasingly accepted by young professionals, in order to 'get their foot in the door' of an art organisation. The 'social capital thesis' suggests that young professionals are prepared to work for free in order to build a

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[1] "The notion of precarity has been at the centre of a long season of protests, actions, and discussions, including events such as EuroMayDay 2004 (Milan and Barcelona) and 2005 (in seventeen European cities), Precarity Ping Pong (London, October 2004), the International Meeting of the Precariat (Berlin, January 2005), and Precair Forum (Amsterdam, February 2005)" (Neilson & Rossiter, 2005, online).

network and secure future employment (Siebert & Wilson, 2013). Unpaid or underpaid work reproduces class inequalities, as those who can afford it can work in metropolitan centres like London and gain access to better career opportunities. Underpaid internships are considered as 'luxury' and known as the 'third degree', as they follow postgraduate education; graduates are usually only able to afford them with family help (Shade & Jacobsen, 2015).

Social activists highlight the impact of class inequalities on access to the artistic labour market, triggering "new forms of political struggle and solidarity that reach beyond the traditional models of the political party or trade union" (Gill & Pratt, 2008:3). These autonomous communities have formed social organisations, such as the UK-based Precarious Workers Brigade, which aims to protect the interests of the precariat. Unlike social enterprises, which are similar to business organisations, these social organisations derive from "self-organized associations" that "instil in their members, habits of cooperation and allow members to reach common goals more effectively" (Degli Antoni, 2016:19).

During this period, new forms of social enterprises have also emerged, such as arts employment charities (i.e. The Creative Society, Creative Access), sharing similar concerns with activists, while supporting employment and entrepreneurship in the artistic labour market. This later version of social enterprise which emerged after the financial crisis mitigates the conditions of precariousness by including diverse shareholders, such as artists, entrepreneurs, policy-makers, philanthropists and firms in the process of facilitating access to the artistic labour market. However, when addressing the ways in which social enterprises mitigate precariousness in the artistic labour market, three issues remain unresolved. Firstly, more scrutiny is required into the ways in which new forms of solidarity which promote autonomy have influenced the emergence of social organisations that advocate institutional change through organised practices (Figure 1). Akemu et al. (2016) have shown how social movement activism has led to social entrepreneurship in terms of creating technological products (e.g. Fairphone) through conflict-free trading and the use of environmentally friendly materials. However, this paper presents a case in which the discourse of precariousness instigated by social activists contrasts with the discourse of voluntarism supported by social enterprise and the government.

Insert Figure 1 Here

Secondly, the role of social enterprise in the artistic labour market is ambivalent. On the one hand, social enterprise is perceived as coordinating social action in order to achieve social

change (Degli Antoni, 2016). On the other hand, social enterprise is considered to be a political manoeuvre designed to avoid the tackling of inequalities, as it is "too bland and ridden with clichés about 'making a difference' or 'putting something back'" (McRobbie, 2011:33). There is a need to demystify the ideology of social enterprise, especially as art employment charities lack the authority to enforce the rules (e.g. the obligation of art organisations in the UK to pay the minimum wage to interns) that control the artistic labour market.

Thirdly, within an increasingly neoliberal cultural landscape, arts professionals encounter more difficulties in pursuing successful careers, despite being educated and trained to a higher level within their profession than average workers (Oakley, 2009). Under neoliberalism, it is seen to be the responsibility of art professionals to manage ambiguity within their careers by building skills which would enable them to become entrepreneurial, flexible and adaptable within the artistic labour market (Bridgstock, 2011; Morgan et al., 2013). The free market exacerbates, rather than mitigates, inequalities, as arts professionals are increasingly pressured to undertake unpaid or underpaid work which has uncertain learning outcomes in terms of building employable skills, consequently privileging those who can access opportunities in art scenes and elite networks of intermediaries (Currid, 2008; Frenette, 2013). Nevertheless, the significant role of cultural policy in mitigating the conditions of precariousness within the artistic labour market is marginalised, with regard to particular actions that could complement social enterprises.

3. Research Method

This research provides a case study of the artistic labour market in the UK since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008. The objective of this 'instrumental' case study is to investigate the role of social enterprise and social activism in tackling inequalities in the artistic labour market in a time of austerity and crisis (Abbott, 1990; Stake, 1995; Van de Ven & Huber, 1990). The context of this case study is the artistic labour market in the UK since the beginning of the creative industries framework in 1997 (Garnham, 2005). The period prior to the financial crisis (1997-2008) is considered as the historical context which is analysed in detail elsewhere (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007; Garnham, 2005; Gray 2007; Oakley, 2009a). Instead, this research focuses on the period between 2008 and 2017 in order to scrutinise the ways in which social enterprise and social activism have mitigated inequalities during the recent financial crisis.

This research concentrates on access inequalities, the most intense source of inequality in the creative economy, as 92% of creative workers come from privileged backgrounds (DCMS, 2016). This paper focuses on the experiences of young professionals and career changers, who perceive underpaid internships as their main way of entering the job market. The case of underpaid internships is important, as for some interns the benefits of gaining on-the-job experience and broadening their social network justify their decision to work for free, while, for others, unpaid work amounts to exploitation and a poor learning experience (Bridgstock & Cunningham, 2016). Scholars have raised concerns about underpaid work in the creative economy, as this practice privileges interns from higher socio-economic backgrounds who have access to "posh unpaid internships", while "lower-income students cluster in retail and food preparation jobs" (Thompson, 2012: n.p.). They have also stressed that work placements in the UK prevent social mobility, affirming "the enduring significance of class", while "showing how family capital pertaining to creative careers significantly shapes young people's capacity to inhabit the position of the creative, cosmopolitan worker" (Allen et al., 2013:514).

This research follows a holistic case study design, as the unit of analysis is the 'discourse' produced or reproduced by social enterprises and social activists (Fairclough, 2010; Yin, 1994). A discourse is defined as a system of statements, including speech and text, which construct an object and/or concept based on the power position, intentions and knowledge of those who produce or reproduce it (Fairclough, 2010; Foucault, 2005; Phillips et al., 2004). Both social enterprises and social activists aim to tackle access inequalities in the artistic labour market, but they generate contrasting discourses which internalise their ideological and power positions in the artistic field. This research relies on secondary data, because discourses "cannot be studied directly", but "can only be explored by examining the texts that constitute them" (Table 1; Phillips et al, 2004:636). Through secondary data, such as published texts and interviews, we access the official discourses of social enterprises and social activists in the original context in which they emerged. This evidence is sourced from four cases, all from the UK: two prominent social enterprises (art employment charities), The Creative Society and Creative Access; and two groups of social activists, the Carrotworkers' Collective and the Precarious Workers Brigade (Table 1). These organisations have been selected because they represent the most prominent cases of social enterprises and social activists engaging directly with access inequalities in the artistic labour market (McRobbie, 2016; Oakley, 2013).

Fairclough's (1992) framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) is employed as a method of investigating the discourses of 'voluntarism', 'entrepreneurship' and 'precariousness' which are used by social enterprises and social activists. More specifically, this framework facilitates the critical analysis of discourse at three levels. The 'analytical level of social context' stresses the ways in which macro-societal discourses, such as the 'Third Way' or 'Big Society', derive from the broader political, social, cultural and economic environment (Fairclough, 1992). This analysis aims to investigate how macro-societal discourses influence employment conditions in the artistic labour market (Table 1; Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015; Oakley, 2009). At this level, data has been sourced by searching for the words 'diversity', 'inequality' and 'access' in relation to employment in the creative economy within political speeches, cultural policy reports and documents published by the government, the Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS), and by non-governmental public bodies, such as Arts Council England (ACE), which operates at arm's length from the government, distributing funding to arts organisations.

Insert Table 1 Here

The 'analytical level of discourse' presents the ways in which social enterprises and social activists internalise macro-societal discourses, while developing contrasting discourses which represent alternative ideological and power positions which they occupy, in an effort to mitigate access inequalities. This level of discourse includes agents and institutions which are directly involved with the production of discourse (Fairclough, 1992; 2010). The discourses of 'voluntarism' and 'entrepreneurship' are associated directly with social enterprises, and are contrasted with the counter-discourse of 'precarity' that derives from social activism. With regard to the discourses of entrepreneurship and voluntarism, data is sourced from documents published by the Creative Society, together with information about art employment charities available online. Data about the discourse of precarity is sourced by publications and interviews of the Carrotworkers' Collective and the Precarious Workers Brigade (Table 1). The 'analytical level of text' identifies local narratives "developed in response to the truth effects of discourse", which can be 'authoritative', 'critical' or 'ironic' (Phillips et al., 2008:784), including the perspectives of scholars and commentators. The analytical level of text includes responses from third parties which are not involved with the construction of 'entrepreneurship', 'voluntarism' and 'precarity' discourses. This level of text also includes data relevant to the investigated phenomena released by third parties (i.e. London Economics, 2015).

Finally, a chronological analysis of the discourses of 'entrepreneurship', 'voluntarism' and 'precariousness' has been conducted. This is an extension of Fairclough's (1992) original framework, which facilitates the critical analysis of discourses over time (1997-2017). A chronological analysis of discourses allows the study of interactions of discourses over time, exposing how, when and why the discourses of 'entrepreneurship' and 'voluntarism' became hegemonic, while shedding light on the conditions that triggered the counter-discourse of 'precarity' (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). A chronological approach is necessary because the social enterprise has changed meaning since 1997, internalising macro-societal discourses from New Labour (1997-2010), which promoted mainly 'entrepreneurship', and later from the Coalition governments (2010-2017), which inserted 'voluntarism' as part of the 'Big Society' macro-societal discourse (Doherty et al., 2014). The discourse of 'precarity' coined by social activists also coincided with the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008.

In terms of research quality criteria, this research lacks external validity, as its findings cannot be generalised beyond the context investigated (Yin, 1994). The research offers an analytical framework that assists the critical analysis of discourses over time, leading to implications for cultural policy and management. The lack of external validity is compensated for by internal validity and reliability (Gibbert et al., 2008). Internal validity is ensured by following CDA as a method which "correctly maps the phenomenon in question"; while following Fairclough's (1992) framework as a protocol enhances reliability, providing a step-by-step approach that can replicated by another researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The phenomena investigated in this paper ultimately constitute socially constructed truths, which are scrutinised in terms of 'reflective research' as an outcome of 'careful interpretation' of discourses in order to expose critical issues about access inequalities (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000).

4. Precariousness and Austerity in the Artistic Labour Market in the UK

The financial crisis in 2008 was a shocking event for the British economy, triggering the introduction of a fiscal austerity programme by the Coalition government in 2010 (Sawyer, 2012). In 2010, the newly elected Coalition government justified cuts to public expenditure, claiming that 'economic recovery' was the 'most urgent issue facing Britain' (Cabinet Office, 2010:15). However, the creative industries proved resilient as the Gross Value Added (GVA) in the UK continued to grow, despite a minor decline in 2009 (Figure 2; DCMS, 2015). The employment rate in the creative economy also grew steadily between 1997 and 2013, despite two declines in 2005 and 2010, demonstrating impressive resilience in the face of the turbulent

economic conditions during the financial crisis (Figure 3). This resilience can mainly be explained by the spectacular growth of the digital economy, and the shifts from 'employment' to 'self-employment' for 10% of employees in the creative industries (De Propris, 2013). However, although 'self-employment' is interpreted as a measure of 'entrepreneurship', it may hide unemployment among creative workers for whom self-employment is not a choice (De Propris, 2013).

Insert Figures 2 & 3 Here

Since the introduction of the creative industries framework in 1997, the issues of diversity, equality and inclusion have occupied a central position in the policy-making agenda. The issue of minority access to cultural education and activities has been a particular priority. Prior to 2008, the term 'access' in policy documents mainly meant the inclusion of Black, Asian and Chinese minorities in cultural consumption (Bridgewood et al., 2003; Khan, 2002; O'Brien & Oakley, 2015). Only since 2015 has the DCMS (2015; 2016) started to report data concerning minority access to the artistic labour market. The Culture White Paper (DCMS, 2016) responded to increasing pressure from within the creative economy for workforce inequalities to be addressed, as in 2015 (DCMS, 2016a), inequalities existed of gender (around 37% of total employees were women); race (about 11% of posts were held by Black, Asian or Middle East minorities); education (almost 59% of employees had a degree or Higher Education qualification); and socio-economic class (nearly 92% were from privileged backgrounds). Despite the increase of new jobs in the creative economy since 2011 (Figure 3), the majority of those jobs have increasingly been occupied by creative workers from more advantaged socio-economic groups (Figure 4). With the exception of 'crafts', creative workers from more privileged socio-economic backgrounds have advantage when seeking employment in the artistic labour market (Table 2; O'Brien et al., 2016).

Insert Figure 4 Here

Internships are the typical way in which arts professionals enter the artistic labour market. Although unpaid internships are illegal in the UK, and all interns are entitled to the National Minimum Wage if they are considered to be workers[2], "91% of the creative workforce in the

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[2] The UK Government clarifies the employment rights and pay of interns by distinguishing the status of 'workers', defined as employees whose employers "can't avoid paying the National Minimum Wage if it's due by: (1) saying or stating that it doesn't apply, and (2) making a written agreement saying someone isn't a worker or that they're a volunteer"; from 'voluntary workers', defined as "Workers [who] aren't entitled to the minimum wage if both

UK has worked for free at some point" (Neelands et al., 2015:46). However, the imagined self-perpetuating identity of the creative class often convinces young professionals to work for free in exchange for a bohemian lifestyle (Bain, 2005; Leslie & Rantisi, 2012). In 2010, David Cameron, the Prime Minister of the Coalition government, responded to the challenges of the financial crisis by introducing the 'Big Society', a political discourse based on 'voluntarism', which has led to an increase in underpaid workers in the artistic labour market (Dowling & Harvie, 2014). During the financial crisis in the UK, the counter-discourse of 'precariousness' was appropriated by social activists (McRobbie, 2011), contrasting it with the discourses of 'entrepreneurship' and 'voluntarism' which are internalised by social enterprises.

Insert Table 2 Here

New forms of social enterprise have also started to emerge, such as arts employment charities, which share similar concerns with activists, while providing a platform for the tackling of inequalities and supporting of self-employment in the artistic labour market. After the financial crisis in 2008, "a variety of campaigning organisations (including Intern Aware, Graduate Fog, the Carrotworkers' Collective and Precarious Workers Brigade) acted to raise awareness and maintain a critical voice, while social enterprises and voluntary organisations such as Internocracy and New Deal of the Mind [now the Creative Society] developed paid internships to counter what they saw as the core problem" (Oakley, 2013:36). Activists and arts employment charities also tackled the issue of access inequality in the artistic labour market, although they used different vocabulary which exposed the idiosyncrasies of their political positions: on the one hand, 'precariousness' has emerged as a counter-discourse which stresses access inequalities, while on the other hand, 'voluntarism' is established as a hegemonic discourse supported by the government and social enterprises.

4.1. Social activism as a response to precariousness in the artistic labour market

The financial crisis in 2008 has indirectly influenced the creative economy in the UK, as "the soaring rates of unemployment across Europe particularly affecting young people" have lowered the existing "high expectations about the creative economy" (McRobbie, 2016:34). It has also exposed geographical inequalities, as more than 50% of the creative economy is concentrated in the South of England, with 30.8% of it in London (DCMS, 2016a; McRobbie,

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of the following apply: (1) they're working for a charity, voluntary organisation, associated fund raising body or a statutory body, and (2) they don't get paid, except for limited benefits (e.g. reasonable travel or lunch expenses)" (www. gov.uk/employment-rights-for-interns).

2011). As the discourse of entrepreneurship was no longer sufficient on its own to guarantee employment and income for many art professionals, counter-discourses have started to emerge highlighting the sources of precariousness in the artistic labour market (De Sario, 2007). This effort has mainly been led by 'radical social enterprises', such as the Carrotworkers' Collective and the Precarious Workers Brigade, which have responded to access inequalities and precariousness (McRobbie, 2011).

The Carrotworkers' Collective is an autonomous network of creative workers, which was founded in 2009 in London to raise the awareness of young professionals about precariousness in the artistic labour market. Using the stories and narratives of young professionals who had experienced it, this group is critical of employment practices in the artistic field. In a series of interviews with art professionals, published in *Surviving Internships: A Counter-guide to Free Labour in the Arts*, the Collective presents the conflicting views of interns about unpaid labour (Image 1). In particular, interns are aware that unpaid labour gives an advantage to the socio-economically privileged. Arts graduates acknowledge internships as a way of pursuing a career in the arts world. The female intern in Mini-Case 1 is "prepared to accept the circumstances" as a way of pursuing a career in the art world, because that is "the way it works", while Interns #1 and #2 in Mini-Case 2 admit that identifying ways to "earn money" or receiving "help from parents" is the only way of coping with unpaid internships. It is remarkable that paid employees of arts organisations also experience precarious conditions. The male employee in Mini-Case 3 has to work more than he previously did, due to the competition he experiences from interns who are prepared to work for free.

Insert Image 1

The Precarious Workers Brigade (PWB), which is affiliated with the Carrotworkers' Collective, is a "UK-based group of precarious workers in culture & education", acting "in solidarity with all those struggling to make a living in this climate of instability and enforced austerity", while highlighting the term 'precariousness' in its name and mission[3]:

> **"The PWB's praxis springs from a shared commitment to developing research and actions that are practical, relevant and easily shared and applied. If putting an end to precarity is the social justice we seek, our political project involves developing tactics, strategies, formats, practices, dispositions, knowledge and tools for making this happen".**

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[3] https://precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/about

The Precarious Workers Brigade uses the medium of publication to expose the 'language of exploitation', especially during the recruitment stage of interns. In *Training for Exploitation? Politicising Employability & Reclaiming Education*, PWB has systematically documented cases of malpractice in art organisations, while revealing the ways in which firms use the language of 'voluntarism' in order to attract unpaid labour (Image 2). More specifically, the activists presented an example of an unpaid internship in which an average of 30 to 40 working hours per week is expected. They wondered "where is the time to study or socialise" after these working hours. In addition, the activists responded ironically – "will only take you when they have no money to pay you"– to the request of the firm for applicants to "apply for a specific vacancy only as we do not keep unsolicited applications on file". In the context of internships, 'voluntarism' is interpreted by the activists as unpaid labour, an interpretation which is not clearly aligned with the definition of 'voluntary workers' provided by the government. For this group of activists, volunteering is just a matter of 'rebranding' free labour, and "one of the ways in which unpaid labour appears more often nowadays" (PWB, 2017:13).

Insert Image 2 Here

In addition, the Precarious Workers Brigade has launched the Open Letter to Art Institutions, a 'whistleblowing' platform through which arts institutions that offer unfair internship programmes are contacted and exposed. A recent example is the exchange of open letters between the Precarious Workers Brigade and the Director of Somerset House, Jonathan Reekie concerning the use of unpaid labour during the Björk Digital show at Somerset House in 2016. Reekie responded to PWB's accusation, claiming that:

> **"I believe our use of volunteers on Björk Digital fits this commitment [fair, ethical and transparent system of pay] … Our policy is that volunteers at Somerset House never act as a substitute for paid employees and the Trust does not recruit volunteers to replace or displace them … Björk Digital uses a full complement of paid staff (about 18 per session) who are all paid the London Living Wage. Like many cultural venues we do use volunteers for certain roles. A key element is that volunteering must benefit the volunteer, as well as Somerset House Trust and our visitors … As well as the fact that we could operate the show without the volunteers, I would also like to reassure you that we are not doing this to save money despite the fact that neither the Trust nor Björk are making any direct financial gain from this project…We also pay all interns".**

The letter demonstrates that voluntarism is considered to be normal practice in arts institutions in the UK. In addition, it admits that volunteers contribute to the experience of visitors,

although their work is not seen as necessary either to deliver the show or to save money. In response to this letter, the Precarious Workers Brigade highlights that:

> **"An institution such as yours has the infrastructure and means to be able to raise, leverage or resource £38,800 additional cost for such a prominent show. But you're putting the onus on the individual to leverage the contribution they are giving to the exhibition. You say you're not trying to save money and that the free labour involved is not essential, but enhances the visitor experience. The fact remains, you're receiving this enhancement free, at an average cost to the volunteers of £400. That's well over half the monthly rent on a cheap room in South London – an expense many young people regularly struggle to meet. The point is not that certain individuals benefit from the 'opportunity' but that the far greater number remain excluded from it, because they cannot afford to work for free".**

The Precarious Workers Brigade claimed in an interview conducted in 2014 by the artists Tereza Stejskalová and Barbora Kleinhamplová that:

> **"The thing we are fighting – precarity – produces conditions that are also the main hurdles: a lack of time, energy, money, multiple work commitments leaving little time for meetings or even travelling to meetings, burn-out, health issues – including mental health, forced migration, visa issues, care duties all make it very difficult. These conditions can be linked more generally of course to any attempt at organizing a dispersed, urban workforce who work in more in a 'social factory' than at a factory production line".**

The Precarious Workers Brigade (2017:71) has exposed the extensive use of volunteers by arts organisations supported by the ACE: for instance, in 2012/13, "17,309 were permanent and 58,200 contractual, while an additional 33,532 volunteers gave their time to support the work of National Portfolio Organisations". Sir Peter Bazalgette, the former chairman of ACE, pressurised arts organisations to make progress with workforce diversity (Brown, 2014):

> **"The progress our funded organisations make with the diversity of their programmes, their audiences, their artists and their workforce will inform the decisions we take on their membership of the next national portfolio after 2018."**

4.2. The social enterprise as a response to precariousness in the artistic labour market

Since 2009, new social enterprises, such as arts employment charities, together with artists, entrepreneurs, philanthropists and politicians, joined forces to tackle inequalities in the artistic labour market. These social enterprises share the interest of activists in facilitating fair access to the artistic labour market. The Creative Society has received "the support of leading figures in the arts, entrepreneurs, politicians from across the political spectrum and policy makers",

who "recognise the urgency of protecting, nurturing and investing in the arts … to prevent a generation of creative talent being lost to the recession"[4]. As an arts employment charity, it aims to find placements, and support self-employment and entrepreneurship[4]:

> **"The Creative Society (formerly New Deal of the Mind) has successfully lobbied for the return of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme, and borrows and adapts from both the EAS [Enterprise Allowance Scheme introduced by Thatcher in 1980s] and WPA [Works Progress Administration] to push for government policy that encourages self-employment and freelance opportunities – the lifeblood of the creative industries. We're working with the Government to help put unemployed people into creative placements in arts and culture and we're finding spaces across the UK which will become "incubator centres" providing space, support and advice for people setting up on their own".**

The Creative Society was inaugurated by an article published in the *New Statesman* in January 2009 by Martin Bright, the Society's Founder and Chief Executive. In particular, the Creative Society advocates for a revival of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme (EAS), which was introduced to the UK by the government of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, in an effort to support entrepreneurship with government help. The Creative Society endorses the EAS which "helped figures including Creation Records founder Alan McGee, Superdry's creator Julian Dunkerton and artists Tracey Emin and Jane and Louise Wilson"[4]. However, it does not use the term 'precariousness' in its narrative, but reinforces the discourses of 'self-employment' and 'entrepreneurship' (Gunnell & Bright, 2009:5):

> **"Discussions with arts organisations and individual practitioners suggest there is a groundswell of support for a new enterprise scheme. One option would be to target this at graduates. Several people expressed their concern to NDotM that many of the jobs in the sector now being taken by school leavers or people without a degree qualification could soon be snapped up by graduates during the recession… It would be better to encourage creative graduates to set themselves up as sole traders or join together to form small start-up businesses".**

The Creative Society worked closely with the Future Jobs Fund (FJF), a programme which aimed to distribute £1.1bn to "deliver the opportunity of work or training to every 18 to 24-year-old job seeker who has been out of work for up to a year" (Gunnell & Bright, 2009:7). However, the FJF, introduced as a government initiative in 2009, was cut by the Coalition government of David Cameron, who found the scheme too expensive (Syal, 2012). However,

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[4] http://www.thecreativesociety.co.uk/about-us/

the Department for Work and Pensions demonstrated that the programme contributed a net benefit through tax receipts and a reduced benefits bill (Gunnell & Bright, 2013).

By developing a rich network of partners including Arts Council England, the National Portrait Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Southbank Centre, Creative Access, and Google, the Creative Society has launched the Fair Access campaign, according to which employers have to sign a form that ensures fair access of arts professionals to opportunities. The 'fair access' programme is based on the public display of the campaign's kitemark on the website and literature of art organisations which have committed themselves to tackling the issue of unpaid internships by promoting fair employment practices. In addition, the Creative Society, together with the Creative and Cultural Skills Council – one of the Sector Skills Councils established by the UK Government to foster the development of a skilled workforce – have created the Fair Access Principle, encouraging volunteering while acknowledging that unpaid internships may disadvantage arts professionals from less privileged backgrounds[5]:

"We want to encourage people to volunteer. However, we acknowledge that when employers offer longer term unpaid placements, people from less affluent backgrounds may feel discriminated against".

This shows that arts employment charities have internalised the discourses of 'entrepreneurship' and 'voluntarism', thus replacing the role of the government in reducing inequalities. Leonard et al. (2016: 383) argue that "the recent economic recession has impacted substantially on the graduate labour market, with many graduates now struggling to find secure employment in professional careers. In this context, temporary, unpaid 'internships' have emerged as increasingly important as a 'way in' to work for this group". In the artistic labour market, unpaid work is extensive in the sector of 'Arts, Entertainment and Recreation' (Figure 3; London Economics, 2015). It should be noted that the number of unpaid interns is significantly higher than reported in Figure 5, as 580 interns investigated for this research did not report a wage (London Economics, 2015).

Insert Figure 5 Here

New social enterprises facilitate employability in the creative industries, especially for young professionals who come from less privileged backgrounds. Creative Access, which has managed to place more than 500 interns from ethnic minorities, states:

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[5] https://ccskills.org.uk/supporters/fair-access-principle

"The 2011 British Census showed that over 40% of Londoners are non-white. Yet, the 2012 Employment Census published by Skillset in July 2013 showed that ethnic minority representation across the creative industries has fallen in recent years to just 5.4% of the total workforce. At senior levels the numbers are far lower. The absence of diversity in the creative sector is not only bad for our society but is also bad for business, which thrives on having a diversity of ideas and opinions".

This initiative from Creative Access is supported by many organisations that operate within the creative industries, including the British Phonographic Industry, Channel 4, the National Council for Training of Journalists, and the diversity recruitment company Rare. In general, social enterprises, such as the Creative Society and Creative Access mitigate the conditions of precariousness in the artistic labour market by developing a network of arts organisations which aim to support their campaign, as they share common values, but they lack the power to buffer the artistic labour market when the rules about internships are not followed by organisations.

4.3. The government's response to inequalities in the creative economy

In 2009, Banks and Hesmondhalgh criticised cultural policy in the UK, as having done too little to reduce inequalities, while at least admitting that the problem does exist. Seven years later the DCMS (2016) published the Culture White Paper which includes the government's response to inequalities in the creative industries. Following the convention of previous reports (DCMS, 2001; 2003; 2007; 2014), the Culture White Paper (DCMS, 2016) celebrates 'creativity', 'diversity', 'inclusiveness' and 'voluntarism', in terms of providing opportunities to creatives and communities to participate in culture. This report, launched by the Coalition government in the UK, is largely considered as a continuation of the neo-liberal agenda set out by the Labour Party in 1997 (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015). The increased privatisation of culture associated with the reduction in public spending has been accompanied by controversies, such as celebrating a multicultural workforce in the creative industries while promoting the 'Britishness' of creative outcomes abroad (DCMS, 2016; Dowling & Harvie, 2014).

In the recent Culture White Paper (DCMS, 2016:24), it is acknowledged for the first time that "employment in the creative economy disproportionately favours those who come from a more advantaged socio-economic background". It is also announced that a further investment of £10 million will be allocated through the Heritage Lottery Fund in its *Skills for the Future* programme "with a particular focus on attracting more diverse new entrants to the heritage workforce" (DCMS, 2016:25). In addition, Arts Council England has recently launched *The Creative Case for Diversity*, a programme that "asks the organisations which it funds to make

themselves and their work more reflective of the communities they serve", stating that progress on diversity "will influence their future funding" (DCMS, 2016:26). Although new social enterprises have responded to inequalities, cultural policy should also prioritise tackling access inequalities in the artistic labour market, as it emanates from a legitimate institution with the power to enforce rules and policies. Despite the campaigns of social activists, the government is encouraging more 'volunteering' in the cultural sector defining it as:

"A way for people of all ages and from all backgrounds and walks of life to get involved in cultural activities and support the work of cultural organisations. The government wants to see more people volunteering and getting involved in social action, including in the cultural sectors. We will work with Arts Council England, Historic England and other publicly-funded cultural organisations to encourage more volunteering opportunities in the cultural sectors" (DCMS, 2016:27).

5. Critical Discourse Analysis of the Artistic Labour Market in the UK

Since the emergence of the creative industries framework in 1997, different discourses that respond to unemployment and inequality have emerged. Figure 6 depicts the evolution of these discourses over time, as instigated by the government, social activists and social enterprises. The macro-societal discourse of 'entrepreneurship' has emerged in tandem with the creative industries framework and has become hegemonic, outlasting the New Labour government (Teasdale et al., 2013). By promoting self-employment, the discourse of entrepreneurship is primarily aligned with business entrepreneurship in terms of generating profit from artistic activities, and, secondarily, with socio-economic objectives, such as economic growth, urban regeneration and community enhancement (Grey, 2007). This model of tackling precarity is determined by market capitalism, as precariousness expresses an excess supply of artistic labour which has to adjust to demand. Despite the early enthusiasm about entrepreneurship as a new model of work (Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999), recent research has shown that cultural policies that solely support entrepreneurship lead to access inequalities in the artistic labour market which is then dominated by middle- and upper-class creative workers (O'Brien, 2016).

Insert Figure 6 Here

The financial crisis of 2008 intensified the conditions for precariousness, and triggered an organised response by social activists. Social activists, such as the Precarious Workers Brigade have developed the counter-discourse of 'precarity' as response to the macro-societal discourse of 'voluntarism' introduced by the Coalition government in 2010. For the activists, voluntarism

is interpreted as a rebranding of unpaid labour, which essentially increases access inequalities in the artistic labour market. The counter-discourse of 'activism' as a "discourse on precarity speaks to workers generally excluded from the established labour movement to which the autonomist tradition has long had an ambivalent relationship" (De Peuter, 2011:421-22). 'Precarity' is a politically charged term used by creative workers to distinguish the privileged from the marginalised. On the one hand, the discourse of precarity gives rise to social movements which declare autonomy from the artistic labour market that reproduces the mechanisms of exploitation (Baumann, 2007; Gill & Pratt, 2008). On the other hand, groups of activists, such as the Precarious Workers Brigade, operate as 'radical social enterprises' (McRobbie, 2011), which do not reject participation in the artistic labour market (McQuilten & White, 2016), but oppose the hegemonic discourses of entrepreneurship and voluntarism, and react to the pitfalls of the market, by advocating fair conditions of employment.

Access inequalities in the artistic labour market have also triggered a response from social enterprises, such as arts employment charities, which include cross-sectoral stakeholders. Social enterprises, such as The Creative Society or Creative Access, are new intermediaries that promote self-employment while aiming to protect social rights at work. In contrast to social activism, these social enterprises have internalised the macro-societal discourse of voluntarism, adjusting to the political climate instigated by the Coalition government in order to attract a wider spectrum of stakeholders, such as artists, entrepreneurs, philanthropists and politicians. The third sector and stakeholder-driven social enterprises can mitigate precariousness in the artistic labour market, but this approach may also underestimate the role of cultural policy, allowing the government to evade its responsibility for directly tackling the increasing number of precarious self-employed creative workers.

Although social activism does not lead directly to the creation of social enterprises in the artistic labour market (Akemu et al., 2016), it has influenced the practices employed by social enterprises by exposing the urgent issue of access inequalities (Spar & La Mure, 2003). Activists, together with social enterprises, exposed the lack of monitoring in underpaid work in arts organisations and provided alternative solutions. In general, the discourse of activism demonstrates that arts professionals are unprotected, stressing that cultural policy should control employment conditions within cultural production, as well as reaching out to a broader and more diverse audience. In the recent Culture White Paper, the DCMS (2016:25) commits itself to "work[ing] with Arts Council England to understand the barriers that prevent people

from particularly under-represented groups becoming professionals in the arts". Our research answers this inquiry by exposing the ways in which contrasting discourses respond to the issue of access inequalities in the artistic labour market, while suggesting that cultural policy should control the artistic labour market, providing the conditions and support for the rise of grassroots-driven social organisations that address the concerns of precarious workers about class, gender, race and religion inequalities (Figure 7; McQuilten & White, 2016).

Insert Figure 7 Here

However, social activism and social enterprise cannot tackle the conditions of precariousness fully, unless the government is actively involved, as a provider not only of funding and monitoring of the artistic labour market, but also of training for artists and investment in their skills. We argue that activism is more likely to have an impact on the social context, once it is organised in the form of grassroots-driven social enterprises initiated by precarious workers and developed with the support of diverse stakeholders. Without social activism, it is not certain whether the discourse of precariousness would have gained momentum during the financial crisis, triggering the responses from government, the third sector and the academic community. Social enterprises, complemented by an enhanced role played by government, can become an efficient means of tackling access inequalities in artistic labour market.

This paper suggests that cultural policy in the UK should follow a selective interventionist strategy. Firstly, the artistic labour market should be monitored more efficiently. Although stricter monitoring of art organisations may lead to fewer internship opportunities for graduates, it would be expected to improve the conditions of training, while providing a safer path to employment. This will benefit not only interns, but also arts organisations which, instead of changing temporary workers every few months, will be able to plan the recruitment and retention of young professionals more carefully, enabling them to build stronger long-term capabilities based on a more loyal and highly trained workforce. However, developing this idea in both arts organisations and individual creative workers requires challenging the accepted norm that unpaid internships are the only path to employment.

Secondly, Arts Council England can play an important role in monitoring the National Portfolio Organisations and reporting examples best practice in fair access and employment. As the current Chief Executive of the ACE, Darren Henley stated in 2016, new applicant organisations should provide evidence that they are complying with the rules of fair access and employment

in order to receive funding. Thirdly, cultural policy should continue to support the infrastructure for arts entrepreneurship, such as arts incubators, and should prioritise sectors, such as crafts, which need urgent support (Essig, 2014). Although the 'creative industries' as a policy framework has attracted more attention to the arts, a selective interventionist policy should focus on the needs of each particular arts sector (Oakley, 2009a). Finally, the logic of cultural policy should shift from 'unitarism' ('society is best served by creating consensus') that aims to promote 'brand Britain' (DCMS, 2016), to 'pluralism' ('society is best served by encouraging diversity'), which nurtures the diversity and multiculturalism of Britain in the arts and in society (Ridley-Duff, 2007:384).

6. Conclusion

This paper contributes to the literature of precariousness by scrutinising the roles played by social activism and social enterprises in tackling access inequalities in the artistic labour market. More specifically, since precariousness is mainly a concern of those excluded, the role of social activism is crucial, especially in times of austerity in which social rights at work are at risk. This view challenges the previous understanding of artistic labour, according to which precariousness is an innate characteristic of creative work, as its outcome is uncertain (Menger, 2014). By critically analysing the contrasting discourses of precariousness and voluntarism, we argue that precariousness in the artistic labour market is socially constructed and linked more strongly to the social class of creative workers. Less privileged creative workers experience greater precarity and exclusion from elite networks, as their access to the artistic labour market becomes more difficult, due to the widespread use of voluntarism and underpaid work by some arts organisations and more privileged creative workers. The extensive use of voluntarism and unpaid work threatens the social fabric of creativity. As part-time work, other caring responsibilities and long commuting times restrict precarious creative workers from socialising, despite the necessity for forming social networks and participating in the local creative scene for their career development (Currid, 2008).

This study has employed critical discourse analysis to evaluate the dominant discourses of volunteerism and entrepreneurship, which are associated with the government and social enterprise, in contrast to the counter-discourse of precarity advocated by social activists. While the previous literature has identified the link between social movement activism and social enterprises (Akemu et al., 2016; Briscoe & Gupta, 2016), this paper demonstrates the ways in which the government, social activists and social enterprises interact by developing contrasting

discourses and positions in the artistic field in order to tackle access inequalities. By analysing these contrasting discourses chronologically, this study has identified a shift from a business-oriented discourse before the crisis to a stakeholder-driven discourse of social enterprises afterwards, while exposing precariousness as a counter-discourse that exposes inequalities and demands corrective actions for both arts organisations and the government. It is important to highlight the shift of discourses from entrepreneurship and voluntarism to precariousness, because the latter represents the position of creative workers who experience precarity and undertake organised actions to tackle access inequalities. The discourse of precariousness also reveals that, despite the growth of social enterprises, such as arts employment charities, access inequalities persist in the artistic labour market. Government intervention, in tandem with social enterprises instigated by creative workers and various stakeholders, can help resolve access inequalities more effectively.

More specifically, precariousness is analysed as a political discourse which symbolises a resistance to the mechanisms that reproduce exploitation and inequalities in the artistic labour market. Although the discourse of precarious work in terms of social movements has existed since the 1970s as a result of the global neoliberal transformation (Gill & Pratt, 2008; McRobbie, 2016), this paper shows that it has been revamped in a more coordinated way since the recent financial crisis in the UK. The counter-discourse of precarity is a critique of the government-driven discourse of voluntarism, as social activists interpret it as rebranding of unpaid labour. However, voluntarism in the cultural sector is widely encouraged by the UK government, inspiring social enterprises, such as arts employment charities, to develop programmes and campaigns that aim to mitigate access inequalities in the artistic labour market. As social enterprises have no authority to enforce policies, this research suggests that the government should be responsible for tackling inequalities, placing fair employment at a central point in the cultural policy agenda, while controlling fair access into the artistic labour market.

Methodologically, this paper complements Fairclough's framework of critical discourse analysis by adding the dimension of time. Fairclough's (2010) three-level framework of CDA describes how social events take place, but is relatively static in terms of the dimension of time. A chronological disposition of the discourses of entrepreneurialism, voluntarism and precariousness is integrated with the aforementioned framework in order to depict the ways in which they influence the evolving meaning of social enterprise and social activism in the UK

over time. By integrating the time dimension into Fairclough's framework, CDA can be used for studying institutional change in creative professions (Muzio et al., 2013; Lingo & Tepper, 2013), reflecting on the transformation of power structure within an institutional field (Oakes et al., 1998).

The findings of this study also point to the responsibility of higher education institutions in imparting strong messages about avoiding unpaid or underpaid work, stressing their detrimental effects on individuals' careers and the artistic labour market. Future research could also focus on access inequalities in countries such as the US, where universities are gradually developing academic units based on internships, assessing the learning outcomes of trainees and their future career prospects in the artistic labour market (Carnevale & Hanson, 2015).

In terms of policy implications, a study of the artistic labour market could contribute to research into transferable skills across and beyond the creative industries (Bennett, 2002). Future research could focus on the role of Sector Skills Councils, which have been established by the UK government to improve employability by developing apprenticeships that nurture and transfer skills within and across industries. By utilising primary data collected from interviews with creative workers, future research could focus on flexible career paths which arise when transferring skills from one creative industry to another (Currid, 2008). In addition, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, announced in 2017 an initiative to "set up Creative Enterprise Zones, providing dedicated small workspace with live-in space so that creative industries, artists and the fashion industry are given extra support to flourish"[6]. Therefore, research is required on the efficacy of public interventions which aim to 'create creative places' (Currid, 2008), scrutinising in particular the conditions under which these initiatives can reduce precarity and mitigate access inequalities in the artistic labour market.

Finally, future research could also focus explicitly on political change, analysing, for instance, the impact on the artistic labour market of the 2016 UK referendum on leaving the European Union (i.e. 'Brexit'). A recent study suggests that such an event would restrict the attraction of talent to the UK (Leigh & Galsworthy, 2016), while disrupting trading flows between the UK and Europe, thus also influencing employment. Therefore, future research could investigate the effects of the 'Brexit' on access inequalities and discrimination in the UK artistic labour market.

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[6] http://www.sadiq.london/making_the_most_of_arts_culture_and_creativity

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Table 1: Fairclough's analytical framework of critical discourse and data sources

Analytical Level of Discourse	Data Source and Type
Social Context (Macro) How macro-societal discourses, such as the 'Third Way' or 'Big Society' derive from the broader political, social, cultural and economic environment?	• Bridgewood et al., 2003 (ACE, Report) • Cabinet Office, 2010 (Public Document) • DCMS, 1998 (Mapping Document) • DCMS, 2001 (Mapping Document) • DCMS, 2007 (Economic Estimates Report) • DCMS, 2011 (Economic Estimates Report) • DCMS, 2014 (Employment Report) • DCMS, 2015 (Economic Estimates Report) • DCMS, 2016a (Employment Report) • DCMS, 2016 (White Paper) • Henley, 2016 (Book by ACE Chair) • Khan, 2002 (ACE, Report)
Discourse (Meso) How do social enterprises and social activists internalise the macro-societal discourses while developing the contrasting discourses of entrepreneurship, voluntarism and precariousness?	• Carrot Workers Collective (Website) • Carrot Workers Collective, 2009 (Research Report) • Gunnell & Bright, 2009 (The Creative Society Report) • Gunnell & Bright, 2010 (The Creative Society Report) • Gunnell & Bright, 2011 (The Creative Society Report) • Gunnell & Bright, 2013 (The Creative Society Report) • Precarious Workers Brigade (Website) • Precarious Workers Brigade, 2014 (Published Interview) • Precarious Workers Brigade, 2017 (Open Letters) • Precarious Workers Brigade, 2017 (Research Report) • The Creative Access (Website) • The Creative Society (Website)
Text (Micro) How third parties which are not involved directly with the construction of the discourses of entrepreneurship, voluntarism and precariousness respond to these discourses?	• Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009 (Research Publication) • De Peuter, 2011 (Research Publication) • De Propris, 2013 (Research Publication) • De Sario, 2007 (Research Publication) • Dowling & Harvie, 2014 (Research Publication) • Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999 (Research Publication) • London Economics, 2015 (Research Report) • McQuilten & White, 2016 (Book) • McRobbie, 2011 (Research Publication) • McRobbie, 2016 (Book) • Neelands et al., 2015 (Research Report) • O'Brien & Oakley, 2015 (Research Report) • O'Brien et al., 2016 (Research Publication) • Oakley, 2009 (Research Publication) • Oakley, 2013 (Research Publication) • Teasdale, 2011 (Research Publication)

Source: the authors based on Fairclough (1992: 73); Phillips et al. (2008:784)

Table 2: Jobs in the creative economy by group and socio-economic class in 2014

|	More Advantaged	Less Advantaged	% Less Advantaged
Advertising and marketing	475,000	25,000	5.0%
Architecture	141,000	-	1.3%
Crafts	41,000	54,000	57.1%
Design: product, graphic and fashion design	189,000	14,000	7.1%
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	233,000	31,000	11.9%
IT, software and computer services	856,000	15,000	1.8%
Museums, galleries and libraries	82,000	24,000	22.3%
Museum, performing and visual arts	310,000	37,000	10.7%
Publishing	204,000	21,000	9.3%
CREATIVE ECONOMY	2,530,000	223,000	8.1%

Source: DCMS (2015:24)

Figure 1: A conceptual framework of precariousness, social activism and social enterprise based on the literature

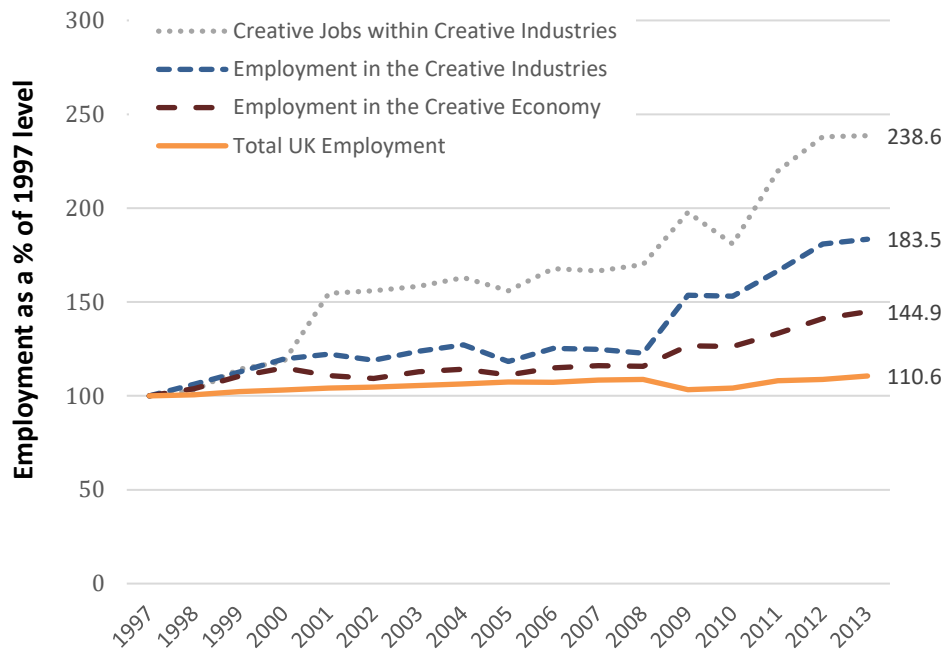| Precariousness	Social Activism	Social Enterprise
Artistic Labour Market	Autonomy	Stakeholder-driven

?

?

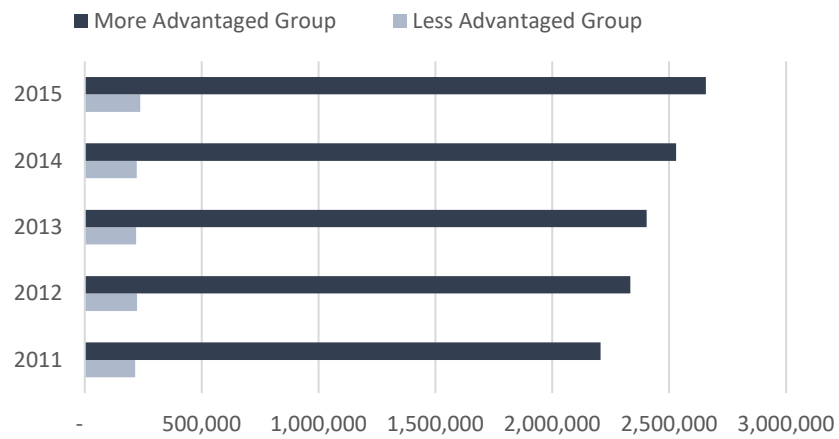*Source: the authors*

Figure 2: Changes in GVA indexed to 2009 = 100
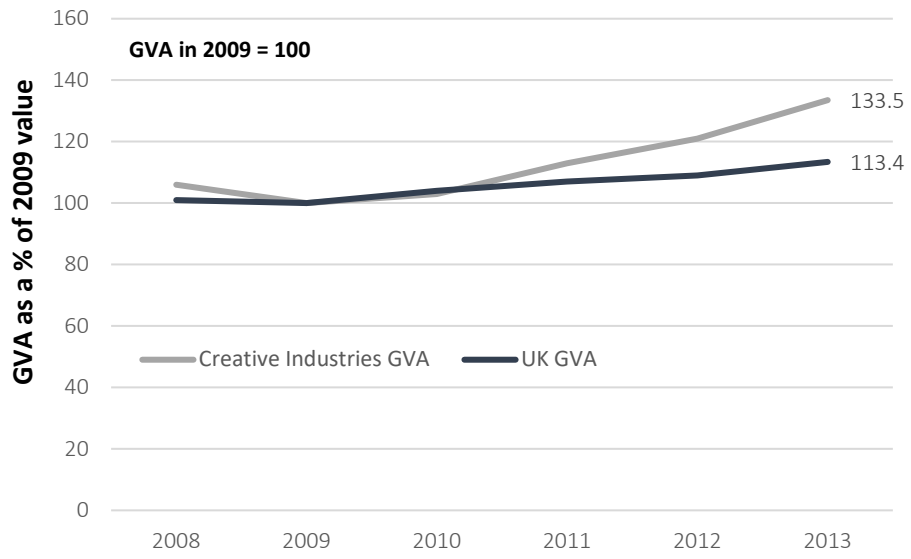
Source: DCMS (2015:20)

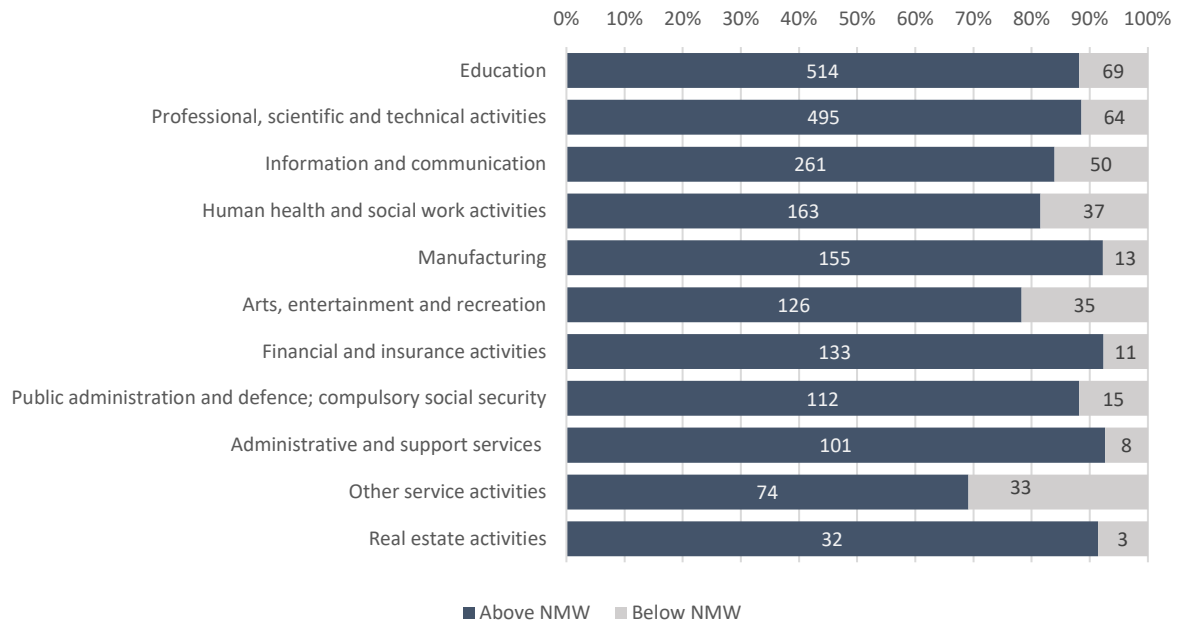**Figure 3: Change in creative employment indexed to 1997 = 100**

Source: DCMS (2015:17)

Figure 4: Employment in the creative economy by socio-economic classification
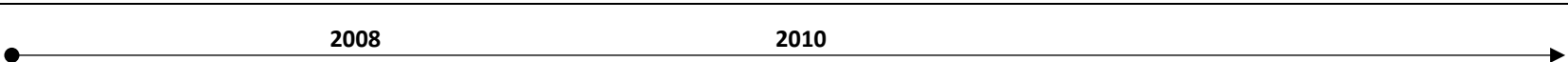
Source: DCMS (2016a)

Figure 5: Proportion of interns with salary below the average minimum wage – 12 largest intern-hiring SIC sectors

Source: London Economics (2015:60)

Figure 6: Critical discourse analysis of 'entrepreneurialism', 'precariousness' and 'voluntarism'

Time	2008		2010	
Analytical Levels				
Analytical Level of Social Context	**'Third Way', 'Cool Britannia', 'Entrepreneurialism'**		**'Big Society', 'Voluntarism', 'Entrepreneurialism'**	
	The very best artists are also some of our most effective entrepreneurs. **ACE, 2004**	To distribute £1.1bn to deliver opportunities for work or training to every 18-24-year-old job seeker, unemployed for up to a year. **FJF, 2009**	The level of diversity in the programmes of funded organisations will determine their future funding. **ACE, 2014**	The government wants to see greater people volunteering and involvement in social action, in the cultural sector and elsewhere. **DCMS, 2016**
Analytical Level of Discourse	**Entrepreneurialism (hegemonic discourse)**			
		Creative graduates to set themselves up as sole traders or join together to form small start-up businesses. **The Creative Society, 2009**	We have successfully lobbied for the return of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme. **The Creative Society, 2010**	The absence of diversity in the creative economy is bad for our society and business. **The Creative Access, 2015**
	Precariousness (counter-discourse)			
		The artistic labour market exploits young professionals through unpaid work. **CWC, 2009**	We are a dispersed, urban workforce, working like a 'social factory' rather than a factory production line. **PWB, 2014**	Volunteering is just a matter of 'rebranding' free labour. **PWB, 2017**
	Voluntarism (hegemonic discourse)			
			We encourage voluntarism, but unpaid internships may discriminate against less advantaged arts professionals. **The Creative Access, 2013**	Charities tackle gender and racial inequalities in creative economy. **The Creative Access, 2015**
Analytical Level of Text	**Critical**	**Critical**	**Authoritative**	**Critical**
	Social movements against precarious work. **De Sario, 2007**	Cultural policy is doing too little to reduce inequalities. **Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009**	Campaigning organisations and social enterprises tackle access inequalities. **Oakley, 2013**	Precarious youth employment can be attributed to unpaid internships. **Shade & Jacobson, 2015**

Source: the authors based on Fairclough (1992)

Figure 7: A proposed conceptual framework of precariousness, social activism and social enterprise

Source: the authors

Image 1: Interviews of the Carrot Workers Collective with interns (2009)

MINI-CASE 1

I would say that I decided to do an internship because of my own ambition and my motivation. I wanted to get an insight into the art world, to see how it works, get some ideas and experience. And I was prepared to accept the conditions and circumstances – because, you know – it's the way it works, and either you accept it or you don't accept it, and if you want to have a go, you just have to be prepared to do certain things.

MINI-CASE 3

I'm worried that my job might be turned into an internship – interns are so much younger and often have loads of skills and academic qualifications that the workplace needs – so I work even more unpaid hours than I did before, just in case they get any ideas.

MINI-CASE 2

Intern #1
I was getting some help from my parents. Before, I was on a student loan, and my parents helped then too.

Intern #2
I was getting bar jobs and any kind of shop job – it was quite desperate. I didn't have any money at that point, but I was working there for two days [at an internship], but I had to drop down to one day a week because I had to earn more money. Around this time, I ended up working seven days a week. Someone I worked with there didn't have to have any other jobs because her husband supported her.

Source: Carrot Workers Collective (2009)

Image 2: Responses of the Precarious Workers Brigade (handwriting) to Internship Advertisement

Applying for an internship at the

Our Internship scheme provides invaluable experience for anyone over the age of 18 wishing to work in the Arts. Please note: The is a charity and all internships are offered on a voluntary/unpaid basis. We usually advertise for all internship opportunities on our website. All vacancies are also placed the mailing list.

What the expects from Interns

VAGUE E.G. CLEAN, PUT STAMPS ON ENVELOPES

Interest in contemporary arts and the programme
Excellent spoken and written English essential
Good telephone manner and ability to take clear messages
Willingness to undertake wide range of duties

DO ANYTHING YOU ARE TOLD   E.G. MAKE COFFEE

What Interns can expect from the

WHEN IS THERE TIME TO STUDY OR SOCIALISE?

RUNNING AROUND WORKING MORE HOURS THAN SPECIFIED

To gain experience, working in all aspects of a busy, high profile multidisciplinary arts centre
Travel expenses: Travel card zones 1-4 *IF YOU DON'T LIVE IN LONDON TOUGH LUCK!*
Average of 30 to 40 hours per week
 staff card for duration of internship
Complimentary tickets to events (where possible) and selected cinemas *NO TIME AS YOU WILL BE WORKING*
20% discount at the Bookshop *BUY BOOKS WITH NO MONEY*

How to Apply

MAKE SURE YOU TICK THEIR BOXES

In order to apply for an internship vacancy, you must fill out an Internship application form which is available to download from this page.

The Internship application form is designed to enable you to give the short-listing department full and clear information about yourself. To ensure we treat all applicants fairly we do not make any assumptions, we only look at what you have told us about yourself on the form. *COVERING THEIR BACKS   NO BLAME*

NO FOREIGNERS

Excellent spoken and written English is essential. If you do not meet these standards your application will not be considered.

If your application is considered suitable for an internship vacancy, a member of the recruiting Department will contact you to arrange an interview. Due to the high volume of applications we cannot reply to all applicants. If you do not hear from us within one month, then unfortunately your application has been unsuccessful. *CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO RESPOND*

WILL ONLY TAKE YOU WHEN THEY HAVE NO MONEY TO PAY YOU

Please note: Please apply for a specific vacancy only as we do not keep unsolicited applications on file. Internships cannot be guaranteed as there are always more people interested than places available.

Please return your completed Internship application form to:
 Internship Department

London

UK

Alternatively, if you wish to return your application form by email, please send it to
 @ .

We look forward to receiving your application.

YES THEY DO!