

Social and Public Kiosks

Dr. Andrew Hewitt



Title	3
Submission Details	3
Additional Information	5
Research Context	6
Research Questions	9
Research Methodology	10
Research Outcomes	20
Insights	60
Dissemination	62
Bibliography	64

Figure 1 (cover)**Clockwise top right**

Freee art collective,
Freee Public Kiosk,
Arts and Humanities
Research Council (AHRC)
Commons First National
Event: Common Ground,
University of York,
Heslington, York June 2016.

Freee art collective, Citizen
Ship, Art in the Park, Milton
Keynes 2017.

Freee-Carracci-Institute, NN
Contemporary, with Centre
for Democratic Practices
(CfDP) The University
of Northampton, Freee
Social Kiosk(open) with
the 'Why? Map', Market
Square, Northampton. 2016.
Photograph Joe Brown.

Freee art collective,
Freee Proto-Kiosk,
Arts and Humanities
Research Council (AHRC)
Commons First National
Event: Common Ground,
University of York,
Heslington, York June
2016.

Title

This research output, entitled *Social and Public Kiosks*, represents a body of artworks comprised of four pop-up structures that are activated in seven different contexts. The kiosks were made between 2015 – 2017. The production of the kiosks was funded by grants from the AHRC, g39, Engage, Leicester University, NN Contemporary, Milton Keynes Gallery and an individual artist award from the Arts Council of England. A total of £52,000 plus additional institutional support was awarded to produce these artworks.

Submission Details

Researcher	Dr. Andrew Hewitt
Collaborators	Andrew Hewitt works collaboratively with Dave Beech and Mel Jordan, as the Free art collective. This research was created by the collective and it is credited to all three researchers.
Title	Social and Public Kiosks
Output Type	Artefact
Output Component(s)	Artworks
Dates	2015 – 2017
Dissemination	Public artworks
ORCID	https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5957-395X
DOI	https://doi.org/10.24339/zcww-6k65



Figure 2.
Slogan writing and badge
making workshops in Citizen
Ship, Art in the Park, Campbell
Park, Milton Keynes, 2017



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Timeline



Proto Kiosk
April 2016



Public Kiosk
(AHRC)
June 2016



Public Kiosk
(engage)
September 2016



Social Kiosk
(engage)
October 2016



Citizen Ship
June – July &
November 2017



Social Kiosk
(Why? Map)
December 2016



Social & Public Kiosk
(NN Contemporary
Arts) November –
December 2016

Commissioners and Exhibition venues

- * *Public Kiosk*, Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), 'Common Ground Event'
- * *Public Kiosk (g39)* Cardiff With Culture: Visioning the City, g39 arts organisation
- * *Social Kiosk (Engage)* Engage international conference, 'Whose Art? Our Art! Access and Activism in Gallery Education'
- * *Social Kiosk and Public Kiosk (NN Contemporary)* Commissioned by NN artistic director Catherine Hemelryk
- * *Social Kiosk (Why? Map)*, in collaboration with Centre for Democratic Practices part of Freee-Carracci-Institute exhibition at NN Contemporary
- * *Citizen Ship*, was a public artwork commissioned by Anthony Spira, for 'City Club' Milton Keynes Gallery (£40,000 ACE funding)

Additional Information

Social and Public Kiosks represents a body of artworks comprised of four pop-up structures that are activated in seven different contexts. The iterations were developed to try out artistic methods that enable democratic encounters in public spaces.

Typically, participatory arts projects take place inside the gallery and are tasked with developing new visitors for the institution. The projects tend to be designed for existing community groupings which can inhibit wider inclusion. Group participants work collaboratively to produce an art object, this method promotes technical skills but is not focused on understanding new forms of citizenship, which could see diverse audiences engage with the art gallery. Therefore, while participatory art projects constructed by galleries and museums aim to achieve wide diversity of engagement there are limitations to current programming.

To address these issues, we work with participants to publish social and political values as a positive function of participatory art practice for citizen engagement. We contribute new methods of engagement to the area of audience development by installing a pop-up structure (kiosk) in the public space of a town centre, shopping mall etc. The kiosk is operated by the artists who facilitate conversational encounters about values and beliefs. The kiosk provides several ways in which a passer-by can engage with opinion formation. The visitor is invited to write a slogan or choose one of the existing slogans to reproduce. They can do this by making a badge, using vinyl text, printing a poster, or programming a teletext sign. They publish their slogan by displaying it on the kiosk structure. Some kiosk events incorporated our collective method of agreeing and disagreeing which we call a 'spoken choir'.

Research Context

Participatory art is now a common process in which artists engage with groups to produce artworks typically funded by the government as part of its social economic policy in urban contexts (Hewitt, 2011: 21). These art projects are generally commissioned by the curator, art institution or the state and envisage an imagined public of users that include the invisible, marginalised or those neglected by society (Milevska 2006). In these instances, participatory artworks are designed to enact inclusion through convivial and technical processes with the aim to create cohesive relations within a group, as well as to evoke a sense of social inclusion. The problem with this as a method for inclusion is that it: 1) infers 'community' on groups who may not see themselves as such and assumes that groups either need or want help; 2) flattens difference within the group, steers the limits of political exchange and acts to suppress wider debate about inclusion, and 3) does not engage other groups from a wider demographic who are perceived as already socially included.

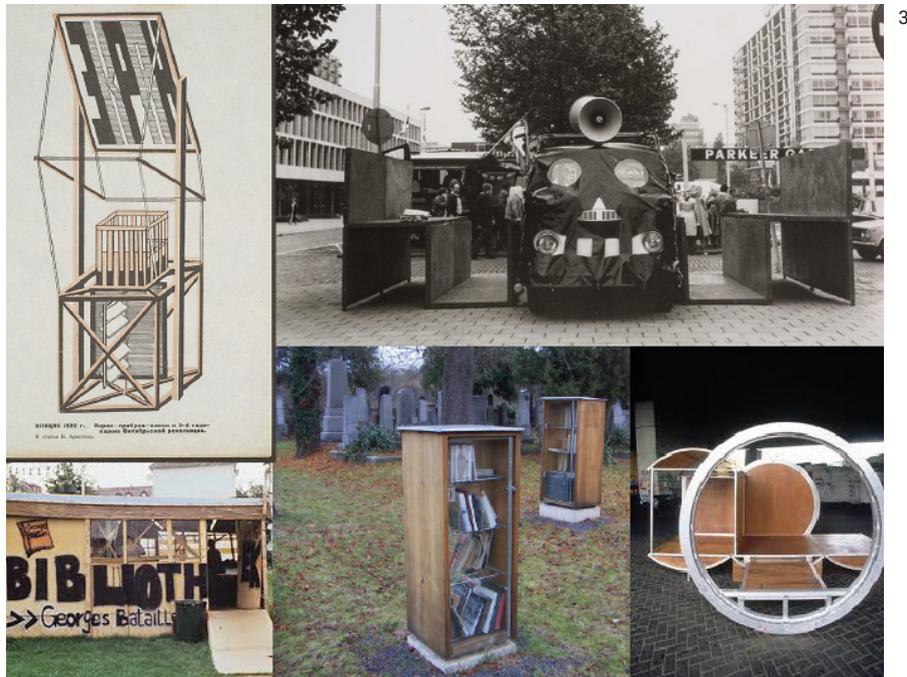
Participatory art projects have been used to circumnavigate the problems identified with hierarchy and power in artistic authorship. To render art more 'democratic', solutions have been directed at the issue of authorship, building on the work of Roland Barthes (Barthes 1977). This also relates to discussions about the function of art for society as well as the way in which meaning in artworks are produced (Jordan 2014: 6). Art historian, Claire Bishop interrogates the term democratic in participatory art practice. She says 'But what does 'democracy' really mean in this context? If relational art produces human relations, then the next logical question to ask is what types of relations are being produced, for whom, and why?' (Bishop 2004, 65).

Political theorist Chantal Mouffe acknowledges a crisis in representative democracy, suggesting that it is failing because it is not agonistic enough. Mouffe prefers what she calls 'agonism' over a continuing consensual neoliberal democracy, arguing that it has the potential to allow different positions to co-exist (Mouffe 2010: 249). For Mouffe, turning antagonisms in to agonism results in a pluralistic community with no one political position dominating a group, thereby providing us with new alternatives for how to live together. (Jordan & Campbell 2018: 129). Agonism allows people to disagree without treating each other as enemies, or, as Mouffe describes, '[agonism is] a form of adversarial confrontation instead of antagonism between enemies.' (Đorđević & Sardelić 2013).

In this research output we consider participatory art as part of the urban studies strategies of the commons and we situate it within art historical concerns and contexts of art practice. We develop agonistic methods of participation as produced in the spoken choirs and the writing, choosing and presenting slogans at the kiosks (Jordan 2017). Therefore, we do not measure the numbers of people that engage in the project rather we collectively develop new methods of opinion formation.

The *Social and Public Kiosks* project addresses these research objectives through practice, producing artworks

that engage with the theoretical debates (Bishop 2004, Mouffe 2010) and foregrounding the function of art for social change. Practice- research is an important contribution to this field of study because it enables us to consider both action and use to understand how the social artwork functions. Conventional forms of contemplation and interpretation when viewing artworks need to be adapted to address this shift (Jordan 2017).



3

Figure 3.
Clockwise from top right
Vito Acconci, *The peplemobile*, 1979. Copyright
De Appel Amsterdam & the
artist(s)

Public works, *Mobile Porch*,
2000

Clegg and Guttman, *Open
Public Library*, 1991-93.

Thomas Hirschhorn, *Bataille
Monument*, Documenta 2002.

Gustav Klutssis, *Screen-
Platform-Kiosk for the Fifth
Anniversary of the Great
October Revolution*, 1922, colour
lithograph on paper, 259 x 157
mm (Art Institute of Chicago)

Research Questions

1. What methods can participatory art practice employ to impact upon democratic processes of opinion formation?
2. How can we engage other groups from a wider demographic in participatory art practice?

Aims and Objectives

- * To produce a portable structure that accommodates the passer-by and ad-hoc publics to engage with participatory art projects.
- * To devise methods of communication and agonistic exchange to enable opinion formation with participants.

Research Methodology

Design and Production of a Kiosk Kiosks are more public, more intimate, and more approachable than shops. They have a sociality that shops lack. By taking away the commercial profit-making utility of the kiosk we investigate its potential for art as opinion formation (Beech, Hewitt, and Jordan, 2017: 16). The kiosk, although conventionally bound to commercial exchange is trapped in financial exchanges, but through it we can see glimpses of a world of public exchanges. By taking away all retail aspects of the kiosk and replacing its branding and advertising with opinions and beliefs we can draw out its full social potential.

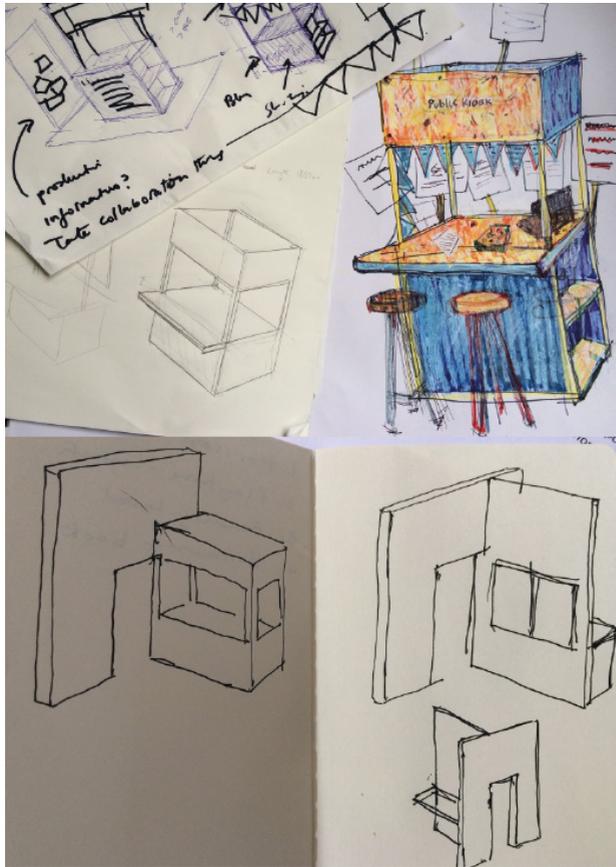


Figure 4.
Examples of commercial kiosks and point of sale techniques.

We produced four pop-up structures to be sited and activated in the public realm, art organisations and as part of one symposium and two conferences. The design of the kiosks had to be light weight and easy to dismantle. The early kiosks had to fit into the back of a small vehicle and needed to be easy to install on site. Lately, Citizen Ship was a more ambitious kiosk that needed others to help move and install it.

The evolution of the kiosks went from a simple stand in which you could put your coffee cup on (*Proto Kiosk*) to something you could congregate around (*Social Kiosk and Public Kiosk*) to finally a weatherproof production and publishing space which could house 15 people (*Citizen Ship*).

The visual aesthetic developed for the first kiosk (*Proto-kiosk*) reflected the pin badge design that we were inviting conference delegates to take. We also needed it to work across a small space and we had to consider the way in which people would meet and chat. *Public Kiosk* (AHRC) was designed so that visitors had space to engage with manifestos, balloons, badges, posters, and scarves, we also wanted enough space for people to draw, write and publish on the structure. We incorporated a large desktop and a cupboard to store materials and a digital printer. We went with the 'festival' context of the AHRC event and made a structure that was part trade stand part market stall. *Social Kiosk (Engage)* was designed for a smaller space at a conference. We took the text we had written which addressed the conference themes, entitled 'Letter to Engage' and reproduced the text on dayglo paper and pasted it on the structure, we wanted it to look like a DIY structure, something hand made you could do yourself. The low-tech graphics and print production were decided upon to operate in contrast to the visual identities and styles used in corporate sites of selling. We used the kiosk to nominate 'a discussion site' and to draw the delegates around to participate in a 'spoken choir' event.



5



6

Figure 5. Development drawings of Freee kiosks.

Figure 6. Free art collective, Social Kiosk, spoken choir reading of Freee's 'Open Letter' at Engage International Conference, 'Whose Art? Our Art!' Liverpool Hope University, October 2016. Photograph Sarah Plumb.

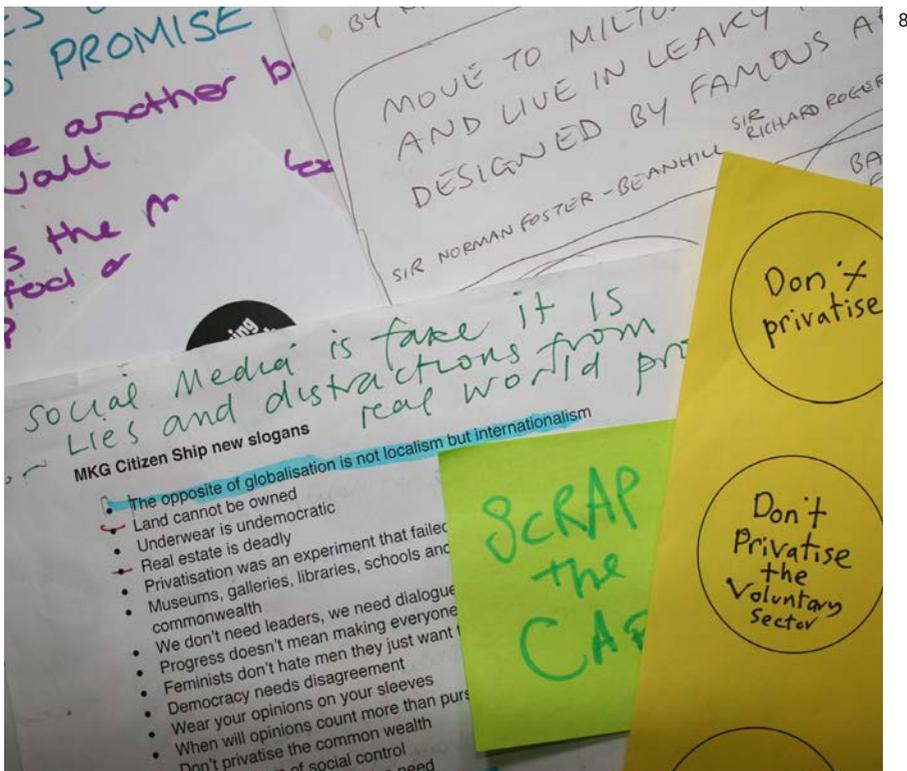
Choosing, Embodying & Publishing Rather than separating the artist off from the public along an axis in which the refusal to make meaning by the artist is opposed to the overproduction of meaning by the public, we aim to place the artist on the same side as the public as collaborators in meaning-making. We make works which say what we believe in collectively for that meaning to be modified, refashioned, and reflected on by others in further acts of meaning-making and disputation of meaning. (Beech, Hewitt, and Jordan, 2017: 12).

We produce slogans (as badges, stickers, scarves, posters, balloons) and manifestos in which we state what we believe in to share our views. The reason we are think slogans are useful tools for opinion formation is that slogans ask for things to change. It is a common misconception that slogans are authoritarian, illiberal and restrictive. Stokely Carmichael would have never used the slogan, 'Black is Beautiful', if he thought that it stated a fact that we could understand without first changing ourselves and the world. The feminist slogan 'The Personal is Political', likewise would only make sense once feminism had transformed our understanding of each of its keywords. If black is already universally understood as beautiful then we do not need the slogan 'Black is Beautiful', and if the personal is already secured as political then we do not need the slogan, 'The Personal is Political'. Slogans do not describe the world they call up a new world to take its place. (Free art collective 2008: 118).

At the kiosk, we present visitors with several slogan-badges (*Proto-Kiosk*), scarves and posters (*Social Kiosk*) and ask them to pick the statement that appealed to them. It does not matter whether they agree or disagree with it (*Social and Public Kiosks and Citizen Ship*). This process of choosing something triggers an emotion in the 'picker', and enables us to enter into a conversation about their ideas and values. Some visitors settle on their choice and then make one of our texts or a text left by a former visitor into a badge, and walk away wearing it. Other visitors come back later (*Public Kiosk AHRC*) or the



7



8

following day (*Citizen Ship*) with a modified version of the text and ask us to start using this as the slogan from which others can choose. Some visitors pick a text for their friend or colleague certain that it will chime with their beliefs.

In some cases, we wrote texts to accompany the kiosks (*Public Kiosk g39*, *Social Kiosk Engage*, *Public Kiosk and Social Kiosk NN Contemporary*). For Public Kiosk g39 we wrote *Manifesto for Art*, to support the 'Cardiff without Culture Campaign'. At g39 we asked visitors to read the manifesto and underline the sentences that they agreed with ready for them to then read aloud together. The events have become known as Freee's spoken choirs. When the space was full of voices, we could hear loudly the most assented parts of the text. And when fewer people joined in, we understood these parts of the manifesto to be less popular. (Beech, Hewitt, and Jordan 2017: 18). Similarly, at the 'Engage International conference' we held a choir to read *Letter to Engage*, a text we wrote addressing the conference themes of art and activism. The spoken choirs were not conventional performances as we asked that if you attended the choir you should participate in it. You could not be a conventional onlooker, you had to be a member of the choir to be present at the event.

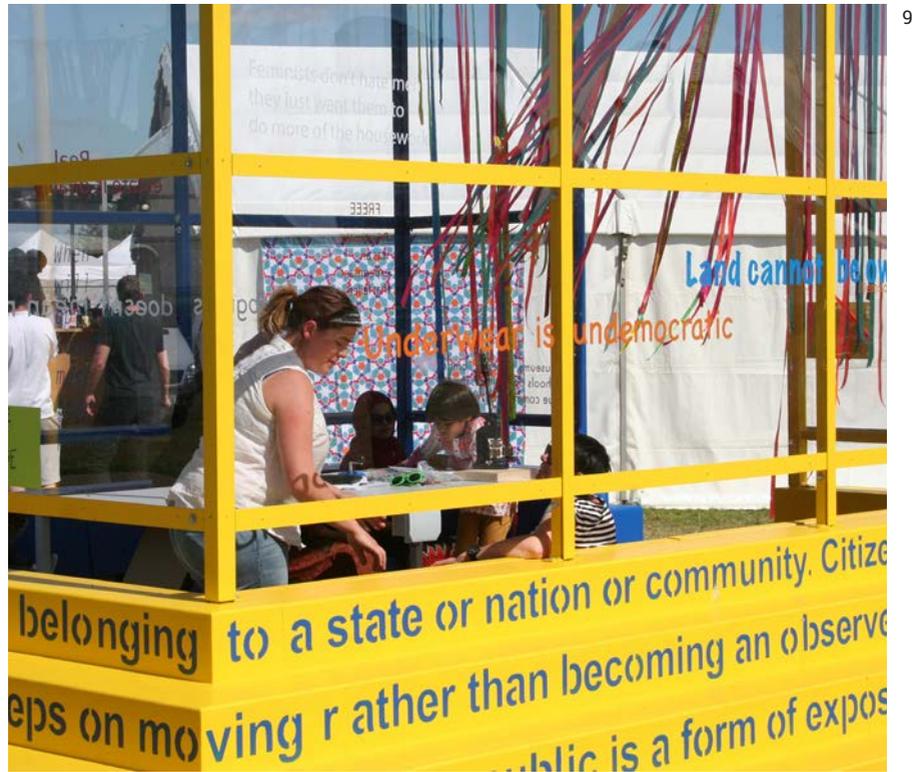
We have utilised badges, scarves, sandwich boards, placards, ribbons, sashes, hats and wristbands to enable the embodying of our texts. By publishing an opinion on your body like wearing a badge you publicly declare a belief. This action prompts further opportunities to think about the relationship between the body and language (Jordan and Campbell: 2018). If the body is not inherent to political action, then, as scholar Ian Bruff asks, 'why do the police employ teargas at a political demonstration? Why not just talk the people into going home?'. (Bruff: 2013).

Figure 7.

From top right, Freee art collective participatory workshop methods; slogan writing workshop for scarf texts MIMA, slogan writing and badge making MIMA, slogan scarf examples, Freee art collective slogan badges, badge making at NN Contemporary.

Figure 8.

Slogan texts written and published at participatory workshops in Citizen Ship



9



10

11



Figure 9.
Free art collective, view
of Citizen Ship, Art in
the Park, Campbell Park,
Milton Keynes 2017.

Figure 10.
Free art collective,
Manifestos 2007- 2017.

Figure 11.
Free art collective, Public
Kiosk, Arts and Humanities
Research Council (AHRC)
Commons First National
Event: Common Ground,
University of York,
Heslington, York June 2016.

Seven Sites We wanted to learn about how the kiosk operated as a vehicle for democratic exchange in a range of sites. We aimed to address different types of publics so when we were asked to contribute to a public project, we proposed using a kiosk. As we used the kiosk in new places, we were able to reflect upon its function. Therefore, we advanced its design and the methods we used for exchange in each iteration.

1. In *Proto-Kiosk*, we co-created the kiosk for the site, and we collaborated on the production of slogans. We invited the visitor to choose a badge. By wearing it they embodied the slogan written on the badge for the duration of the conference.
2. For *Public Kiosk (AHRC)* we equipped the kiosk to facilitate people to produce slogans as posters or badges at the kiosk.
3. We initiated a spoken choir around the kiosk (*Public Kiosk g39*) as part of a symposium event, enabling participants to agree or disagree with the contents of our text and provoke discussion on arts function.
4. We took the kiosk to the 'Engage International Conference' and sited it within the conference hall (*Social Kiosk Engage*) having redesigned for the smaller site, we also wrote and shared a text as a 'spoken choir' on the theme of the conference.
5. Placing *Public Kiosk* and *Social Kiosk* in the gallery at NN made us realise that they appeared as sculptural objects when in the gallery. To emphasis our idea about their use and function we closed each kiosk when they were not being used.
6. We took *Social Kiosk* to the Market Square in Northampton to collaborate with the Centre for Democratic Practices, the kiosk was the focus and meeting place in which we undertook a survey on why the people of Northampton had made their decision in voting for or against leaving the EU.
7. With the final iteration of the kiosk we wanted to create more space for citizen publishing, so we designed *Citizen Ship* to be a citizen workshop in which to produce and publish opinions. These were published on the structure itself. The same structure travelled to five sites within Milton Keynes.

12



Figure 12. Freee art collective, Public Kiosk, spoken choir reading of the 'Manifesto for Art', Cardiff With Culture: Visioning the City, g39, Cardiff, September 2016.



13

Figure 13.
Free art collective. Documentation of
Proto-kiosk workshop with research
students in the Museum Studies
Department, University of Leicester, 2016.

Proto-Kiosk

Commission and residency at the Museum Studies Department, Leicester University (March - April 2016) preceding the '50th Anniversary International Conference: Museums in the Global Contemporary: Debating the Museum of Now', Leicester, UK, 20-22 April 2016.

We designed and made the *Proto-kiosk* together with members of the department of Museum Studies (*Proto-kiosk* team). To inform the co-creation processes we delivered two seminars to introduce the project contexts and we also led two workshops to enable the co-design of the *Proto-kiosk*.

The aim of *Proto-Kiosk* was to enable informal conversations between the conference delegates about audience participation in museums and galleries. We arrived at the idea of producing six slogans to be made into badges, we made over 300 badges available for delegates to choose and wear during the conference. Wearing a slogan-badge was designed to initiate a conversation about why you had picked the slogan you were wearing. The slogans were designed as a talking point to begin exchanges between delegates; the idea was to choose a badge and have a conversation with another delegate (or one of the 10 members of the kiosk team) about why this slogan appealed to you.

We made the kiosk for the informal spaces of the 'Debating the Museum of Now' conference where delegates met for coffee between panel sessions. The *Proto-kiosk* consists of four plinths and one large slogan board. Each plinth had four slogans, badges with each slogan were placed on top of the plinth.

The kiosks and slogan-badges prompted more exchanges between delegates, as they provided a point of discussion. Many delegates expressed a desire to write and make their own slogan-badges. Janet Marstine says, 'The piece was powerful and provoked many valuable discussions.' (Marstine: email April 2016).



14

Figures 14 + 15.
Free art collective.
Production of
Proto-kiosk. 2016

Figure 16.
Delegates using
'Proto-kiosk' at the 50th
Anniversary International
Conference: Museums in
the Global Contemporary:
Debating the Museum
Now, University of
Leicester, April, 2016.

15



16





17

Figure 17.
Delegates using 'Proto-kiosk' at the 50th Anniversary International Conference: Museums in the Global Contemporary: Debating the Museum Now, University of Leicester, April, 2016.



18

Figure 18.
Conference Panel: Curating Performance in the Age of the Global Contemporary: Dr. Andrew Hewitt, University of Northampton; Oscar Ho, Chinese University Hong Kong; Dr. Mel Jordan, Royal College of Art.

Public Kiosk (AHRC)

Public Kiosk was commissioned by Stacy Boldrick and Henry Chapman for the 'AHRC Common Ground Event', York University 21 & 22 June 2016. We received a materials budget of £1,685 from the AHRC as well as accommodation and technical support. Supported by Tate Exchange, Tate Modern for 1 x day curator fee (Curator: Helena Hunter).

We designed and made a new kiosk which enabled the passer-by to both produce their own slogan and display it on the structure. The kiosk had to be easy to install and accommodate three kiosk-operators (Jordan, Hewitt, Hunter). Light-weight materials were used: Strand Board, timber, Correx, text vinyl, and spray paint. We engaged with the event audience via badge making; slogan writing discussions about value, opinion formation and publishing.

Field notes from the event were collected by Dr. Roxanne Morosanu. Morosanu observes, 'It's hard to not remark on the kiosk; when entering the lobby from the back doors the kiosk stands out – celebratory and intriguing in the middle of a mass of educational stalls that look boring in comparison. Keri Facer comes wearing a badge with 'Economists are wrong' which someone else picked from the kiosk and gifted to her, telling her that she should come and look at the kiosk. This means that rumours about, and objects from, the kiosk have circulated already.' (Morosanu: 2016).

19



Figure 19.
Free art collective,
manufacture of Freee
Public Kiosk, 2016.



20

Figure 20. Free art collective, Public Kiosk, Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Commons First National Event: Common Ground, University of York, Heslington, York June 2016.



21

Figure 21. Free art collective, Public Kiosk, Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Commons First National Event: Common Ground, University of York, Heslington, York June 2016. With Freee-text-banners, All Information Will Be Common, Advertising For All Or For Nobody At All, Reclaim Public Opinion, Borders Are Crossing, adjusted by James Smith.



22



23

Figures 22 + 23.
Free art collective,
Public Kiosk, installation
at Cardiff With Culture:
Visioning the City, g39,
Cardiff, September 2016.

Public Kiosk (G39)

Public Kiosk at 'Cardiff With Culture: Visioning the City', g39 arts organisation, Cardiff, 7 September 2016. The 'Cardiff Without Culture? Campaign' resulted in Cardiff Council withdrawing their proposal to cut the city's arts funding by £700,000. This event was convened by g39 in Cardiff to discuss both the success of the 'Cardiff Without Culture? Campaign' and to speculate on implications for the arts in a time of austerity. A day of workshops, presentations and discussions was open to those interested in issues of culture, austerity and sustainability. Artist and curator, Rabab Ghazoul commissioned us to help activate discussions by siting the *Public Kiosk* at g39. We wrote an accompanying manifesto entitled *Manifesto of Art* to prompt discussion about the function of culture.

Other speakers and contributors to the event included Paul Haywood, Made in Roath, and Cardiff People's Assembly.

We took *Public Kiosk* to g39 and assembled it together with help from visitors. We wrote slogans and made new badges for the event. We also distributed existing badges and manifestos. We convened a spoken choir to read together *Manifesto of Art*. The manifesto generated discussion on the politics of art and culture, including pragmatic issues of arts funding and arts function for political and social change (Beech, Hewitt, and Jordan: 2020).

The structure made people gather to it – the gathering of bodies in a space produces a sense of membership and attachment to the subject of the discussion. The structure produces a memorable image of the debate. Rabab Ghazoul said ‘this was such a perfect contribution to our symposium. It really was fantastic to have you and the kiosk supporting engagement with the issues of the day, we had very good feedback about what you brought to the day.’ (Ghazoul: 2016).



24

Figure 24.
Free art collective,
'Manifesto for Art', for g39,
Cardiff, September 2016.

25



Figure 25.
Free art collective, Public Kiosk, spoken
choir reading of the 'Manifesto for Art',
Cardiff With Culture: Visioning the City, g39,
Cardiff, September 2016.

Social Kiosk (Engage)

Social Kiosk was a commissioned artwork for the one-day Engage international conference: 'Whose Art? Our Art! Access and Activism in Gallery Education', Liverpool, UK, 13 - 14 October 2016. The Engage International Conference 2016 addressed how issues of access and activism impact on gallery and visual arts approaches to education and outreach. The conference considered the methods of engagement that have developed from the early days of activism, and the ways in which the arts can create value in society.

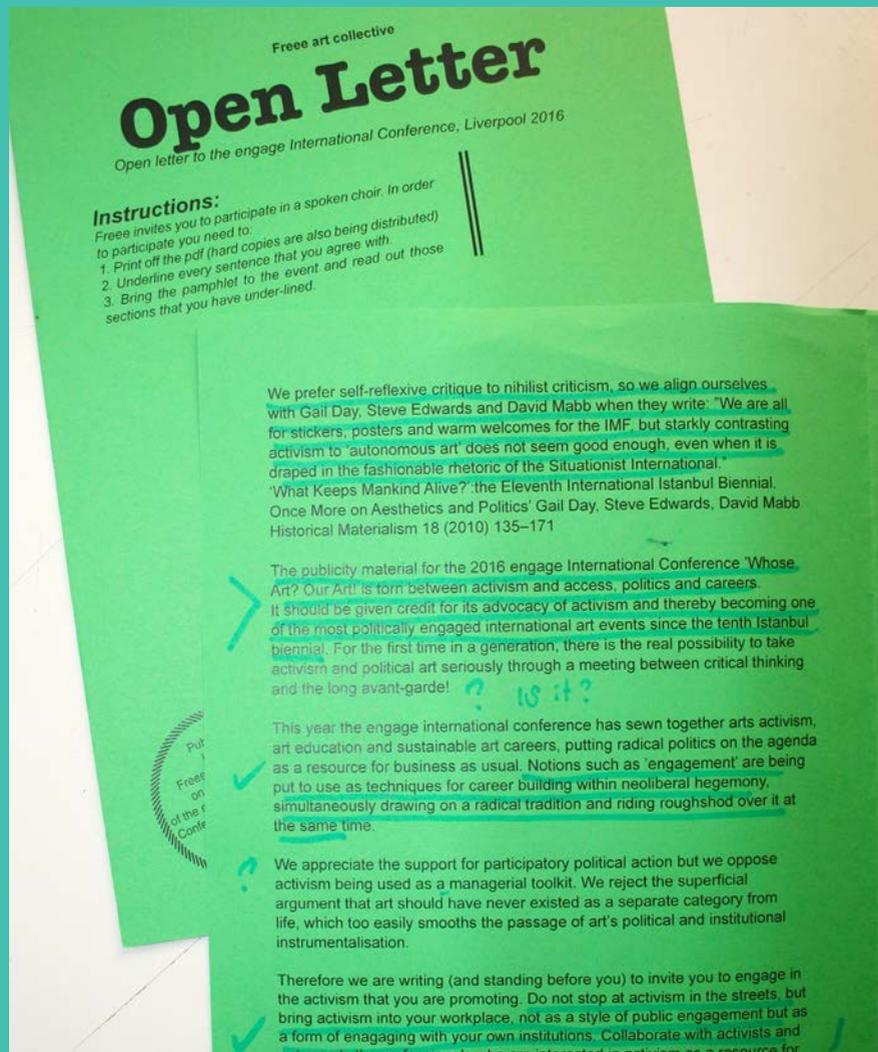
We built a new smaller and easier to assemble kiosk. Light-weight materials were used: Strand Board, timber, dayglo paper and photocopied posters. We wrote a *Letter to Engage* which became a text that we incorporated on the front of the kiosk. We also published it as a small pamphlet and this was displayed along-side printed balloons, badges and posters. For the first part of the day we assembled the kiosk in the conference room so it become an integral part of the conference. After lunch we moved the kiosk to the courtyard, and invited conference delegates to join us in a spoken choir. We asked participants to underline what they agreed with in our *Letter to Engage* and asked them to read these sections out loud as part of the spoken choir.

Incorporating the *Letter to Engage* text onto the structure utilised its potential for publishing and impacted upon the visual design of the kiosk. Moving the kiosk to the outside space worked to create a focal point for the spoken choir. Christine Mathews- Sheen (commissioner) said, 'Many people thought the spoken manifesto was a wonderful idea and it is the type of event that will make the conference remembered by the delegates.' (Mathews-Sheen: 2016).

26



Figure 26. Freee art collective, Social Kiosk, spoken choir reading of Freee's 'Open Letter' at Engage International Conference, 'Whose Art? Our Art!' Liverpool Hope University, October 2016. Photograph Sarah Plumb.



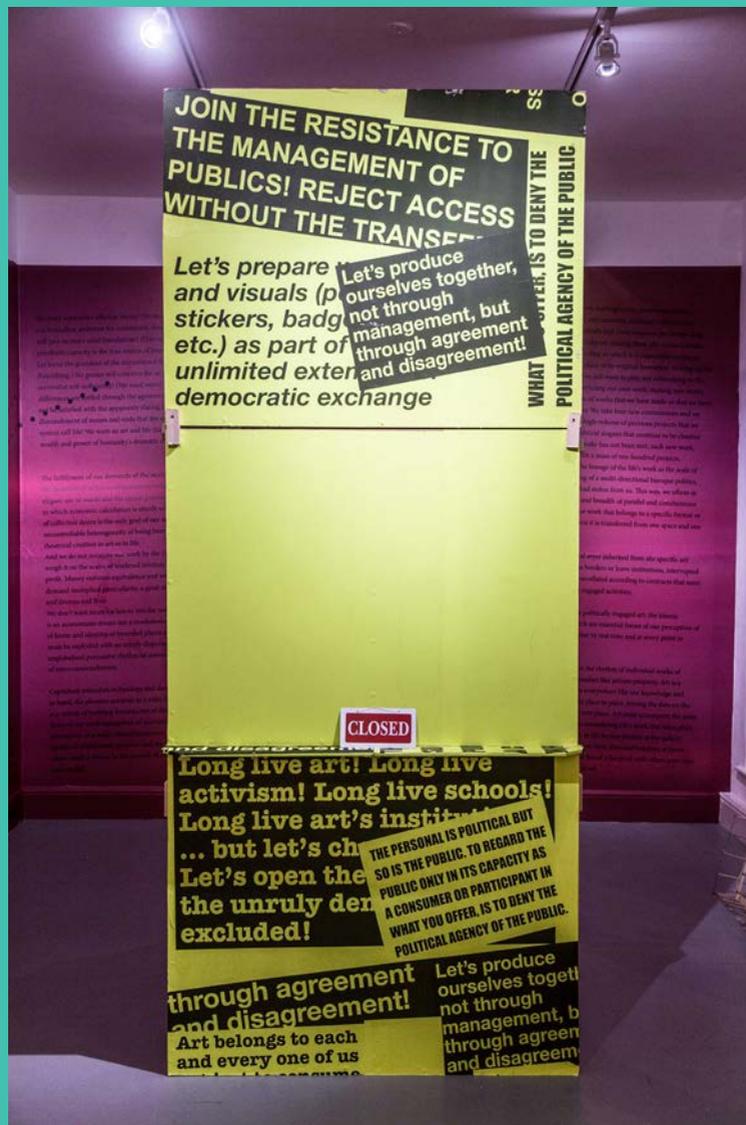
27

Figure 27. Freee art collective, 'Open Letter to the Engage International Conference', Liverpool 2016. A participant's copy of the Open Letter, with sections underlined that they would then speak during the choir.

28



Figure 28. Freee art collective, Social Kiosk in the conference hall, Engage International Conference, 'Whose Art? Our Art!' Liverpool Hope University, October 2016.



29

Figure 29. Freee art collective. Freee-Carracci-Institute, installation view with Social Kiosk (closed), NN Contemporary. Photograph by Joe Brown

Social Kiosk & Public Kiosk (NN Contemporary)

Social Kiosk and *Public Kiosk* were presented as part of a solo exhibition *Freee-Carracci-Institute*, NN Contemporary, Northampton, 5 November–24 December 2016. Commissioned by artistic director Catherine Hemelryk. We received an Arts Council England, individual artist award of £5,000 for the development of the project. We used the kiosks as a platform for others to use in order to make new works and interventions in the kiosks. For example, *Invisible-visible*, by artist Joanna Drewniak, and *Why Comedy and not Art?* by comedian Dave Green (Drewniak 76: 2017: 74, Green 2017: 78).

The Freee-Carracci-Institute project was based on a series of collaborations, events, talks and workshops based on ideas of the original Carracci family who initiated the Baroque art movement. We wanted to understand what happened when we used both kiosks together and enquire into how they can be used inside the gallery to prompt action and debate. When the kiosks were not activated socially we closed them. (Beech, Hewitt, and Jordan quoted in Esche 2017: 53). We used the kiosks in conjunction with programmed talks and workshops. We assembled and installed the kiosks in the gallery space; wrapped *Public Kiosk* in blue tarpaulin when it was not in action and boarded up *Social Kiosk* placing a 'closed' sign on each. The kiosks were 'opened' for each event, for

example Alex Taylor's *Urgent Graphics Today*, and Dave Green's comedy event, *Why Comedy and not Art?* For the project, we wrote *MORE: The Neo-Baroque Manifesto*. The kiosks were the focal point of a number of manifesto readings and spoken choirs. To reflect upon the process of kiosk design we invited architect Professor Sean Griffiths (University of Westminster & Modern Architect) to feedback on the function of the kiosks.

The majority of conversations we had in the gallery were leading to a discussion about contemporary politics; how might we incorporate a specific political issue into the use of the kiosk. NN artistic Director Catherine Hemelryk comments on the process of the kiosk as a platform for opinion formation, she says, 'The kiosk was presented and active in both the gallery and the public realm. The gallery viewers tend to be a self-selecting group, even though we get a wide range of people visiting us. Freee's kiosks act as a platform to empower people to re-evaluate their own views and their political, moral, life values - to question what they believed. Whether or not you come to exactly the same finishing point, that's fine, but Freee were trying to get you to test how you think and why.' (Hemelryk 2020). Sipei Lu says, 'Freee has gone some way towards reordering the relationships between objects and events in this exhibition. By asking others to contribute to the exhibition throughout its duration they make the idea of continued production the main premise of their project.' (Lu 2017:96).

30



31

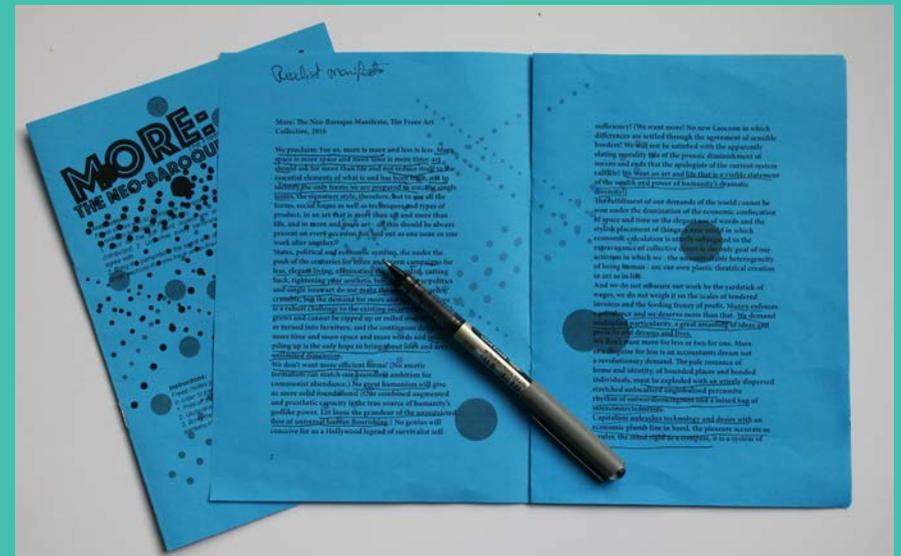


Figure 30.
Freee art collective. Freee-Carracci-Institute,
installation view with Social Kiosk (open)
and slogan badge making, NN Contemporary.
Photograph by Joe Brown.

Figure 31.
Freee art collective, The Neo-Baroque
Manifesto, for Freee-Carracci-Institute,
NN Contemporary, 2016



32

Figure 32.
Free art collective. Free-Carracci-Institute, Social Kiosk (open), spoken choir reading of the The Neo-Baroque Manifesto, NN Contemporary, 2016.



33

Figure 33.
Free-Carracci-Institute with Christopher Daubney, Sounding Window [and crossing borders] spoken word performance of the text *We Will Not be Silent*. NN Contemporary 2016.

Social Kiosk (Why? Map)

On Friday 9 December 2016, the Free Art Collective (FAC) and the Centre for Democratic Practices (CfDP) used the *Social Kiosk* in the Market Square, Northampton to record people's reasons for voting in the UK referendum to stay or leave the European Union.

The CfDP are an interdisciplinary group of academics (Politics, Law, Arts and Psychology) (Smith 2017: 88). The results of surveys from the event were compiled as a data stream. In order to disseminate these findings, FAC and graphic designer Alex Taylor converted the new data into a graphic interpretation showing peoples decision-making, like a map – which we called the *Why?Map*. The *Why?Map* was then displayed in two venues; Northampton Town Hall and the Royal and Derngate Theatre; and used as a tool to engage in further conversations to collect more data.

We disassembled the social kiosk from the NN gallery space and carried it to the Market Square in Northampton where we set it up as a platform for the CDP researchers to carry out the surveys. We engaged passers-by in conversations as we carried out the surveys. Field notes entitled, *Make Art, Make Debate* were made by researcher Sipei Lu (Lu: 2017). Two local councillors came to visit the kiosk and engaged with the survey and visitors.

34



Figure 34. Free-Carracci-Institute with the Centre for Democratic Practices (CfDP), University of Northampton. Moving the Social Kiosk (open) to the Market Square from NN Contemporary, Northampton, 2016. Photograph Joe Brown.



35



36

Figure 35. Freee-Carracci-Institute with the Centre for Democratic Practices (CfDP), University of Northampton. Installing the Social Kiosk (open) in the Market Square, Northampton, 2016. Photograph Joe Brown.

The kiosk created attention and formed part of an ‘event’ in the public realm the process attracted people to fill in the surveys. Catherine Hemelryk says. ‘On each side of the kiosk there were strongly contrasting conversations happening, each with a different research assistant, but not judgemental, and the fact that it was art made it a safe space for people to engage with. It was taking you out of your everyday, it was not the news, not a vox pop, it was art, it was something else, something different. And it looked really incongruous, which was fantastic, just this big yellow structure.’ (Hemelryk 2020: 2). The shared objectives between the FAC and the CDP created a good collaborative process, the artwork was not in service to the survey – opinion formation was key to both practices.

Figures 36 + 37.

Researchers from the Centre for Democratic Practices (CfDP) The University of Northampton with passers-by at the Social Kiosk Market Square Northampton. Interviews were held to ascertain voter patterns on the recent Brexit referendum. Reasons on how people voted and why would then inform the design of the ‘Why? Map’. 2016. Photograph Joe Brown.



37



38



39

Figures 38 + 39.

Free-Carracci-Institute, NN Contemporary, with Centre for Democratic Practices (CfDP) The University of Northampton, 'Why? Map' by Graham Smith, design by Alexis Taylor, on 'Free slogan stand'. Shown at public events at the Royal and Derngate Theatre and the council chambers. (Figure 39, detail)

40

A CITIZEN IS INCLUDED IN A POLITICAL SYSTEM BASED ON THE EXCLUSION OF OTHERS. A CITIZEN IS LEGALLY ACKNOWLEDGED AS BELONGING TO A STATE OR NATION OR COMMUNITY. CITIZENSHIP IS THE PRACTICE OF BEHAVING, AS AN INDIVIDUAL, IN RELATION TO OR IN CONCERT WITH OTHER CITIZENS.

PHYSICALLY, THE PASSERBY IS A BODY THAT MOVES AND KEEPS ON MOVING RATHER THAN BECOMING AN OBSERVER, ONLOOKER OR PARTICIPANT. SUBJECTIVELY, THE PASSERBY IS REMOTE EVEN WHEN IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO SOMETHING. THE PASSERBY CAN BE A CITIZEN BUT DOES NOT PRACTICE CITIZENSHIP.

IN CONTRAST WITH THE PRIVATE, THE PUBLIC IS A FORM OF EXPOSURE TO OTHERS. DOING PRIVATE THINGS IN PUBLIC CAN BE UNCOMFORTABLE, OBSCENE OR ILLEGAL, WHEREAS DOING PUBLIC THINGS IN PRIVATE CAN BE EXCLUSIONARY OR ELITIST OR CORRUPT.

41

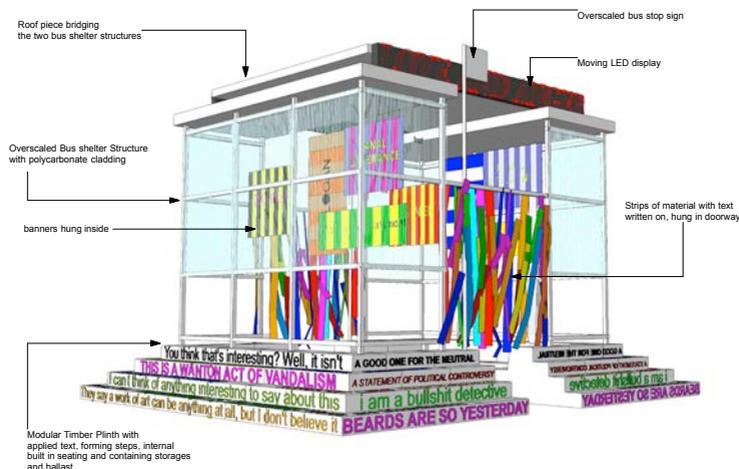


Figure 40. Free art collective with Sean Griffiths, AKA Modern Architect. Design development drawings, 2017.

Figure 41. Free art collective, text for Citizen Ship, 2017.

Citizen Ship

Citizen Ship, 2017, was a public artwork commissioned by Milton Keynes Gallery (£40,000 ACE funding). *Citizen Ship* was conceived of as a public meeting place; it was designed to be part-public sculpture, part-kiosk and part-publishing laboratory.

We began this project by collaborating with Vito Acconci, (Free art collective: 2017a) who was to design a nomadic structure with Freee, unfortunately he became unwell and passed away in April 2017.

To continue the development process, we asked architect Sean Griffiths (Professor of Architecture, University of Westminster, *Modern Architect*), to co-design a purpose built structure with a resemblance to Milton Keynes bus shelters.

42



Figure 42. Manufacture of Citizen Ship at Footprint Scenery, London, 2017.



43



44

Figures 43 + 44.
Installation of Citizen Ship in MK1
Shopping Centre, Milton Keynes, 2017.



45

Figure 45.
Slogan writing workshops in Citizen Ship,
MK1 Shopping Centre,
Milton Keynes, 2017.

46



Figure 46.
Citizen Ship, MK1 Shopping Centre,
Milton Keynes, 2017.
Photograph by Sean Griffiths.

We drew on the structure of a bus shelter because it is a type of incidental public space; a space in which people wait around and where informal conversations can occur, as well as a place of teenage memories – where a first kiss might have taken place, a first trip without an adult – the beginning of actual independence.

We designed *Citizen Ship* to host 15 people; it was equipped with plinth seats along two sides of the structure with one long table in the centre where the writing of slogans, the making of badges and the production of vinyl lettering took place. A teletext display system was installed on the outside of the structure so that we could publish slogans quickly via a laptop. The plinth structure on the outside of *Citizen Ship* held a new slogan setting out our definition of citizenship and was designed for people to sit on.

It was sited in five locations in Milton Keynes, including; MK Gallery, Milton Keynes Art Centre, Art in the Park, Middleton Hall, Shopping Centre, Feast of Fire Milton Keynes International Festival. Commissioned as part of City Club (<http://cityclubmk.org/>), MK Gallery. Over 5,000 people visited *Citizen Ship*. (MK Gallery evaluation for Arts Council England).

47



Figure 47.
Citizen Ship installed at Art in the Park,
Campbell Park, Milton Keynes, 2017.

48



Figure 48.
Slogan writing and badge making
workshops in Citizen Ship, Art in the Park,
Campbell Park, Milton Keynes, 2017.

Citizen Ship was an iterative system in which we both 'collected' and 'published' opinions that became part of the structure as it progressed through its five locations. By the final installation, at the 'Festival of Fire' event, it was covered in collected texts. Through conversations visitors and passers-by developed new slogans and published them by making badges, vinyl lettering, ribbons and teletext messaging (Free Art Collective, Beech, Hewitt, & Jordan 2017b).

The temporal nature of the work meant that passers-by returned to visit us or had heard about the project from a friend and came to find us at a new location. Some people returned with slogans that they had written for us to publish. People stayed in the kiosk for longer as it was larger and enabled more production, although they needed to be encouraged to enter. Children were attracted to the design of the kiosk - they brought their parents who also made badges and wrote slogans. The teletext electronic display was a quick method to get more slogans instantly published.

Public Art Curator, MK Gallery, Simon Wright says, '*Citizen Ship* had such a presence that it immediately made people curious. It was amazingly how much people wanted to be heard. The project was about asking questions, genuinely wanting to know people's opinions. All the things that came from *Citizen Ship* and under the City Club project, more broadly, has opened up a dialogue across the city. And there's a space for more collaboration, more kinds of partnership, and more co-authorship with communities. I think that that is really amazing. That will be the legacy for Milton Keynes.' (Wright: 2020).

Insights

The Social and Public Kiosks set out to investigate what types of methods participatory art practice can utilise to effect democratic processes of opinion formation. We designed structures to attract people to engage with the project. The structures were assembled in a range of spaces and contexts both in and beyond the gallery space. By developing quick methods for engagement via the production of posters, badges, and vinyl texts, a range of publics could engage with the kiosks structure. We targeted different publics in different places, which included the passer-by (*Citizen Ship*), the conference delegate (*Proto-Kiosk*, *Social Kiosk: Engage*), the campaigner (*Public Kiosk g39*), the academic (*Public Kiosk: AHRC*) and the gallery goer (*NN Contemporary*). Thus, we expanded the participants of the project from the usual community groups of the arts organisation. As we developed the design and function of the structure we were able to place more emphasis on people publishing their opinions via the kiosk; conversations turned into actions (*Citizen Ship*). We wanted to experiment with forms of artistic encounter beyond the convivial nature of 'relational aesthetics' (Bourriaud: 2002). We did this by discussing current political events (*Social Kiosk: Why Map?*) and making our own slogans as a starting point for discussion. Having to formulate a response to an existing slogan proved a useful way to help kiosk visitors understand their own opinions. We introduced them to how slogans are written, the difference between an advertising slogan and a political slogan and explained how slogans call for change rather than describe the current situation. Using these techniques visitors were able to write about what they believed in and what they wanted to see happen next.

Commissioners were keen to see experimentation with new methods of audience engagement and supported the kiosks as a platform for political discussion and citizen participation.

We disseminated the methods we had developed through book chapters and conferences. We were invited to deliver public talks at the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Edinburgh College of Art. Other researchers discussed the work through ethnographic reports and journal articles.



Figure 49.
Citizen Ship installed
outside the MK Gallery
at Margaret Powell Square.

Dissemination

Publications - Books

Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (2017) *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (eds) Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123.

Hewitt, A., & Jordan, M. (2018). *Misrecognitions in Art & Ethnography in Arts and Ethnography in a Contemporary World: From Learning to Social Participation*. Ferro, L. & Poveda, D. (eds.). London: The Tufnell Press, 92 – 108.

Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (2020) *Art Politics and the Pamphleteer*. Tormey, J. & Whitely, G. (eds.). London: Bloomsbury, 100-107.

Ethnography (reports)

Morosanu, R. (2016), *Public Kiosk Project*, Common Ground AHRC Event, Field Notes and Participant Observation, London.

Lu, S (2017) *Make Art, Make Debate*, Field notes from the Why? Map, in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (eds), 92 – 98 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

Interviews

Esche, C. (2017) The Free Art Collective Interviewed by Charles Esche, in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (eds), 50 – 65 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

Golding, J. (2017) *Into the Fray, Freee, in conversation with the Freee Art Collective*, City Club Newspaper, 4-5. Milton Keynes Gallery: Milton Keynes

Conferences

Hewitt, A., & Jordan, M. (2016) *Citizen Ship (Proto-Kiosk) and Performative Practices for Opinion Formation*. The Curating Performance in the Age of the Global Contemporary (panel session), Museums in the Global

Contemporary: Debating the Museum of Now, Leicester University. Panel Chair Dr. Janet Marstine, University of Leicester; Ethan Lasser, Harvard Art Museums; Dr. Mel Jordan, Royal College of Art; Dr. Andrew Hewitt, University of Northampton; Oscar Ho, Chinese University Hong Kong. 20 April 2016

Hewitt, A., & Jordan, M. (2017) *The kiosks of the Freee art collective: Understanding social art practice and opinion formation for new models of collaboration*. ETHNOARTS-Ethnographic Explorations of the Arts and Education, University of Porto, Portugal.

Public Talks

Manifesto of Art and the work of the Free art collective, 'Beyond Art Activism: Rewriting Arts Neoliberal Value System', 2016, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin 26 October 2017

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

Writing by others

Mahony, E. (2015) 'Locating Simon Critchley's "interstitial distance" in the practices of the Freee Art Collective and Liberate Tate', *Art & the Public Sphere*, 3.1, December 2015, pp. 9-30

Mahony, E. (2017) 'Three Keys to Understanding the Freee-Carracci-Institute as the Common', Freee-Carracci-Institute. Northampton: NN Contemporary, October 2017, p. 53-6

Bibliography

Barthes, R. (1977) *Death of the Author*, in *Image-Music-Text*, edited by Heath, 142-48. New York: Fontana Press

Beech, D., Hewitt, A., and Jordan, M. (2020) *The Manifesto of Art*, in *Art Politics and the Pamphleteer*, (eds) Tormey, J and Whitely, G, 100-107. London: Bloomsbury

Beech, D., Hewitt, A., and Jordan, M. (2017) (eds) *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, 1- 65, NN Contemporary, Northampton. ISBN 9780995700123

Beech, D., Hewitt, A., and Jordan, M. (2017) *MORE: The Neo-Baroque Manifesto*. In *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, 23- 30, NN Contemporary, Northampton. ISBN 9780995700123

Beech, D., Hewitt, A., and Jordan, M. (2016), *The Manifesto for Art*, pamphlet published by Freee: Sheffield

Bishop, C. (2004), *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*, October 110: 51- 79.

Bourriaud, N. (2002). *Relational Aesthetics*. Paris: les presses de reel.

Bruff, I. (2013), *The Materiality of the Body and the Viscerality of Protest*, presented at Heckler, TRADE, Nottingham

Dordevic, B., and Sardelic, J. (2013) *A Vibrant Democracy Needs Agonistic Confrontation: An Interview with Chantal Mouffe*, Citizenship in South-East Europe, July 22, <http://www.citsee.eu/interview/vibrant-democracy-needs-agonistic-confrontation-interview-chantal-mouffe> [Accessed 17 Dec 2020]

Drewniak, J. (2017) *'Invisible -visible,'* by the artist in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (eds), 76 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

Esche, C. (2017) *The Freee Art Collective Interviewed by Charles Esche*, in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (eds), 50 – 65 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

Feigenbaum, G. (2004). *Carracci Family*, in *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. 393 – 395, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Freee Art Collective: Beech, Hewitt, & Jordan. (2017a) *Changing Spaces: Vito Acconci interviewed by Freee*, in *Talking Art 2: Interviews with artists since 2007*, (ed) Patricia Bickers, 300-306 London: Art Monthly & Ridinghouse

Freee Art Collective Beech, Hewitt, & Jordan. (2017b) *Into the Fray, Freee, in conversation with Johnny Golding*, *City Club Newspaper*, 4-5. Milton Keynes Gallery: Milton Keynes

Freee Art Collective: Beech, Hewitt, & Jordan. (2014), *Impossible Participation*, in *Interactive Contemporary Art: Participation in Practice*, (ed) Kathryn Brown, 255- 69. London: I.B. Tauris

Freee Art Collective: Beech, Hewitt, & Jordan. (2008), *Functions, Functionalism and Functionlessness: On the Social Function of Public Art after Modernism*, in *Art and Theory after Socialism* (eds) Jordan, M. and Miles, M, 113-125. Bristol: Intellect

Ghazoul, R. (2016). Email to Mel Jordan, Sept 2016

Green, D. (2017) *Why Comedy and not Art?* in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan, M. (eds), 78 – 87 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

Goldberg, D., and Reed, P. (2008), *What is a participatory practice?*, <https://fillip.ca/content/what-is-a-participatory-practice> [Accessed 15 Dec 2020]

Golding, J. (2017) *Into the Fray, Freee, in conversation with Freee Art Collective*, *City Club Newspaper*, 4-5. Milton Keynes Gallery: Milton Keynes

Hemelryk, C. (2020) *On Freee-Carracci-Institute*, by Freee Art Collective, interview with artist Sadie Erdington, London.

Hewitt, A. (2011), *Privatizing the public: Three rhetorics of art's public good* in 'Third Way' cultural policy, *Art & the Public Sphere Journal*, 1:1. London: Intellect Books, pp. 19-35.

Hewitt, A. & Jordan, M. (2018) *Misrecognitions in the practice Art & Ethnography*, in *Arts and Ethnography in a Contemporary World: From learning to social participation*. Ferro, L. & Poveda, D. (eds). London, UK: The Tufnell Press, p. 92-108.

Jordan, M (2017), *Art and the Public Sphere: from controversy to opinion formation in the making of contemporary art*, in *Art & the Public Sphere* 6, 1-2, p.7-18

Jordan, M. (2014), *People as Producers*, in *Art & the Public Sphere* 3, (1) : 5- 7.

Jordan, M & Campbell, L., (2018), *The Heckler's Promise*, in: *Performance Paradigm*, 14, p. 126 – 140, <http://www.performanceparadigm.net/index.php/journal/article/view/216>

Lu, S (2017) *Make Art, Make Debate*, Field notes from the Why? Map, in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan. M. (eds), 92 – 98 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

Marstine, J. (2016) Email to Mel Jordan, April 2016

Mathews-Sheen, C. (2016) Email to Mel Jordan, Oct 2016

Morosanu, R. (2016), *Public Kiosk Project*, Common Ground AHRC Event, Field Notes and Participant Observation, London.

Mouffe, C. (2010) *Chantal Mouffe: Agonistic Democracy and Radical Politics*. *Pavilion: Journal for Politics and Culture*. <https://www.pavilionmagazine.org/chantal-mouffe-agonistic-democracy-and-radical-politics/> [Accessed 17 Dec 2020]

Smith, G. (2017) *Free and the Centre for Democratic Practices*, in *The Carracci Institute Year Book*, Beech, D., Hewitt, A., Jordan. M. (eds), 88 – 91 Northampton: NN Contemporary. ISBN 9780995700123

TATE website (n.date, n.author) <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/participatory-art> [Accessed 12 Dec 2020]

Wright, S. (2020) *On the function of Citizen Ship*, by Free Art Collective, interview with artist Sadie Erdington, London.

Photographs all Free art collective unless otherwise stated.

COLOPHON

Project Editor	Andrew Hewitt
Proofreaders	Andrew Hewitt, Mel Jordan
Graphic Design	James Smith
Publisher	The University of Northampton
DOI	10.24339/zcww-6k65



