

Partisan Social Club: Art-Study- Action

Dr. Andrew Hewitt



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Figure 1 (cover)**Top to bottom**

Partisan Social Club,
On Being together: membership, collectives and unions, slogan writing workshop documentation, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, 2018

Partisan Social Club,
Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish, workshop documentation, Edinburgh Printmakers, Fountainbridge Edinburgh 2019

Partisan Social Club,
After Thompson: The Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness, workshop documentation, Coventry Biennial, Coventry 2019



Title

Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action, comprises three art projects which explore methods for collective art production through study and membership. The projects were delivered between 2018 – 2019. The production of the artworks was funded by Edinburgh Printmakers, and Arts Council of England grants from Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, and Coventry Biennial. A total of £14,000 plus additional institutional support was awarded to produce these artworks.

Submission Details

Researcher	Dr. Andrew Hewitt
Collaborators	Andrew Hewitt works collaboratively with Mel Jordan and others as the Partisan Social Club. Collective working underpins the content of this arts-based research which looks to include others in new forms of opinion formation through the production of artworks.
Title	Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action
Output Type	Artefact
Output Component(s)	Artworks, exhibitions
Dates	2018 – 2019
Dissemination	Artworks, exhibitions
ORCID	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5957-395X
DOI	https://doi.org/10.24339/q6z0-1833

Figure 2.
Partisan Social Club,
On Being together:
membership, collectives
and unions, slogan writing
workshop documentation,
Beaconsfield Gallery
Vauxhall, London, 2018



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Timeline

BGV, 13 September – 5 December 2018



Figure 3.
Partisan Social Club,
On Being together:
membership, collectives
and unions, slogan writing
workshop documentation,
Beaconsfield Gallery
Vauxhall, London, 2018



Social Montage,
27 May – 1 June,
exhibition 15 June –
14 July 2019

Partisan Social Club,
Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish, workshop
documentation, Edinburgh
Printmakers, Fountainbridge
Edinburgh 2019

After Thompson,
4 October – 24
November 2019



Partisan Social Club,
After Thompson: The
Distribution of Wealth
Most Conducive to Human
Happiness, workshop
documentation, Coventry
Biennial, Coventry 2019

Commissioners and Exhibition venues

- * *On Being Together: Memberships, Collectives and Unions* at Beaconsfield Art Gallery, Vauxhall London
- * *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish!*
Commissioned by Edinburgh Printmakers, Castle Mills, Edinburgh
- * *After Thompson: The Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness* Commissioned by Coventry Biennial

Additional Information

Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action represents a body of artworks that are presented in two solo exhibitions, (Beaconsfield Art Gallery and Edinburgh Printmakers) and one group exhibition (Coventry Biennial). A series of methods for study, collaboration and production were developed to produce participatory artworks and events.

Participatory art projects programmed by government funded arts institutions are designed to develop new audiences for art rather than evoke citizen participation as a social function of art practice. Outreach programmes tend to include specific groups rather than recognising people as complex subjects. Another criticism of participatory arts projects is that the authorship of the project can automatically revert to the lead artist overlooking the collaborative aspects of the artwork. So, although participatory art projects constructed by galleries and museums aim to achieve democratic conditions and outcomes, there are limitations to existing practices.

To address these concerns, as well as understand art's potential for social change, we made artworks that use a framework of care, commoning and collectivizing.

We create temporary public spheres in the art gallery, which use the production of artworks to engage citizens. Membership, shared study, tagging and publishing

together are used as new methods for including others in art projects. Through membership we enable the coming together of those with shared interests, creating a temporary institutional framework to debate political issues, leading to the production of creative outputs. Shared study supports skilling, develops ideas and confidence and provides knowledge on agreed topics. 'Tagging', allows members to work together to design and produce their own authored public events. These 'tagged events' call forth new participants who can become members. Thus, membership of the Partisan Social Club changes with each collaborative event.

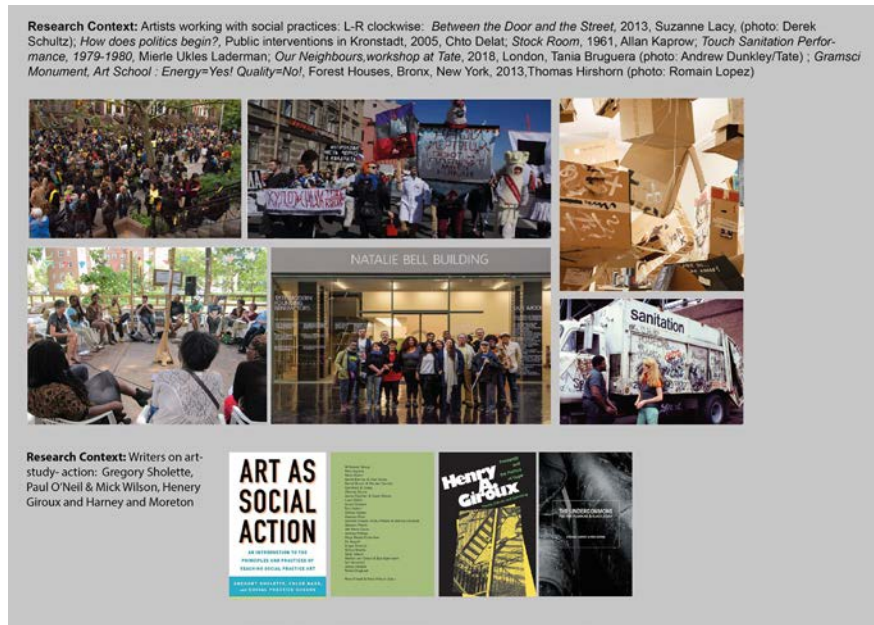
Research Context

Art plays an important role in the formation of democratic societies as it reveals and addresses issues that may not come under usual political or municipal attention. Art and culture are key tools in urban regeneration schemes (Matarasso, 1997). While the social inclusion agenda in urban policy and cultural regeneration schemes are well intentioned, they often benefit property development schemes (Hewitt, 2016). Common spaces such as parks and squares, though publicly accessible, are increasingly privately owned. This restricts the way in which these spaces are used, such as the right to free assembly.

The art gallery as a potential site for the creation of multiple public spheres has been proposed by theorist Simon Sheikh who suggests that the space of the art institution, with its display of artists work and public access, can function as a place for opinion exchange. (Sheikh, 2008). In this project we address the need for more sites to enable free exchange, we do this by using the art gallery as a space for opinion formation. Our aim when enabling an art-driven public sphere is to inform new understandings of political identity and social experience.

We experiment with making art projects within the framework of care, commoning and collectivizing aiming to construct public spheres of opinion formation. (Hewitt & Jordan, 2021). Here we use ideas of study, (Harney & Morton, 2013) and the emancipatory nature of education and knowledge (Friere, 1970, Giroux, 2011, Hooks, 1994). We apply practices of membership and tagging to create the foundation of the Partisan Social Club - an evolving provisional collective that assembles members for specific projects. Political scientists, Jonathan White and Lea Ypi's revisiting of partisanship has enabled us to understand that the forming of a group enables the pursuit of political visions irreducible to the self-centred aims of personal interest. (White, J & Ypi, L, 2011). The project addresses these debates through practice by establishing new methods to produce social artworks with others. The knowledge produced here focuses on learning collectively. It utilises participatory art practices but extends existing methods by considering participants as members, therefore creating a longer-term engagement with a group.

As artist-researchers we contribute new methods of engagement and propose questions about how the art gallery can support increased democratic exchange. When participant-based activity is articulated as an art project as opposed to a gallery education project, it enables more experimentation with new social practices. It doesn't have to mean big policy changes to the methods of an organisations audience development programme, but can enable new developments through practice.



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Figure 4.
Clockwise from top left

Artists: Suzanne Lacy, (2013) *Between the Door and the Street*, Brooklyn USA. (photograph: Derek Schultz)

Chto Delat, *How does politics begin? Public interventions in Kronstadt*, 2005

Allan Kaprow, *Stock Room*, 1961

Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Touch Sanitation* (1978-80)

Tania Bruguera, (2018) *Our Neighbours*, workshop at Tate, London, (photograph: Andrew Dunkley/Tate)

Thomas Hirschhorn (2013) *Gramsci Monument*, *Art School : Energy=Yes! Quality=No!*, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Courtesy Dia Art Foundation. Photo: Romain Lopez

PSC research. From left to right

Gregory Sholette (2018) *Art as Social Action: An Introduction to the Principles and Practices of Teaching Social Practice*, Allworth Press, USA

Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson (2010) *Curating and the Educational Turn* Paperback – 31 Mar. Open Editions London.

Henry Giroux (1997) *Pedagogy And The Politics Of Hope: Theory, Culture, And Schooling: A Critical Reader*, Routledge

Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013) *The Undercommons, Fugitive Planning & Black Study* Minor Compositions, New York

Research Questions

1. How can the art gallery support increased democratic exchange?
2. What types of art practice can support the production of counter-public spheres?
3. How can new groupings impact upon authorship and enable further collective artistic production?

Aims and Objectives

- * To produce new methods of participation for art projects.
- * To utilise spaces of the art gallery to develop alternative public spheres.
- * To design art projects that bring together new members as opposed to arts participants.
- * To devise methods for artistic production that consider care, commoning and collectivising.

Research Methodology

Shared Study and Workshops In 2010 the ‘educational turn’ in art, was articulated by Paul O’Neill and Mick Wilson via an edited anthology entitled, *Curating and the Educational Turn*. O’Neill and Wilson described the prevalent use of pedagogical models as used by curators as well as artists engaged in critical art projects (O’Neill & Wilson, 2010: 12). They explain how lectures, classes and *discussions* have long been considered forms of dematerialised art practice as well as operating as a supporting role for exhibitions of art in museums and biennials.

In the *Partisan Social Club Art-Study-Action* research project we explore the possibility of content-led pedagogical approaches to working with others in the production of artworks. We advance from focusing on artistic methods as a form of individual learning and move towards advocating critical debate through collective art projects. Stefano Harney describes, ‘study’ as getting together with others and determining what needs to be learnt together; spending time with identified material without worrying about the endpoint or the credits accumulated (Harney, 2018).

We developed ‘study workshops’ and ‘workshopping’ methods as way of evolving participation techniques, moving the emphasis from the making of a shared artwork towards the activity of learning together (Jordan, 2019).

The workshops for the project *On Being Together* set out to introduce partisanship and politics, with a seminar *On Membership* by Professor Jonathan White and then a series of three practical workshops with accompanying ‘How to’ posters: *How to Change the World*, *How to Write a Slogan* and *Embody a Text*, (Hewitt and Jordan) and *Collective Working Towards the Production of Built Structures*, (Griffiths, Hewitt and Jordan). The workshops at Edinburgh Printmakers for *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish!*, called forth

Figure 6.
Clockwise from top left
Jonathan White and Lea
Ypi (2016) *The Meaning
of Partisanship*, Oxford
University Press

Kristen Ross (2018) *The Zad
and the NoTav*, Mauvaise
Trupe Collective, Verso

Michael Hardt and Antonio
Negri (2006) *Multitude*,
London: Penguin Books

Joan C Tronto (2013) *Care
and Democracy*, New York
University Press

Paulo Freire, (1970)
*Pedagogy of the
Oppressed*, Penguin
(PHOTO)

Bruno Gulli (2005) *Labour
of Fire: The Ontology of
Labour Between Economy
and Culture*, Temple Univ
Press

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Research Context: Care Collectivising and the Commons: L-R clockwise: *Partisanship*, White & Ypi, *The Zad and NoTav*, Ross, *Multitude*, Hardt & Negri, *Caring Democracy*, Tronto, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire, *Labour of Fire*, Gulli.



members to debate ideas of labour (Gulli: 2005) and platform capital (Snireck: 2017) as well as build with, situate and customise a series of slogan-boxes that we had produced during our residency in the print workshop. The participants developed temporary structures on the nearby brownfield site, performing with the slogan-boxes. Documentation of these events were presented in the gallery as a series of billboard posters. For *After Thompson* at the Coventry Biennial we took Thompson’s text, *The Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness* as the basis for shared study. We produced a *Workshopping Manual #1*, and PSC members designed and ran eight workshops, (including a one-day pre-exhibition text workshop).

The visual aesthetic developed for this practice-research is based on what has been called *Urgent Graphics*, (Poyner, 2013) using DIY processes to generate posters, slogans, and slogan- structures (objects that related to the body to be worn or carried that hold text).



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Action, Membership and Tagging Artist and theorist Gregory Sholette, articulates ways in which art is considered as social action. Citing a number of contemporary artists, he combines action with art practice and refers to methods such as direct action, collective learning and alternative ways of organising (Sholette, 2018). Artists Adrian Piper and Mierle Laderman Ukeles sought to enquire into the relationship between art and the everyday in particular they focused on their gender resulting in a series of actions in art spaces and the public realm. These practices literally take art out of the studio and place the production of art into the public domain. (Jordan, 2017). Importantly for this research these artworks transform the pursuit of art from the arena of representation to the place of action.

For this project we worked with art spaces in conjunction with curators to offer an alternative place in the public domain to construct sites for groups to meet. We utilised the gallery as a provisional place in which to engage with others and form mini- public spheres. We wanted to create a longer-term project in which 'members' could develop their own work and impact upon the aims of the group, changing it and owning it. Members are those who together make up a group or organization and they inspire collective action for themselves. Using the process of membership over the typical practice of 'participation' helped us to create relationships that lasted longer than a one-off art project.

The aim of the *Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action* workshops was to create a union and an artistic collective of study as a basis to produce creative outputs. Members worked on things together and chose when to participate or not according to their other commitments. The objective was to utilise the space of art to think about political topics together. PSC members formed small groups to design and organise their own workshop and collaborative events, we called this process 'tagging'.

Figure 7.
Partisan Social Club,
On Being together:
membership, collectives
and unions, Subverting
the pop song: hijacking
popular music for
opinion formation,
with Toby Tobias &
Tim Cape workshop
documentation,
Beaconsfield Gallery
Vauxhall, London, 2018



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Figure 8.
Partisan Social Club,
After Thompson:
An Inquiry into the
Principles of the
Distribution of Wealth
Most Conducive to
Human Happiness, 'Is
This T-shirt Working
Hard Enough?' Sadie
Edginton & Khaver
Idrees, Yukako
Tanaka, workshop
documentation, The
Row, Coventry Biennial,
UK, 2019

Care, Commoning and Collectivizing Care is both a collective and an individual concern in that it is something that affects us all whether we are driven to perform individual acts of care, or we vote for a collective strategy of state provided care. However, care is motivated by mutual concerns and is therefore predominantly a collective process. Care does not have a leader nor a single author, but relies on interdependence and accountability. Care is action and method in that it is something we can provide for others but it is also a political tool for thinking about the future of society. (Hewitt & Jordan, 2021).

Collectivity is a way to challenge the ontological limits of individualism and the social limits of art. Art theorist Gerald Raunig, activists of the Zad and historian Ross (Raunig, 2010, Ross, 2018) present us with new hope for both the construction of community and the workings of a collective. Employing the method of care via action in a collective art practice enables us to foreground collective encounters, social events and the exchange of opinions, over finished artefacts.

We designed the content of *On Being Together* and *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish!* and *After Thompson* to address working collectively and care. (Hewitt & Jordan, 2021). After sociologist Tronto, we understand care as a politics of democracy not as an individual responsibility; care as a way to look out for each other, so that as few people as possible suffer from poverty, racism or prejudice. Theorist Deva Woodley's articulation of the way in which the Black Lives Movement utilizes a political idea of care, demonstrates there are possibilities for it as a means to political change (Woodley, 2020). Hardt and Negri enable us to consider the commons as a practice of sharing and a tool for freeing us of private property. Commoning, in conjunction with care and collectivizing can be utilized as a political force towards social change. (Hardt & Negri, 2005). Art practice is always contingent and relies on a number of experiments, encounters and occurrences as part of the process of production. 'The polarity and autonomy and social character marks the positions of artworks with advanced capitalist societies.' (Zuidervaart 1990: 65).

Three Art-Study-Action projects We delivered three *Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action* projects with three public art organisations. We wanted to learn about how these processes could be applied over a range of projects with new members in different sites.

1. In *On Being Together*, we were able to inhabit the gallery space from 13 September to 5 December 2018. We proposed the idea of membership and was able to start the Partisan Social Club (PSC). We invited artist Frank Wasseur to run a workshop entitled 'How to Design a Workshop'. The 'tagging' idea developed as members designed and hosted their own events, in total there were 10 workshops. Two participants undertook an auto-ethnography and anthropologist (Edington 2019, Struthers 2019). Dr. Gabriela Nicolescu carried out an ethnography.
2. For *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish!* We wanted to experiment with how the site of the work impacted on the actions of members. We worked with labour, economics and platform capital as a way to explore this. We produced slogan-boxes in the print workshop at Edinburgh Printmakers. In this instance we invited members to perform with and site the slogan-texts. We were able to use the education space, the outdoors space, and the gallery space to host workshops, talks and present documentation of the PSC members.
3. For *After Thompson* at Coventry Biennial we turned the exhibition space into a site of work, hosting talks and workshops for and by PSC members. We produced a workshop manual to further disseminate Thompson's ideas of the difference between wealth creation and distribution. We wrapped the room in a billboard poster which showed the first *After Thompson* PSC workshop. Members hosted seven workshops at Coventry Biennial.



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Figure 8a.
Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions, 'How to design a workshop' with Frank Vasseur Slogan Writing Workshop, workshop documentation, 15th October, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall London, 2018*



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Figure 9.
Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish, workshop documentation, Edinburgh Printmakers, Fountainbridge Edinburgh 2019*



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Figure 10.

Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions*, Slogan Writing Workshop, with Andy Hewitt & Mel Jordan, with guest speaker Professor Jonathon White, workshop documentation, 13 September, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall London, 2018

On being together: memberships, collectives and unions

On Being Together: Memberships, Collectives and Unions, commissioned by Beaconsfield Art Gallery (BGV), London and funded by the Arts Council of England £5,000. The project took place at BGV from 13 September 2018 – 5 December 2018.

The aim of the project was to create a new group, a set of members that worked together on practically transforming the outside spaces of the gallery and whilst doing so, to reflect upon their understanding of community, membership, collective action and local citizenship. We asked members to respond to studying and working with the site and to make embodied structures and text props. We received 18 responses from local residents, local artists, art students, architecture students and a performing arts student.

We produced three posters and ran three days of study and practice workshops and two days for final production. We provided materials and equipment for days three, four and five which were spent producing collective artworks together. At the end of the week we presented the outcomes to the wider public, via an exhibition-like event. Members collectively programmed events over the period of the exhibition, which included: 'How to design a workshop' with Frank Wasseur, 'Drawing slogans @half term', The Big Draw, Allan Struthers, Sadie Edginton and Simon Tyszko. 'Collaborative or collective: the politics of the artist group' Andy Hewitt and Mel Jordan. 'Subverting the pop song: hijacking popular music for opinion formation', Toby Tobais and Tim Cape. Closing event: Richard Galpin on the Charterists and growing lettuce in Lambeth and Partisan Bingo, by Liz Murray, Alison Gill and Ron Harley (Unison Regional Manager)

85% of the responders attended the five days, public opening and further events. Study workshops operated as a way to start the process but became the most important part of the project. PSC member Chris Daubney states that, 'These opening workshops helped to frame activities among members through which to explore further the intersection of art and politics. Ideas around political forms of 'membership' and collective opinion formation, especially within differing social and cultural contexts, were jointly – defined and debated.' (Daubney 2018: n.pag).

In her auto-ethnography, Sadie Edginton says, 'At the time, the process of making the slogans with others didn't seem like it had any particular worth, but with distance I could identify that it did something. By thinking through the text, drawing it out and doing something with it, really makes an idea permeate.' (Edginton, 2019)

Participant, Allan Struthers says, 'I was drawn to the project by a chance to explore an artistic community, work with experts in the field of socially engaged art projects, and participate in a politically oriented artwork. Through these engagements, I have developed political positions that inform my practice, which I try to consider in terms of political praxis. (Struthers, 2019).

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Figure 11.
Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions, Slogans and Embodiment*. Activity and making by members, workshop documentation, 13 September, Partisan Social Club, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, 2018



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**Figure 12.**

Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions, Slogans and Embodiment + Structures*, Andy Hewitt, Mel Jordan & Sean Griffiths. Collective working towards the production of built structures, documentation, 28-29 September, Partisan Social Club, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, 2018.

Figure 13.

Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions, Slogans and Embodiment + Structures*, Andy Hewitt, Mel Jordan & Sean Griffiths. Collective working towards the production of built Structures, documentation, 28-29 September, Partisan Social Club, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, 2018.



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Figure 14. Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions*, 'Collaborative or collective: the politics of the artist group', Andy Hewitt and Mel Jordan, workshop documentation, 1st November, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall London, 2018.



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Figure 15. Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions*, 'Subverting the pop song: hijacking popular music for opinion formation', with Toby Tobias, workshop documentation, 14th November, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall London, 2018.



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Figure 16. Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions*, 'Musicalize your slogan', with Tim Cape, workshop documentation, 17 November, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall London, 2018.



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Figure 17. Partisan Social Club, *On Being together: membership, collectives and unions*, 'Closing Event: PSC entertains', Partisan Bingo with Alison Gill, Liz Murray, Simon Tyszko, and Richard Galpin on 'The Chartists and growing lettuce in Lambeth', 24th November, Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall London, 2018.

Social Montage: Speak- Act- Publish!

Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish!

Commissioned by Edinburgh Printmakers, Castle Mills, Edinburgh, for a residency in the print workshop resulting in an exhibition in their new gallery space, Gallery 2. Technical support, Travel and artist fee. £5,000. The residency 27 May-1 June, exhibition 15 June to 14 July 2019.

Whilst in residence in the print workshop at Edinburgh Printmakers, we worked with artist and technician Anupa Gardner to screen-print eight new slogans onto four sides of 130 cardboard boxes (slogan-box). We aimed to explore the relationship between print, the body and publishing. We made reproducible, modular objects as a starting point for members to make into their own temporary artworks. We printed slogan-text onto a 3-dimensional mass-produced object to invite engagement through reading and physical interaction. The boxes host the texts: *Free work from capitalist exploitation; Working for mutual co-operation and solidarity; e-Workers of the world, unite!; Re-educate platform capitalists; All power to the communist workers; End the accumulation of capital - work to satisfy human needs; Labour for common wealth not private property; Living labour - workers against capital.*



Figure 18. Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, development drawings and view of Edinburgh Printmakers building and adjacent brown field site, Edinburgh Printmakers, Fountainbridge Edinburgh, 2019.

Figure 19. Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, slogan-box printing and production with Anupa Gardner, Edinburgh Printmakers, Fountainbridge Edinburgh, 2019.



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Figures 20 + 21.
Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, workshop documentation,
Edinburgh Printmakers Fountainbridge
Edinburgh, 2019.

The content for the slogan-boxes is labour; informed by Bruno Gulli's ontology of labour (Gulli: 2005), in which he presents an alternative framing of labour as essential to our society; Gulli asserts that our current understanding of work is one that is co-opted by capitalism for the accumulation of private wealth and accordingly he attempts to recast labour as a type of human agency, in order that we can reclaim it for new social and collective endeavours. The slogans also refer to the realities of contemporary working conditions as articulated by Nick Srnicek, in his book 'Platform Capitalism', he describes global tech companies as 'economic actors within a capitalist mode of production', rather than cultural or political actors who are informed by cultural values. (Srnicek: 2017). The cardboard box is a symbol of goods and trade.

As part of a study workshop we gave the slogan-boxes to all attendees to work with. Edinburgh Printmakers have relocated to an ex-factory building in Fountainbridge, the surrounding area between the building and the canal is awaiting redevelopment and is an unoccupied brownfield site. The members took the slogan-boxes to the nearby site; they made an obstacle course, built arbitrary structures, put up a wall, strung the boxes together, defaced them- disconnecting them from their slogan, filled them with debris and embodied the slogans by carrying and wearing the boxes. We produced three billboard posters from documentation of PSC members using the boxes in the wasteland space. We installed the posters and the rest of the boxes in the gallery space with an invite to move them around or take them away.



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Figures 22 + 23.
Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, workshop documentation,
Edinburgh Printmakers Fountainbridge
Edinburgh, 2019.

Producing printed objects for workshop practices enables dialogue to develop through space, objects and social encounters. This changed the nature of the collaboration between members to create a more agonistic agenda around the agency of the objects (slogan-boxes). Anupa Gardener, artist and print technician comments on the role of printmaking as a way to prompt discussion, she says, 'It was unusual to work with artists to create a large print run of print as objects that were only produced to be the basis of workshops.' (Conversation with Andrew Hewitt, 28 May 2019). When describing the use of objects in the workshop participant Kate Davis said, 'It was very exciting for us to experience thinking about ideas around labour and its social meaning whilst responding actively to the slogan-boxes in the nearby waste ground.' (Conversation with Mel Jordan, 1 June 2019). And Madeleine Wood says 'I really enjoyed learning about your work the ideas behind it, on our day of box building together.' (Wood, 2019).

Sarah Manning-Shaw, programme director, commented upon the way the print became secondary to the process, she said, 'Print is often an image mounted on a wall. I liked that fact that you made objects especially for your workshops. The fact that the boxes could be rearranged and handled by visitors in the gallery made me think about printmaking differently. As the first project in the new gallery Space 2 it was great to see you turn it into a place for action and discussion,' (in conversation with Andrew Hewitt and Mel Jordan 14 June 2019). Judith Liddle, programme co-ordinator, commented on the political content of the printed objects, she says, 'It was great to talk about how your ideas developed. Discussions about labour in our gig-economy and post-industrial, highly digitised society are so relevant and compelling - we are all very excited about the discussions that your work inspired.' (Liddle, 2019).

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Figure 24.
Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, Gallery 2, exhibition views, 15th June – 14th July, Edinburgh Printmakers Fountainbridge Edinburgh, 2019.



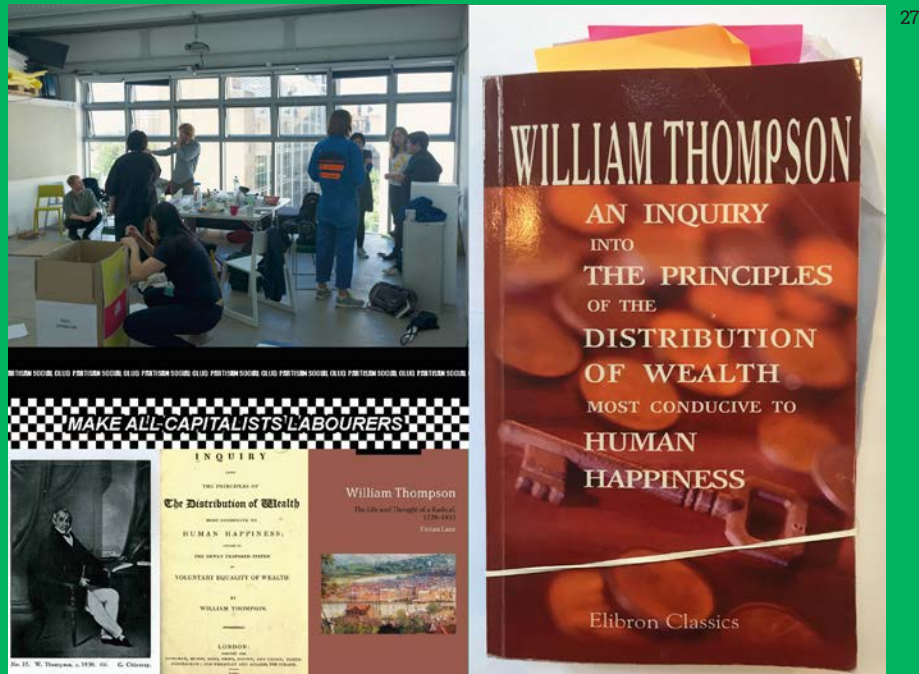
25

Figure 25.
Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, Gallery 2, exhibition views, 15th June – 14th July, Edinburgh Printmakers Fountainbridge Edinburgh, 2019.

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Figure 26.
Partisan Social Club, *Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish*, Gallery 2, public event, exhibition Edinburgh Printmakers Fountainbridge Edinburgh, 2019.



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Figure 27.
Clockwise from top left

Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, 'William Thompson Workshop', RCA London, 2019.

Thompson, W., *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, Elibron, London 2005.

Lane, F., (2018) *William Thompson, The Life and Thoughts of a Radical, 1778- 1833*, Bloomsbury London

Thompson, W., *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness; applied to the Newly Proposed System of Voluntary Equality of Wealth*, Longman, Hurst Rees, Orme, Brown & Green: London, first published 1825.

Portrait of William Thompson by G. Chinnery, Partisan Social Club Scarf, *Make all capitalists labourers*, for 'After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness', Coventry Biennial, UK, 2019.

After Thompson: The Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness

Commissioned by Coventry Biennial, resulting in a new installation and a series of workshops. Technical support, Travel and artist fee of £4,000. 4 Oct - 24 November 2019.

The project included existing PSC members and new participants to explore ideas of labour and economy as first expressed in the writing of Irish philosopher William Thompson (1775–1833). The aim was to develop study-workshops where new members could translate Thompson's ideas into statements, texts and artworks, corresponding to their own experiences and viewpoints on working life, equality and happiness. From documentation of the first Thompson workshop we produced a billboard poster and to wrap the walls in the exhibition space. In a 'tag-type' process PSC members generated workshops ideas and sent out calls for participation. Seven workshops were scheduled throughout the duration of the project.

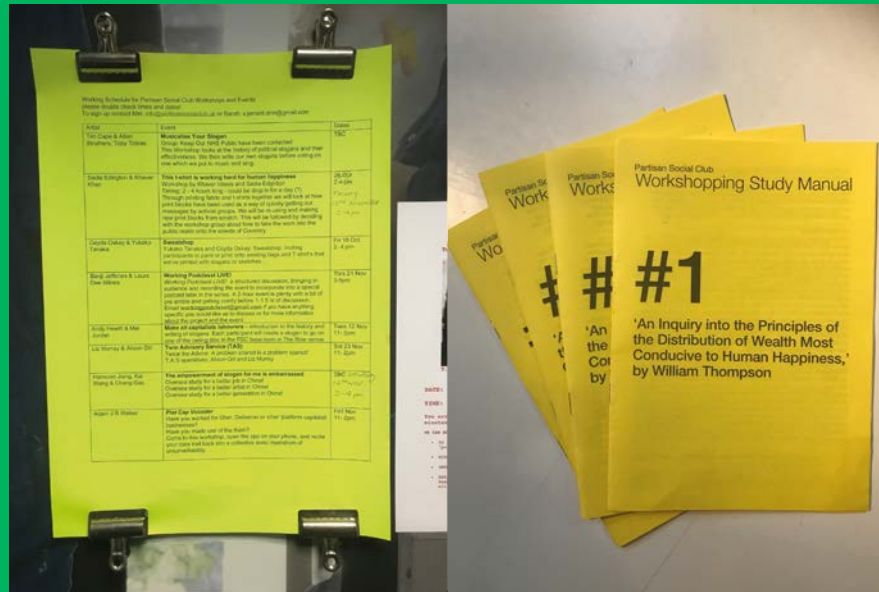
Thompson's book *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness; applied to the Newly Proposed System of Voluntary Equality of Wealth*, was first published in 1824 (Thompson: 1824). It was his first major work in political economy, and it contains his most comprehensive critique of capitalism as well as his proposals for a co-operative society as an alternative to the existing state of affairs, which saw acute poverty amongst the lower classes in Ireland and the UK. Thompson condemned the narrow mechanical approach taken by political economists but also the naïvely utopian and moralist approach of philosophers and attempted to combine a scientific and ethical critique of the system, concentrating on how wealth is created and also how it is distributed.

We published a 'Workshopping Study Manual #1', to introduce others to Thompson's work and a slogan scarf based on his ideas, 'Make all Capitalists Labourers'. PSC members translated Thompson ideas into participatory workshops to produce sound works, T shirts, posters, performances and slogan writing on ceiling tiles in the exhibition space.



Figures 28–30.
Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, view of PSC workshop room at Coventry Biennial with Williams Thompson workshop billboard poster, 4 Oct – 24 November, Coventry Biennial, The Row Coventry, UK, 2019.

Figure 31, photograph by Marcin Sz



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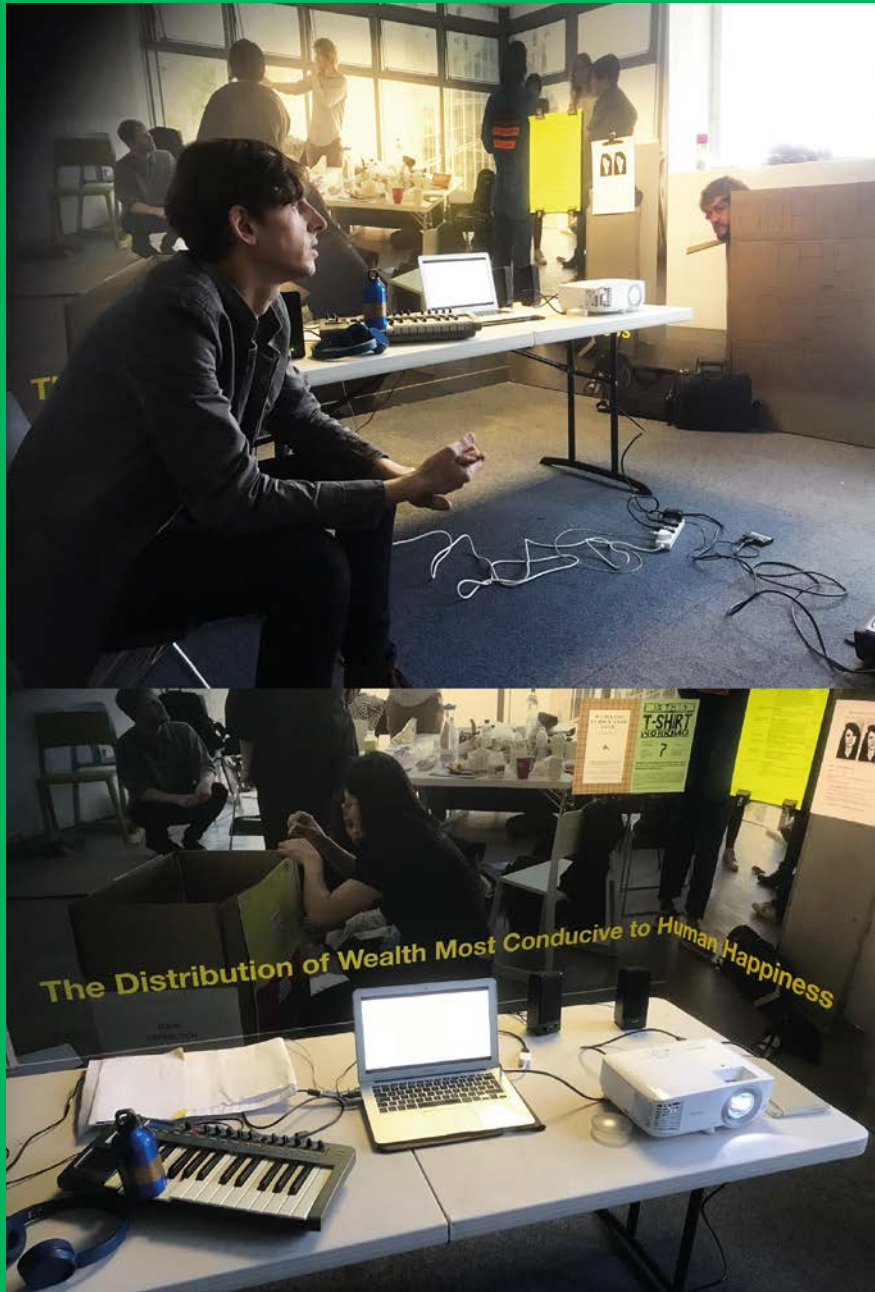
Figure 31. Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, Schedule of Partisan Social Club workshops, PSC workshop study manual, PSC study manual stand, Coventry Biennial, 4 Oct – 24 November, The Row Coventry, UK, 2019.

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Figure 32.

Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, members event posters, Coventry Biennial, 4 Oct – 24 November, The Row Coventry, UK, 2019.



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The method of tagging, supporting new PSC members to create and host follow-on events enables further participants and more diverse people to become involved in thinking about contemporary politics and how to develop their opinions. Thompsons work on wealth and happiness was something that people could identify with and understand, even though it was political philosophy. The study manual worked to introduce Thompson ideas quickly and simply.

Ryan Hughes Coventry Biennial Director commented on the popularity of the workshops. He said, 'the workshops are going well and the growth of content in the PSC space is great'. (Hughes, 2019).

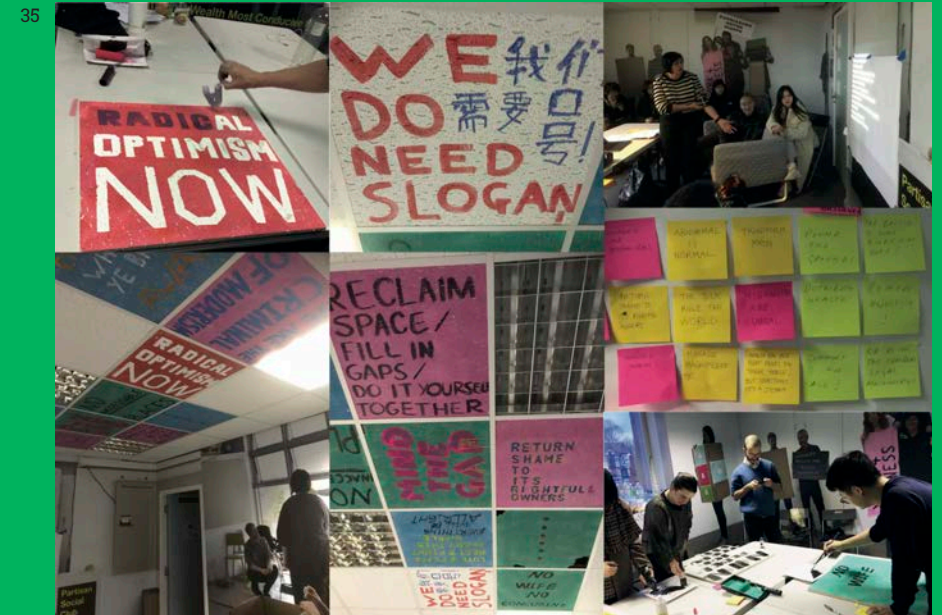
Figure 33.

Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, 'Plat Cap Vocoder', With Adam J B Walker, Have you worked for Uber, Deliveroo or other 'platform capitalist' businesses? Have you made use of them? Come to this workshop, open the app on your phone, and recite your data trail back into a collective sonic maelstrom of unsurveillability, Friday 1 November. Coventry Biennial, The Row, Coventry UK, 2019



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Figure 34. Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, 'Musicalise Your Slogan', with Tim Cape & Allan Struthers, Toby Tobias. This Workshop looks at the history of political slogans and their effectiveness. We then write our own slogans before voting on one which we put to music and sing. Saturday 2 November, Coventry Biennial, The Row, Coventry UK, 2019



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Figure 35. Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, 'Make all capitalists labourers', with Andy Hewitt & Mel Jordan. An introduction to the history and writing of slogans. Each participant will create a slogan to go on one of the ceiling tiles in the PSC base room in The Row venue. Wednesday 13 November, Coventry Biennial, The Row, Coventry UK, 2019



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Figure 36.

Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, 'Is This T-shirt Working Hard Enough?' Sadie Edginton & Khaver Idrees, Yukako Tanaka. In this workshop the artists will be exploring the use of t-shirts in displaying printed political text. The artists have devised a set of shapes out of their languages of English and Arabic that people can play with to create text and patterns. We invite you to join us to create printed words. T-shirts will be available, also feel free to bring your own! Friday 15 November. Coventry Biennial, The Row, Coventry UK, 2019



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Figure 37.

Partisan Social Club, *After Thompson: An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, 'Twin Advisory Service (TAS)' Alison Gill and Liz Murray, 'Twice the Advice: A problem shared is a problem spared!' Saturday 23 November, 'Podclass LIVE!' With Benji Jeffery & Laura Dee Milnes, Working Podclass LIVE! A structured discussion, bringing in audience and recording the event to incorporate into a special podcast later in the series. A 2-hour event is plenty with a bit of pre-amble and getting

comfy before 1-1.5 hr of discussion. Thursday 21 November. 'Reflection of Oversea Studies as Chinese identity' with Chang Gao, Hanxuan Jiang & Kai Wang. The workshop is based on a game called "Telling truth and Big Adventure". As talking about political issues is a quite sensitive in China, so we use a framework of a popular game among Chinese young people to make the participants less worried/feeling friendly. Saturday 16 November, Coventry Biennial, The Row, Coventry UK, 2019

Insights

The *Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action* set out to explore new methods of participation for art projects as well as to use the art gallery to develop alternative public spheres. We designed programmes of study and workshops that others could join as members rather than participants. By calling forth new members we expanded the participants of the project from the usual community groups of the arts organisation and created an ongoing project that created potential for long term collaborations. We developed the idea of sharing and commoning through 'tagging' workshops which in turn created new participants and members.

Feedback from members was valuable, for example this quote from Sadie Edginton about the method of membership for participatory projects. She says, 'The long-term process over a few months of repeatedly returning to the space and the participant organised follow-up events created more of a feeling of collectivity. It was this aftermath where the membership became a new group, when we independently forged links and self-organised. When members of the public returned and joined in activities, it really worked. It was the continued return that built on the conditions in the space and generated group-ness, which is when things shifted.' (Edginton, 2019). Khaver Idress, commented on how the workshops had changed her approach to working with groups. She says, 'I work with vulnerable women who've never really had a lot of choice and the biggest thing they've done is to leave. I mean they made the move of getting out of certain situations. I think if they were doing a workshop that was just telling them exactly what to do, I don't think that does anything for them. It is then all about me just delivering the workshop. I think that method is common in galleries, it's that same old thing. What I picked up from this project and what I can take to my workshops is about that empowering goal, so using those techniques to bring about a certain change or transformation in that person.' (Idris, 2020)

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Figure 38.
Partisan Social Club,
*On Being together:
membership, collectives
and unions*, Slogans
and Embodiment +
Structures, Andy Hewitt
& Mel Jordan & Sean
Griffiths, workshop
documentation,
28-29 September,
Beaconsfield Gallery
Vauxhall London, 2018

The overall research contribution of this project is to propose new methods for working in the context of participatory and social practices. We experimented with effective ways of working with others that address the shortfalls of institutional practices. We prompted alternative public-spheres in the gallery with the aim of democratic exchange to provide a political approach to participation. We created a new form of shared authorship through tagging, that created sustainability through membership.

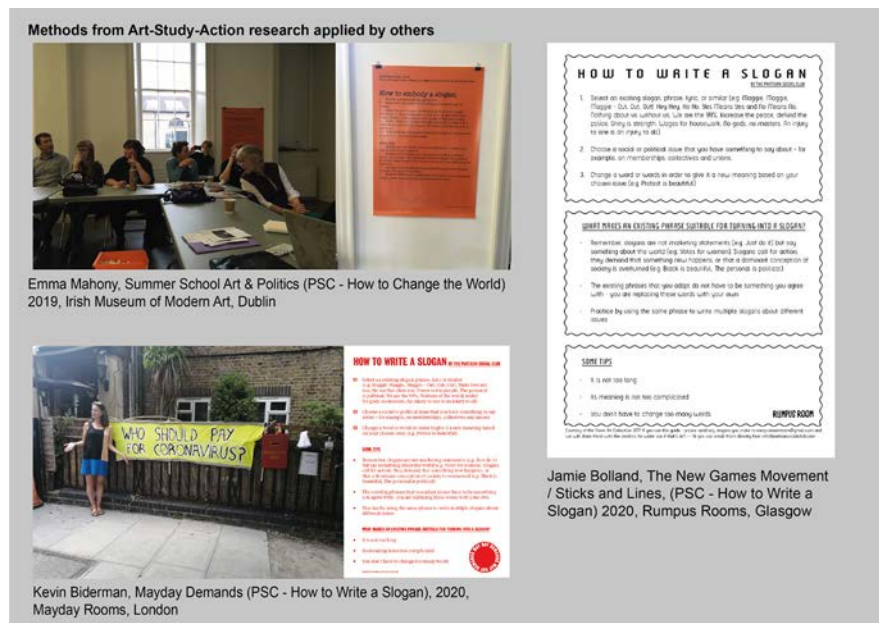
This research was included as part of the funding proposal for the forthcoming project *SPACEX: The value for society of social and participatory art and design and architecture projects in urban space*, funded in 2019, Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions - Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) Call: H2020-MSCA-RISE-2018. (€690,000) Successful, due to begin 2021.

From seeing our projects three different arts professionals got in touch to ask if they could use our methods to run collaborative projects in Dublin, London and Glasgow.

Partisan Social Club: Art-Study-Action applied by others.

1. Emma Mahony, Summer School Art & Politics (PSC - How to Change the World), 2019, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin
2. Kevin Biderman, Mayday Demands (PSC - How to Write a Slogan), 2020, Mayday Rooms, London
3. Jamie Bolland, The New Games Movement / Sticks and Lines, (PSC - How to Write a Slogan) 2020, Rumpus Rooms, Glasgow

The project leaders acknowledged our work and used our method of collective working- designing their version of our 'How to' posters to use with others.



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Figure 39.
From top left
Emma Mahony,
Summer School Art
& Politics (PSC - How
to Change the World),
2019, Irish Museum of
Modern Art, Dublin
Kevin Biderman,
Mayday Demands (PSC
- How to Write a Slogan),
2020, Mayday Rooms,
London

Jamie Bolland, *The
New Games Movement
/ Sticks and Lines*, (PSC
- How to Write a Slogan)
2020, Rumpus Rooms,
Glasgow

Dissemination

Publications

Panel convened by Hewitt, Jordan and Mahony, entitled *Spatial Practices in Art and Architecture for an Empathetic Society (SPACES)*

Paper 1: *Art, Partisanship and Public Spheres*, (Hewitt: 2019)

Paper 2: *Art as a Politically Transformative Tool in the Public Sphere*, (Jordan: 2019).

Lund Urban Creativity Conference 2019, Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies in collaboration with the Division of Art History and Visual Studies at Lund University.

Hewitt, A. & Jordan, M. (2021). *On Trying to be Collective*, *Art and the Public Sphere Journal*, 9.1 & 9.2 (in press).

Public and academic talks

On being together; memberships, collectives and unions, Jordan, as part of Art Week London at Beaconsfield Art Gallery, September 2018.

Let the Productive Power of the Collective Run Riot! Hewitt and Jordan for 'Talk With Us: Collaboration', Coventry Biennial, 23 November 2019.

Kiosks, Slogans and Social Montage, Jordan, Edinburgh College of Art, 25 October 2019.

'Engagement as Material', Royal College of Art, <https://www.rca.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/engagement-material-symposia/>. Introduction and Co-organiser, Jordan, 18 September 2020

On Trying to be Collective, Hewitt and Jordan, NN Contemporary, Northampton, 28 January 2021

Ethnography (reports)

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Struthers, A., (2019), *Leadership, Authority, and Contestation in a Gallery: The Partisan Social Club*, Ethnography, Report, London.

Press Coverage

On Being Together

Isotopica, Resonance Radio, 7th October 2018 (The Partisan Social Club) by https://www.mixcloud.com/Resonance/isotopica-7th-october-2018_-the-partisan-social-club/

<https://www.artrabbit.com/events/on-being-together-memberships-collectives-and-unions>

<https://nineelmslondon.com/events/celebrate-the-partisan-social-clubs-residency-beaconsfield-gallery/>

<https://nineelmslondon.com/events/musicalise-your-slogan-with-the-partisan-social-club-beaconsfield-gallery/>

Social Montage: Speak-Act-Print-Publish!

<https://ukprintmakers.wordpress.com/2019/06/18/social-montage-speak-act-print-publish/>

<https://www.artrabbit.com/events/social-montage-speakactprintpublish-the-partisan-social-club-at-edinburgh-printmakers>

After Thompson: The Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness.

Coventry Biennial

<http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/the-twin-coventry-biennial-of-contemporary-art>

<https://www.a-n.co.uk/blogs/a-n-writer-development-programme-2019-20/post/52574800/>

<http://www.thedrouth.org/tales-of-two-cities-coventry-biennial-2019-by-jamie-limond/>

<https://tobytobiaskidd.cargo.site/Musicality-In-Grassroots-Politics-Coventry-Biennial>

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