Dialogues between Art and Business

Dialogues between Art and Business:

Collaborations, Cooptations, and Autonomy in a Knowledge Society

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To my family - born and chosen.

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the art and the business sphere has never been harmonious: it has been rejected, fought about, ignored, exploited, criticised, and questioned, but remains omnipresent. Being a student of business administration and economics who at the same time took courses in art theory and practice, I always had the feeling that there was something in art that has the potential to enrich if not transform business, something more profound than the links that were created by putting art to functional use. This idea was furthered by such great minds as Professor Michael Bockemühl, who was convinced of connections between aesthetic, social, and economic behavioural modes, and whose courses in aesthetics opened up the possibility for us to adumbrate them. Yet, in my search for literature that helped me think about what I had only felt at that time, I came across only writings that conceptualised art as a tool for marketing and communication purposes.

And then there was Lotte Darsø's book (2004, which felt like someone had finally found the words to speak about what I had sensed but was not able to articulate. Since then, I have been writing about the relationships between the spheres of art and business, thriving on the excitement of various business and organisation researchers, artists, and, yes, also consultants, who all seem to have teamed up to promote art's potential to profoundly transform business organisations into more sustainable and humane contexts that could provide more creative, self-determined, and engaged forms of working. While this released a lot of energy and created a frame within which different actors could envisage a different future, the overemphasis on its potential and the general tendency to exclusively address "positive" or "successful" examples elicited in me a particular degree of scepticism. I therefore decided to search for a project that was not purely successful in the eyes of the participants.

Product & Vision had generated considerable attention in the art world as well as in the research community engaging with art and business encounters in that it involved 14 artists and artist groups from all over Europe engaging with members of a business organisation who agreed to open up their organisation for an explorative engagement. However, these were not the only ones participating in the projects: there were also researchers, consultants, and various others interested in questions that

revolved around the attempts to develop a new kind of engagement between the art and business spheres. Talking to several participants in the project, however, produced mixed responses that clearly deviated from the generally very positive accounts that were common in the field. Apart from the sheer size and the controversies around the project, there was also another reason for my being driven to make Product & Vision the centre of a study on art and business relationships.

In management and organisation studies one can actually find a substantial history of writings on different kinds of entanglements between the art and the business spheres (Carr and Hancock 2002; 2007; Seifter and Buswick 2005; 2010; Warren and Rehn 2006; Kerr and Darsø 2008). These writings engage with various artforms to explore their potential for further developing management and organisation theory and practice, such as theatre (Schreyögg and Dabitz 1999; Corrigan 1999; Schreyögg and Höpfl 2004), literature (De Cock and Land 2006; Land and Sliwa 2009), poetry (James and Weir 2006; Kerle 2008; Celly 2009), music (DePree 1992; Weick 1998; Nissley, Taylor, and Butler 2002), and even dance (Denhardt and Denhardt 2005; Letiche 2012). Yet, as Barry (2008, 31) puts it, "few, if any of these worlds [writings] discuss art as professional artists do." In other words, art discourses revolving around and infusing different forms of art are usually not part of theoretical musings carried out in the management and organisation sphere, which therefore misses out on a considerable amount of literature that has the potential to further one's understanding of relationships between the arts and the business organisation sphere.

In saying that, I consider especially fine art—in its broadest sense, including not only classical formats such as painting and sculpture, but also video, installation performance, and conceptual art—highly relevant to further an understanding of the processes and issues that revolve around attempts at bringing the worlds together. I do so for two reasons: first, much more than any other art form, fine art has been prone to various moments of cooption (see Chiapello 2004 for the most recent one), and developments in fine art often take place in response to the business sphere, as, for instance, Fluxus art or performance art developed as responses to the increasing commodification of the art object. This means that fine art has a remarkable history of relating to the business sphere in different ways (Velthuis 2005).

This also implies—and this is the second reason why I have chosen to focus on fine art in this study—that the theories and discourses running around and through the artworks produced are heavily entangled with critically addressing the business and/or the organisational sphere and art's

relation to it. Ignoring this literature when writing about relationships between the arts and the business organisation sphere, no matter whether it is about artistic interventions in organisations or more broader perspectives, is giving away a lot of potential for understanding the processes, the gaps, and entanglements, the frictions and concordances of these relationships.

Although my study is situated in what can broadly be called critical management and organisation studies, I therefore start with the field of art and how its discourses produce different ways of relating to the business sphere before I shift towards management and organisation studies and its changing conceptions of relating to the world of art. This not only allows me to situate the study but also point out the various complex and often paradoxical entanglements between the two, such as the fact that art's opposition to the business sphere is not a natural characteristic of art, but quite the contrary. Art is a business in itself, and so I show that it is necessary to actively generate a particular kind of (if not organisational then at least ideological) distance by means of different strategies.

Similarly, I turn to the business world to discuss new forms of relationships that started to appear in the literature of management and organisation studies in the 1990s based on the idea that business can learn from the arts to show how these arguments are based on assumptions that create paradoxical interplays between losing and maintaining control.

Since the early days of energy and excitement a lot has changed. While Product & Vision took place in 2005, a time when both artists and business researchers as well as practitioners could see the potential in changing the world through collaboration, the project I carried out five years later as an historical ethnography was overshadowed by the financial crisis and the consecutive developments that erupted in the Western hemisphere and elsewhere. Back then I wrote: "Why then look into possibilities of dialogue, when business seems to be colonising and exploiting everything, even, as Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) claim, artistic critique in order to sustain its status quo?" Perhaps the answer is because part of this resistance is against immediate appropriation, representation, and being put into a box. It is against the power of immediate definition, which clogs people's perceptions and the possibilities to organise social life and interaction in a different way, or so an Occupy activist, camping close to the German parliament building, said: "This movement is about developing a democratic culture, a culture of listening." Art is often assumed to be able to carve out a space, where a culture of listening can develop and social relationships be re-negotiated (Kester 2004; Nissley 2004). According to Chiapello (2004, 585), this is exactly the reason why

artist critique is in crisis these days—it was too successful in getting business to listen to its claims:

> One of the key aspects to be analysed is neo-management's adoption of practices similar to those found in the artworld. In many respects, one might say that neo-management practices are the result of paying careful attention to the complaints articulated by "artist critique." In short, it is precisely the success of "artist critique" that has led to its being co-opted by its adversary and losing so much of its poignancy.

So why dialogue if even artist critique is colonised and appropriated by a business logic, turning this claim into a transformation of the world of work, with management literature explaining that less job security will be outweighed by greater personal freedom and creativity that shifts work conditions towards a more artistic lifestyle (Menger 2002/2006)? An explanation might be found in the concept of dialogue I use for this study.

The Concept of Dialogue

Dialogue is usually considered a specific form of conversation that takes place amongst people and deals with relations (Kristiansen and Bloch-Poulsen 2005). Instead, I use a Deleuzian concept of dialogue which considers it as a non-hierarchical encounter that has the potential of "becoming" a source of creation, developing between two spheres, and "which no longer belongs to anyone, but is 'between' everyone, like a little boat which children let slip and loose, and is stolen by others" (Deleuze and Parnet 1977/2006, 7). This concept of dialogue therefore focuses on creation, not appropriation of the one (art) by the other (business sphere). It focuses on the between, not on one or the other.

Ariane Berthoin Antal (2004, 27) stresses the need for this in what she calls intellectual entrepreneurship. She argues that a:

> great deal of intellectual entrepreneurship happens BETWEEN institutions. Institutions in the dual sense of the term: institutions as organizations and institutions as conventions. Ideas and the energy to take them forward are often born when people from different organizations come together, ideas that might not fit with one institution alone.

Hence, she opines that the creation of genuinely new knowledge is often developed as something that neither belongs to the one nor the other, but has its own direction—an intensity which does not fit into one institutional setting. This direction means it becomes neither an imitation nor an assimilation.

This concept of dialogue is characterised by a non-hierarchical relationship, with participants often possessing a high level of independence whilst being attracted by an interest in a particular project or question, which only produces weak ties and makes their collaboration rather fragile and subject to disruption (Amin and Roberts 2008). Because of this non-hierarchical character, dialogue produces thoughts; thoughts that are not the results of knowledge (pre-defined by any participating sphere), but defined in the movement of learning (Deleuze and Parnet 1977/2006, 18), thereby possessing the potential to generate newness.

By making use of such a concept of dialogue, I hoped to embrace the enthusiasm and energy that can be found at conferences and in the papers, projects, and talks of management and organisation studies researchers, whilst maintaining a wary attitude towards uncritically celebrating what can easily turn from an humanist ideal of freedom, self-fulfilment, and creativity into a business means for colonising and appropriating even more aspects of employees' lives for the sake of further exploitation and control. At the same time, this concept was also a means to critically assess existing relationships without dismissing the possibility of collaborations between the two spheres that produce relationships not characterised by unidirectional appropriation, exploitation, and subversion. The concept of dialogue thereby worked like a lens of critical curiosity.

Today, another six years later, creativity and innovation are ubiquitous terms used in nearly every part of society. A strategic involvement with the arts seems to be a kind of standard in many business organisations today, whilst the EU heavily funds, on the one hand, art projects that reach out to business organisations and non-art communities, and on the other, research that evaluates them. With these changes that move the arts from the periphery into the centre of societal life, however, there is the question of whether this has actually led to the changes that business researchers and artists alike have asked for in all the different projects, writings, promotional talks, and network building activities.

Some years ago, when being invited to speak at a summer school on innovation that tried to transgress the mere economic notion of it, I caught myself in the discomforting situation that my audience was interested in results, whilst I was talking about the moment of opening up. It was then that I painfully realised that the openness of the early days was gone, and that managerial control had tightened its grip again, weeding out all the ambiguous, messy, ephemeral, emotional, weird, and paradoxical aspects of such encounters that cannot be measured, sorted out, and controlled. When I read writings of different kinds—but especially reports— encounters between the arts and the business organisation sphere appear to

be rather unproblematic, simple, and straightforward. It seems to be clear what kind of outcomes can be produced by putting the arts into "use."

Although this might generate the basis for more business leaders to engage and experiment with the arts, it also leads to expectations and a particular kind of disengagement that come with just following a formula-like structure. I have tried to point out the negative implication of this when it comes to producing learning opportunities in the organisational context (Berthoin Antal & Strauß 2014), but with research increasingly approaching these projects with a focus on outputs and a rigorous set of methodological instruments inspired by management ideology, I consider developing a framework that allows for engaging with the paradoxical and messy character of newness and sensitising moments of opening up and closure as more important than ever before.

A Machinic Research Approach

My statement on the framework that I have developed for and during the study is based on particular epistemological and ontological notions that I subscribe to and I grant some space for in the following. From what I have written so far, one can infer that I do not consider methods to be webs of inquiry that are meant to catch the world "as it is." Instead, I would call methods first and foremost practices of making—of making realities they try to describe. This relates to Latour and Woolgar's (1979/1986) classic work in which they show how, alongside statements about reality, reality itself is being done, and how methods that are meant to generate knowledge about reality also enact and perform it. At the same time, I assume that those statements usually do not freewheel in mid-air and are not arbitrarily made but embedded in a network of supporting statements, material, and social realities to gain authority and eventually produce socio-material effects, such as the distribution of resources (Law 2004). Hence, I assume that reality is not only beyond ourselves and constitutively complex but also made, which locates reality in-between the in-here and out-there.

In fact, I would go a step further, together with Annemarie Mol (2002) who principally subscribes to the idea that reality is being made, but argues that if reality appears to be singular it is only a virtual singularity that is assumed, because possible differences are co-ordinated, wiped over, or kept apart. This conception "does not simply grant objects a contested and accidental history (that they acquired a while ago, with the notion of, and the stories about their construction) but gives them a complex present, too, a present in which their identities are fragile and may differ between

sites" (ibid., 43). Here, it is important that these identities are not different attributes or aspects of the same object that are "revealed" through different approaches, but "are different versions of the object, versions that the tools help to enact. They are different and yet related objects. They are multiple forms of reality. Itself." (Mol 1999, 77). She thereby argues that objects that are made do not produce a fixed and singular reality but are much more fluid. They are multiple, not in the past but in the present, which implies ontologies not different epistemologies, which is a crucial difference for forms of perspectivalism. This shifts the focus towards the practices that coordinate different ontologies; in other words, as ontology is not pre-given in any sense, we have to think about what Mol calls ontological politics.

> If the term "ontology" is combined with that of "politics" then this suggests that the conditions of possibility are not given. That reality does not precede the mundane practices in which we interact with it, but is rather shaped within these practices. So the term politics works to underline this active mode, this process of shaping, and the fact that its character is both open and contested. (1999, 75)

This has two crucial consequences: the first needs to consider the performativity of enactments of reality, which means paying attention to the craftwork that is implied in practice, and the second has to think about different ways of research, a research which takes into consideration the performative character of practices, also for itself. Research that makes these ontological (and epistemological) assumptions the centre of its approach is often related to the Actor Network Theory. Researchers using the Actor Network Theory and related approaches study cultural practices. I also relate my research to Actor Network Theory, in that I subscribe to this view, considering reality and statements about reality as performed in co-creative cultural practices.

   Researchers following Actor Network approaches do not assume a closed space, a field with boundaries which sits in a larger context like a Russian matryoshka doll. They rather stress the importance of a flat ontology, which means that there are no hierarchies between micro and macro but that the macro describes another local place, another micro, which is connected. "The macro is neither 'above' nor 'below' the interactions, but added to them as another of their connections, feeding them and feeding off of them. There is no other known way to achieve changes in relative scale" (Latour 2005, 177). This theory of a flat ontology draws attention towards the connections and guides the researcher through the (open) network. These connections, according to

Latour, can only be traced by "footwork," by following the actors themselves, following the fine-tuning and making of a network. Hence, the researcher has also to move with the actors, which does not allow a permanently fixed point of view outside the field. So from where does one start to follow if there is no permanent fixed point of view outside the field? Latour (2005, 123) suggests we "start in the middle of things, in medias res" and follow the actors in their connecting activities.

Researching what has yet to become

Actor Network accounts tend to focus on successful translations that have become relatively stable, and tend to describe practices that are organised or ritualised in some way.

I am not interested in these established relationships but in relationships characterised by an AND. In other words, I am interested in a relationship that is different to the established ones. As these relationships, often initiated in the hope of potential learning opportunities, are a relatively recent phenomenon and, in contrast to everyday organisation life, are often limited to the time of a particular project, practices of translation that could guide and facilitate interconnections between the two fields are far from being stabilised and smooth.

Hence, there is no such thing as an arts and business organisation practice that Gherardi (2006) defines as, "a mode, relatively stable in time and socially recognised, of ordering heterogeneous items into a coherent set" (34), only art practice and business organisation practice. Attempts of translation have until now created weak associations at best, despite efforts, for instance of the Arts and Business Council in the United Kingdom, to spark and institutionalise the contact between the two fields. This means that I consider *attempts* of translations; attempts to come together and knot a multiple world from otherwise fragmented realities.

A connected point, which is also related to general criticisms of Actor Network approaches (Amsterdamska 1990), especially by critical management scholars (Whittle and Spicer 2008), is the tendency to focus on the status quo. I did not want to focus on the status quo but rather look into the attempts of translations between art and business organisations and explore them with regard to their potential to generate *new* relationships, relationships that are characterised by neither a "for" not an "against" but by an AND. In other words, instead of focussing on successful translations that stabilise particular relationships and produce actual results, I wanted to be sensitive towards the virtual and intensive processes that are usually rendered absent but that hold the potential for

actualising a whole variety of forms. I therefore turned towards the philosophical concepts of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, especially those developed in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), to further analyse and explore the data and critically assess the attempts of translation made with regard to newness.

The philosophical writings of Deleuze and Guattari are not incompatible with Actor Network Theory as they share the assumption of a flat ontology. Links to Deleuzian thought can be found as footnotes in various Actor Network accounts, such as Latour (1993; 2005) or Callon and Latour (1981). Yet, although they share the same ontological assumptions, in that both do away with notions of absolute being, essence, and truth, Deleuze and Guattari have constructed a series of concepts that focus more on change, which is not considered a strength of Actor Network approaches. However, as Actor Network accounts are also keen to make the hidden, contingent character of the actual relations part of their accounts instead of glossing over it, using Deleuze and Guattari's writings instead of the focus of material translations to generate sensitising concepts that "indicate the direction in which the researcher could look" (Bray 2008, 303; also Bowen 2006) is probably only a question of emphasis instead of a real difference in approach. My relation to Actor Network Theory is therefore, like so many things, partial.

Deleuze and Guattari have not developed one abstract theory or concept that can be reproduced and applied for different contexts but have rather conceptualised concrete concepts for every aspect of society they want to explore. Therefore, I used their philosophical writings as a toolbox that provided me with different concepts that I used in different stages of my research.

The concepts of lines and machines that assemble them especially guided my way through the data. They meander through the following chapters like a stream that finds its way through a multitude of landscapes— sometimes big and torrential, sometimes small and trickling. Like a stream, those concepts come in various forms and do different things to the landscapes they are passing through, but they are always linked to movement. Although they rarely appear explicitly in the writing that follows this introduction, this study is nevertheless constitutively based on these concepts, which is why I discuss them in the following pages.

Three Lines and Their Machines

Deleuze and Guattari's world, according to Sørensen (2003, 51), "consists of nothing but flows: flows of matter, flows of energy, flows of signs,

flows of sperm, of blood, of anger." Stating that "we are made up of lines" (Deleuze and Parnet 1977/2006, 93), Deleuze points to the assumption that those flows are assembled into movements that differ in their nature. He subsequently introduces various lines that segment us and our lives spatially and socially.

For a start there is the line that forms rigid segments. "[F]amily— profession; job—holiday; family—and then school—and then the army— and then the factory—and then retirement. And each time, from one segment to the next, they speak to us, saying: 'Now you're not a baby any more'; and at school, 'You're not at home now'; and in the army, 'You're not at school now'…" (ibid., 93). These rigid lines segment peoples' lives and people themselves according to a binary fashion (a against b), a linear fashion (a, then b), and a circular fashion in ever larger circles (where one says, for instance, my affairs, my neighbourhood's affairs, my town's affair, my country's affairs, etc.).

At the same time there is another line which is more molecular and describes becomings that happen beneath the rigid segments. It relates to rigid segments of public authorities but generates something different. Take, for example, an artist, a manager, a researcher—a profession as a rigid segment. But then there are attractions, repulsions, and changes that are not included in the general notion of a profession but rather are secretly related, and come from *being* an artist, being a manager, being a researcher; living this profession with all its idiosyncrasies, forms of madness, and imperceptible variations that operate on the threshold. This is variation that is tolerated within the boundaries of a stratified area of a rigid segment called artist, manager, researcher.

And then there is the third line that is a dissolving force, "as if something carried us away, across our segments, but also across our thresholds, toward a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent" (ibid., 94). Whilst the second line is internal to segments and constitutes the little micro-cracks that form a threshold of resistance or exigency, this third line, the line of flight, is entirely external to segments. There are no secrets. This crack is a rupture, a line that shoots between the segments and makes fluxes of deterritorialisation that neither belong to the one nor to the other but are *between*. Hence, while the line that forms rigid segments is a movement of capture, a movement of marking, of re-territorialising, the others (secretly or not) are lines of cracks, cracks "which do not coincide with the lines of great segmentary cuts" (ibid., 95).

All these lines exist at the same time; they are not only intertwined but caught up in one another and seem to constantly "transform themselves into one another" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 245). Flows, however, do

not automatically form lines. The movements of the lines are generated by what Deleuze and Guattari introduce as different kinds of machines that connect the flows in certain ways, thereby creating movements that continually stratify, code, and reterritorialise, or de-stratify, de-code and de-territorialise, the social.

The concept of machine describes immanent production. "Because a machine has no subjectivity or organising centre it is nothing more than the connections and productions it makes; it is what it does … it is not made by anything, is not for anything and has no closed identity" (Colebrook 2002, 55–6). Machines are productive instances that make connections and at the same time break down others. Anything can be machinic—language, concepts, artworks, business, computers, books, or persons, and what they can do and are actually doing depend on the connections and assemblages they form with other machines. Colebrook (2002) gives the example of a bicycle as something that has no intention in itself. It becomes a vehicle only in connection with another machine, a human body, and it is the connection with the bicycle that turns the human body into a cyclist. It is the connection that produces the machines, and other connections would produce other machines. For instance, connecting the bicycle with a gallery would turn the bicycle into an art object.

Some machines carry out movements of capture, thereby assembling rigid lines. They exert a stratifying movement of segregating substances from the flux of the earth with all its intensities, singularities, and transitory particles and masses, assembling them into connections and successions. "Progress in art, science or philosophy always involves upheavals in thought that allow glimpses of chaos" (Patton 2006, 24), but machines of capture deal with these upheavals by developing new styles of art or new kinds of paradigms that can be integrated into the "big picture" to ward off chaos and reach a "unity of composition" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 51).

Such machines constantly code. They do so by means of devices of power, such as language, that code in a binary fashion—like man-woman, black-white, figurative painting or modernist art—thereby establishing functional and stable orders that are actualised in components that are produced by them. This way, the machine creates constant binary choices and exercises power over these upheavals by integrating them into a pre-established grid of codes, which it constantly produces and reproduces.

Through different devices of power, codes are not only established but also linked to the territory of the corresponding segment. A code works in the territory of its corresponding segment, but not beyond it. The dress code for managers works within the territory of companies, business

launches, and fairs, but not in the context of the art world. These machines of capture, providing codes and places in a pre-established grid on a particular territory, also provide identity: the identity of a manager, father, student, sister. These machines also "regulate the passage from one side to the other, and the prevailing force under which this takes place" (Deleuze and Parnet 1977/2006, 97): art *in* business organisations as marketing and communication tools, art *against* business organisations framed by a critique of capitalist economic systems.

Hence, such machines of capture that produce rigid lines therefore imply coding, re-territorialising, ordering, organising, classifying, regulating, and controlling, "the dominant utterances and the established order of a society, the dominant languages and knowledge, conformist actions and feelings, the segments which prevail over others" (ibid.). This way, those machines produce and reproduce rigid lines that generate identity and recognisability. In the literature review that follows this introductory chapter, I describe some of these machines, like the concept of autonomy and the jargon of the art world and its infrastructure, all of which are destined to make certain activities recognisable as art. The same goes for the business world with its PR departments, language, dress codes, and offices that, for instance, turn art into a marketing means.

The other types of lines, the lines of open cracks, carry out an altogether different movement and therefore seem to be realised by different machines: a machine that does not overcode but mutates.

Deleuze and Guattari do not provide a full list of defining characteristics since the mutating machine cannot be captured by a concept, because it isn't a clear-defined entity but "exists only in its own metamorphoses" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 397–8). Yet, by means of empirical material from different fields as diverse as mythology, literature, anthropology, and history of philosophy, they manage to approximate it.

A mutating machine operates as a contra-force to the machine of capture and the identities it produces. Whilst the latter "always seals, plugs, blocks the lines of flight … this [mutating] machine is always making them flow 'between' the rigid segments and in another, submolecular direction" (ibid., 246). The principle of the mutating machine does not allow for choosing or entering into binary distinctions but asks for removing particles from the striated spaces, making them flow, turning them into currents, escaping binaries and overcoding. This force that dissolves existing identities operates through decoding and deterritorialising the launch fluid and rapid escapes, and makes the line of flight flow. These creative and mutant flows do not have any pre-given direction other than being different to the movements determined by the

machines of capture. They do not have any beginning or end but are always located in the middle. It is an ongoing movement of melting the striated space, of dissolving its binary codings, a movement of continuous becoming that is an ever-changing variation which generates accidents conditioning problems in a way that has never been thought about before. Assemblages of the mutating machine type:

> may be actualised in a variety of different material domains: they can appear in thought as well as in material practices of resistance to capture. Such a machine might take the form of a new invention or process in a given technological phylum, a new individual or collective affect in the stratum of desire, or a revolutionary judgement or new branch of jurisprudence in the law. (Patton 2000, 110)

The two machines do not assemble fully disconnected movements but co-existent lines that intermingle and cross each other. A machine of capture is never able to capture everything. There is always something that escapes, eluding the codes, whilst parts of the mutant flows always get entangled in the grid of the machine of capture that codes and re-territorialises, that seals the lines of flight. Hence, "There is always a correlation between the two aspects since linearization and segmentation are where flows run dry, but are also their point of departure for a new creation" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 239). Deleuze and Guattari stress that they do not propose another dualism of two kinds of machines—although it seems like it at first sight—but rather consider their interpenetrating movements. "In truth, codes are never separable from the movement of decoding, nor are territories from the vectors of deterritorialisation traversing them. And overcoding and re-territorialisation do not come after them" (ibid., 245). What counts is the continuously shifting borderline between the movements that cut loose contents of a stratified area and movements that in turn reintegrate particles of the flow in rigid lines.

In this study there are many different machines, assembling and dissembling, stratifying and destratifying, producing rigid lines and lines of flight, and neither line is genuinely good or bad. Instead of pre-judging particular movements, such a machinic methodology engages with the assumption that the world is restless; becoming and perishing without end. It thereby allows for focussing on moments of opening up and moments of closure that constantly happen, and not only in interdisciplinary collaborations. The machinic accounts for composition and movement on all scales, and it is within this that the concept of dialogue unfolds, in that it is linked to the machinic in its focus on connections and what these connections were doing, but it specifically refers to relationships. Hence,

instead of assuming that art automatically opens up a space where connections can multiply and relations become perpetually dynamic, I use the notion of dialogue in a rather normative way to explore the relationships that the artists attempt to enter into with the business people with regard to their potential to be generative, creative, and dynamic.

Coming back to the idea of ontological politics, it becomes clear that such a machinic research framework does not allow for notions of control so much favoured by classical management approaches, because it is not based on one governing principle. Instead, it does something else. It allows for perceiving the relationships between the art and business spheres as an ongoing flux of relating. It allows for perceiving them as a process rather than one stable kind of relation, be it opposition, submission, or collaboration. And it allows for exploring the potentialities and politics of different kinds of relating.

Product & Vision

At the centre of this book is a project called Product & Vision that took place in Berlin in 2005. This project was set up by two artists to explore relationships between art and business organisations "beyond sponsoring and purely representative art" (the project description can be found on http://archiv.kunstfabrik.org/archives.
html#2005). The participants—artists, business organisation members, researchers, consultants—met over half a year to discuss and examine the possibilities and constraints of art and business relationships and to "really test their limits," as one of the participants put it.

In the concept paper of Product & Vision, one could read that the leading questions for this collaborations were: (a) Is a cooperation between arts and business possible that meets the needs, requirements, and expectations of the artistic as well as the business sphere?; (b) To what extent can this kind of cooperation contribute to identifying approaches to solve current societal issues?; and (c) How could those approaches possibly be integrated into societal, business, and cultural activities?

In addition to these questions, one of the organisers of Product & Vision stated that the notion of learning aptitude was central in that it was important within every participating discipline, because it was considered as a prerequisite for learning.

The aim of the project was to ask artists and business people to collaborate on questions that explored relationships between the art and the business spheres, and were potentially interesting for both. This made Product & Vision an ideal case for exploring the potentials of relationships

between the art and the business spheres that is characterised by an AND.

In addition, the project is documented not only on a website (www.produktundvision.com—now defunct), but also in two books, one exhibition catalogue, and one book with theoretical reflections about the relationship between art and the business organisation sphere.

Choosing this project as my empirical case gave my study an historical component and posed a crucial question: how can one trace connecting practices that might have been gone a long time ago? Is it possible at all? Someone who answers this question with yes is Bruno Latour (1996/2002), who conducted a study of the death of a project to build a guided transportation system (Aramis) for Paris. Relating to this piece of research, my study was conducted in a similar manner. I decided to combine interviews with collecting materials of the project that I either found online or in the form of books or articles and materials that the participants were giving, showing, or mentioning to me in order to explain the project.

Product & Vision was generously funded by important state-bound art funds and widely promoted through various media, including a website and two books that the project organisers published at the end of it. Whilst this provided me with a rich resource for my study, this visibility makes it challenging with regard to anonymising the case study.

Also, Product & Vision is constitutively connected to its time (2005) and place (Berlin); situated in specific broader discourses, questions, and developments that were prevalent at that time; and tied to a particular conjunction of events, desires, and processes. Product & Vision is therefore not representative for arts and business relationships in general. It is one way of responding to the question of how to relate to the business sphere. As such, it is provisional and contingent, and constrained by a number forces that are also contingent and provisional. Keeping the name of the project, the participants, and places would stress its contingent and provisional character.

At the same time, however, some of the dynamics, positions, and subjectivities that are employed and produced in Product & Vision are indeed also recognisable in other projects. They are therefore singular but not necessarily individual. Focussing on the individual would therefore entail the risk of not being able to perceive such singularities when being subsumed under the frame of the individual.

But there are also ethical considerations—especially relevant for ethnographic methods—that suggest not focussing on the individual participant. The present study is an historical ethnography based on interviews I conducted with various people participating in the project

along with collected material traces that were part of the interviewees'
accounts. This material comprises transcriptions of meetings, personal
email exchanges, interviews that the participants conducted with one
another during the project, and photographic and video material. These
materials allowed me to draw upon different layers in time, but the
personal character of many of these conversations and communications
suggests a certain degree of anonymising.

   I therefore decided to keep the name of the project and its organising
artists—Henrik Schrat (Schrat) and Mari Brellochs (Mari)—but use
pseudonyms for every other individual[1] in order to: (a) generate a certain
degree of confidentiality, and (b) stress that certain dynamics,
subjectivities, and positions employed and produced were not necessarily
linked to the individual but part of a particular assemblage enabling certain
connections, thoughts, and dynamics, whilst foreclosing others.

Outline of the Book

Before delving into the depths of this study, I want to say some things
about the outline of this book that, apart from the introduction and some
concluding remarks, consists of six chapters. Whilst this introduction is
meant to provide the reader with the broader context within which the
study was developed and conducted, the main concept and foci used, and
the project the empirical analysis is based on, the following chapter
presents the relevant literature on relationships between art and the
business sphere.

   Most of the literature presented is situated within management and
organisation studies, but one can also find literature that derives from the
world of art. The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview over the
different discourses engaging with relationships between art and business
that have developed over the years.

   Starting with relationships generated in the art and business sphere,
characterised as an antagonistic and co-opted one, I also address paradoxes
and complexities that exist in-between these rather clear-cut notions,
before I engage with different arguments found in management and

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[1] I kept the names of the artist groups and names of artists whose work I mentioned
but who I did not quote directly. One exception that I make here is the case of Kent
Hansen, who in the last chapter teams up with the head of communications of the
collaborating business organisation, and who I treat as an exceptional individual in
the project who elicits a becoming.

organisation studies over the last decade that claim the existence of a "new" relationship described as art with business.

This body of literature promotes art with regard to knowledge creation and learning, and I unpack the notions of art and concepts of knowledge on which these arguments are based.

After having mapped the field within which this study is situated, we delve straight into an account of Product & Vision. This account is divided into two parts. The first part comprises two chapters (two and three) and focuses on the time before the official project started in April 2005, whilst the three chapters of the second part (four, five, and six) deal with developments during the project.

Chapter two is an account of the first and failed attempt to bring together members from the art and business worlds. At this rather embryonic stage of the project, where the aim was to engage different people in co-writing a project proposal, no decisions had been made concerning what kind of collaboration between art and business was sought, who the participants in the project would be, and the project's size. The concept of dialogue, with which this first attempt is analysed, points out the challenges that contest dialogue and shows how the participants failed to deal with them.

In contrast, the third chapter is about successful ways of winning over different players of the business world to actively and financially participate in a project organised by artists. Here, the concept of translation is the central tool of analysis, and the focus changes from engaging with the micro perspectives of particular discussion partners (chapter two) to broader developments in the fields of art, business, and research and the opportunities of linking the different fields that those developments made possible.

The second part of the analysis does not follow the storyline but deals with individual subject positions, the first of which are the company members and the second the artists. This necessitates changing the narrative that in the first half developed along the timeline of the project to a more thematic one.

Chapter four deals with the members of the participating business organisation, especially the managing directors, their expectations at the beginning of the project, the ways they interpret and deal with the behaviour of the artists throughout the project, and how they perceive the result of the project—that is, the exhibition that took place at the end of the six-month collaboration. The main focus is a business organisation's desire to control its images and its consequences for opportunities of

engaging with and learning about organisational identity, especially in the presence of particular audiences.

The fifth chapter does the same with the participating artists, especially the artist organisers, the way they perceive and interpret and react to the behaviour of different company members, and how they frame what they were doing for art-world audiences. The focus of this chapter is the rigid subject positions that form and maintain artist identities in the world of art through different stratifying forces and their consequences for thinking and generating relationships with the business sphere.

Chapter six looks into occasions where instances of dialogue were taking place and asks about the conditions that render them possible. A coda draws some impressions of the time after the project.
I end this book with some concluding remarks on my research as well as a prospect for future engagement with the topic.

CHAPTER ONE

SHIFTING STRATA:
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ART AND BUSINESS

The relationship between art and business is in some ways paradoxical in that, on the one hand, it appears to be rather clear that business is everything that art is not. On the other, however, this clear-cut distinction is subject to on-going doubts, discussions, and attacks. Hence, art and business are distinct yet involved with each other, and it seems that disputes over this relationship cannot ultimately be settled. Instead, they are constantly transforming, their boundaries shifting, and their possibilities for relating changing, and yet we still perceive constants, still perceive boundaries that do not seem to be surmountable, ways of relating that seem to be impossible, unthinkable. Although the economic realm is considered to dominate society, art, despite many Cassandras predicting its decline, has never been fully co-opted by it. There is always something that flees attempts of appropriation.

Daniel Bell accounts for this co-presence of rigidity and change by dividing contemporary society "into the *techno-economic* structure, the *polity,* and the *culture* [to argue that] [t]hese are not congruent with one another and have different rhythms of change; they follow different norms which legitimate different, and even contrasting, types of behaviour. It is the discordances between these realms which are responsible for the various contradictions within society" (1978/1996, 10). It is the constant clash of these differing norms that gnaws at existing forms of organising society and fosters change, whilst at the same time producing a particular kind of inertia that protects us from change becoming so fast that our world sinks into chaos.

In the following I therefore highlight some of the lines along which relationships between art and business are organised. Yet, although I connect to a certain extent to a historical perspective, I do not wish to evoke the impression of a singular and coherent narrative. Instead, the following account aims at highlighting the lines along which the two spheres are organised in relation to each other, producing conflicting and

paradoxical positions that nevertheless exist at the same time. It is this shifting zone of contact in which Product & Vision is situated.

Distant Business: Art's Antagonist

The idea of thinking about relationships between the art and business is not new. In fact, it has been an ongoing concern of artists and writers since the Romantic era. At the centre of this kind of relation one can find the idea of artistic autonomy, developed in the context of Romanticism, "to separate art from the rational and instrumental demands of the new commercial society … so [that] artists' innate expressivity appeared as a bulwark against the creeping incursions of the market" (Banks 2010, 253). Yet, the long-assumed separation between the two spheres was more and more difficult to obtain with an increasing proliferation of industrial principles in every possible area of life, including "the formerly strictly anti-industrial areas of culture and creativity" (Raunig 2013, 96). Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (1987/2002), who critically engaged with the growing influence of the entertainment industry, the increasing commercialisation of art, and the homogenisation of culture in the early 1940s coined the term "culture industry" to account for developments that increasingly questioned the autonomous position claimed by artists. Yet, despite this, the "utopian vision of artistic freedom has … remained prominent amongst academic critics" (Banks 2010, 254), including Adorno (1970/2002), who hung on to a rather romantic idea of artistic autonomy and genuine creativity when allowing some spaces of resistance and difference emerge in the totality of the culture industry.

    The idea of autonomy implies distance from the materialism arising in a market society. At the same time, the relationship between art and business has never been as definite as suggested. Rather, this relationship is a dialectical one, in that it was the very same market society that made the autonomisation of art possible, releasing, "so many art forms from traditional contexts of religious and aristocratic patronage by allowing them to engage with the new commodity-buying audience" (Slater and Tonkiss 2001, 155). Some decades later, Paolo Virno (2004), instead of perceiving culture to be a victim of transferring the Fordist production model to the cultural field, regarded the culture industry as a vanguard concerning Post-Fordist production schemes. With its production modes that favour self-employed cultural entrepreneurs and project-based institutions and informal spaces that are open to the unforeseen, "creativity becomes the imperative, flexibility becomes a despotic norm, the precarization of work becomes a rule" (Raunig 2013, 102). With artistic