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COME TOGETHER: CHANGING MODELS OF ARTS ORGANIZATIONS IN SAN FRANCISCO

By

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I. Introduction

Come Together

Changing Models of Arts Organizations in San Francisco

Abstract

An investigation into the changing models of arts organizations in San Francisco in light of economic pressures. Considered in dialogue with the frames of post-Fordism, neoliberal economics, the Californian ideology, creative placemaking, arts ecosystem and collaboration theories, the three case studies illustrate newly adopted and adapted models from other sectors. The models include variations on marketplace, land trust, and start-up approaches. Each organization is considered in situ of its particular challenges and opportunities, however the three examples offer creative solutions that have implications for informing institutions in a broader context. The case studies include Lost Weekend Video, CounterPulse, and Minnesota Street Project and follow their major transitions in the years 2015 and 2016.

Overview

San Francisco is undergoing rapid change from economic pressures. San Francisco Bay Area artists are being displaced from their homes and studios, galleries are being evicted, and organizations are shuttering. A few organizations have expanded—such as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA)—receiving positive press and fueling hesitant optimism. Besides the closing of small and mid-sized arts organizations and the expansion of large organizations, not much press or criticism has focused on small and mid-sized organizations that are remaining. This begs the questions: how are small and mid-sized arts organizations managing? What models do they use, adopt, adapt, or create to withstand rising rents? What can be learned from them? *This thesis investigates collaborative models of arts organizations in San Francisco in light of economic pressures. An urgent topic, this thesis documents three organizations while in the midst of adopting and adapting models from other sectors—such as land trust, marketplace and a start-up—to withstand growing economic pressure.*

Methodology

The methodology of this project is multi-tiered, but focused around case studies. Each case study was researched through in-person interviews, site visits, and local news sources.

Surrounding the case studies are multiple frameworks presented in a literature review style. The frameworks include contextual economic theories such as post-Fordism and neoliberalism that influence the economics of large contemporary cities. Regional attitudes will also be looked at, in particular the Californian ideology. These frameworks provide background into the economic and ideological situation for the case studies, and are followed by data and examples of how these larger frameworks impact San Francisco in relation to artists and arts organizations.

The case studies are three entities that made large organizational shifts in 2015–2016. The first is Lost Weekend Video, a video rental store that has operated in San Francisco's Mission District for just under 20 years. The second is CounterPulse, an experimental performance and dance nonprofit organization with over a 25 year history that moved from its space in South of Market (SoMa) to the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco. The final case study is Minnesota Street Project, a new visual art for-profit without the profit, in the Dogpatch area of San Francisco. Each case study will be elaborated upon in terms of the context and challenges it faced, how it began and how it changed. Each represents a different adapted or adopted model with associated lessons.

Following the case studies is an analysis that elaborates upon the economic and ideological frameworks from the beginning of the project, and brings in the arts ecosystem approach and theories of collaboration to understand the models of the case studies. The analysis offers further distinctions and similarities drawn from the case studies; presents the models such as marketplace, museum, land trust, and start-up; and illustrates how each has a distinctive twist.

The ultimate goal of the project is to document how the economic context of San Francisco has forced arts organizations to change their models. The case studies are examples of agency and creativity in the face of economic challenges. Beyond the specific descriptive qualities of this project, the real life examples offer implications for other organizations and cities. These models are not presented for exact replication but instead to inform a larger conversation on possible solutions to shared or similar challenges.

II. Background

<u>Post-Fordism, Neoliberalism, and the Californian Ideology</u>

Before turning attention directly to San Francisco, this project will explore factors related to substantial shifts in the American economy, namely post-Fordism—the move away from mass production and material labor—and neoliberalism—the deregulation of markets. It is important to understand these two major theories as they relate directly to changes in cities. A third theory, that of the Californian ideology—a linkage between counterculture and tech ideology—will also be investigated as it relates particularly to the San Francisco region, and is part of the reason why San Francisco is such an apt city to study in terms of economically driven cultural change.

Why study San Francisco? Full disclosure: I live in the SoMa neighborhood of San Francisco and work nearby at SFMOMA, the newly expanded modern and contemporary art museum. Besides the even fuller disclosure that I care deeply about art, the region, and am interested in exploring deeply the challenges faced, there is another reason why San Francisco is a prime area for study. Post-Fordism and neoliberal economics are happening in all major cities in the U.S., but San Francisco is a particularly apt place to study the effects of these factors, as the regional change is propelled by concentrated technological innovation that accelerates the effects. In addition, given the unique geographic context—a seven mile by seven mile peninsula—San Francisco's rapid changes are spatially concentrated. To borrow a few words from the tech industry, the city can be considered a rapid prototype for the intervention of post-Fordist and neoliberal economies and their associated patterns of disruption in the market.

In other words, what is at full force in San Francisco is happening in its beginning phases across the country in other cities. As Christian Frock, a local arts critic and curator wrote:

> Suddenly, all eyes are on San Francisco as the center—or, perhaps, epicenter—of technology's quaking authority over the 21st-century global community. In this regard, the city of San Francisco (really the greater Bay Area) has become a test case on the impact of rapidly escalating, brand-spanking-new wealth and its relationship to new technologies, privacy, public resources and social infrastructures. San Francisco has become a cautionary tale: Everything happening here can happen wherever else technology companies are setting up shop, which is everywhere. (2014)

Frock is right, all eyes are on San Francisco, as a petri dish for the combination of three factors: post-Fordism, neoliberalism and the Californian ideology. San Francisco is undergoing economic and cultural changes that other cities with burgeoning silicon corridors are looking toward.

Post-Fordism

A late twentieth century economic trend, post-Fordism refers to the shift away from Ford models of production and labor. Consider a Ford Motor Company assembly line, where laborers perform repetitive tasks to create generic products; post-Fordism is the opposite, with labor associated with knowledge production. It signals a drift away from labor as related to material and toward labor as service; away from products and toward knowledge accumulation; and away from mass-produced items toward customized output.

Cultural theorist Stuart Hall explains how post-Fordism is about more than just economy and labor. It is also about how those factors intersect with culture:

> A shift to the new 'information technologies'; more flexible, decentralized forms of labour process and work organisation; decline of the old manufacturing base and growth of the 'sunrise', computer-based industries; the hiving off or contracting out of functions and services; a greater emphasis on choice and product differentiation, on marketing, packaging and design, on the 'targeting' of consumers by lifestyle, taste, and culture rather than by categories of social class; a decline in the proportion of skilled, male, manual working class, the rise of the service and white-collar classes and the 'feminization' of the work force; an economy dominated by multinationals, with their new international division of labour and their greater autonomy from nation state control and the 'globalisation' of the new financial markets, linked by the communications revolution. (1988, 24)

Hall's description is not surprising, in fact, it most likely resonates with the labor that contemporary workers are familiar with. Many of these elements are recognizable, such as the depletion of industry and the rise of service jobs; the decrease in unions and the increase in freelancing; the proliferation of choice in goods; and the global nature of communication in a technologically linked world. Hall continues his association of post-Fordism with cultural changes such as "greater fragmentation and pluralism, the weakening of older collective solidarities and block identities and the emergence of new identities associated with greater work flexibility, [and] the maximization of individual choices through personal consumption" (1998, 24). Personal consumption is an important phrase. Emphasis on 'personal' assigns value based on identity, individualism and customization. Emphasis on 'consumption' focuses on commodity, ownership, and use. The combination of those two phrases and their meanings gives way into the next effect of post-Fordism which, is the merging of consumer and aesthetic realms. Ash Amin, an expert in cultural change, said of this phenomenon:

> The 'aestheticization of commodities' and the 'commodification of aesthetics' are two aspects of the emerging age which serve to blur the traditional distinction between economic and cultural activity. The first refers to the embellishment of products, artifacts, buildings, workplaces, infrastructure and so on, as a means of enlivening everyday life at the same time as legitimating consumerism and social acceptance of the imperatives of capitalism. The second refers to the increasing transformation of culture and cultural activity, especially leisure and recreation, into cultural industries, that is, commodities sold in the market to individual consumers who, in turn, increasingly identify cultural gratification with consumption, rather than as an independent activity, geared towards, say, creative learning. (1994, 31)

This phenomenon is recognizable in the 21st Century. Products and spaces are often highly stylized. A rise in cultural activity associated with markets, such as sports or movies, is also common. In short, post-Fordism makes labor precarious and culture pluralized and commodified. The focus of post-Fordism is on the relationship between labor and capital, and further, how it plays out in the cultural sphere. The relationship between governments and capital, however, is considered under neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism

Generally understood as taking hold in the 1970s, neoliberalism is about markets, capital, and their regulation (or absence of regulation) by governments. Cultural anthropologist Sherry Ortner links post-Fordism and neoliberalism as two related shifts that happened around the same time, in the latter half of the twentieth century:

> The first is a shift from a so-called Fordist to post-Fordist framework defining the relationship between capital and labor: under Fordism there was a kind of truce between capital and labor, and (organized) labor did fairly well in terms of pay and job security; under post-Fordism, the truce is over, and labor has become dispensable, disposable, and replaceable. The second is a shift from a Keynesian theory of the relationship between the government and the economy, to a post-Keynesian ("neoliberal") theory: under Keynesianism, the government was expected to play a role in regulating the economy and in sustaining social programs for the general well-being; under post-Keynesianism/neoliberalism the government is supposed to do neither. (2011)

The previous framework of governmental control of markets and egalitarian social services was rejected by neoliberals. To them, government controls were seen as a hindrance both to global economic development and to social freedom. A turn toward free-market capitalism was seen as the solution. In the 1960s and early 70s many economists conflated individual liberty with market freedom. Most notable are F.A. Hayek's 1960 book, *The Constitution of Liberty* in which he connected individual liberty and freedom with eschewing government control over markets and Milton Friedman's 1962 book *Capitalism and Freedom* in which he linked limited governmental power and intervention with political freedom. These ideals are similar to contemporary Libertarianism. As David Friedman wrote in his 1970 book, *The Machinery of Freedom: Guide to a Radical Capitalism*, he links radical capitalism or anarcho-capitalism with Libertarianism. He focuses on how private property, individual rights, and very little government intervention leads to an increase in individual choice, and calls for the privatization of insurance, police and courts. His idea is that markets even out resources due to supply and demand, and that individual choice is paramount.

The effect of neoliberal economic policy has been a withdrawal of state support for social welfare, the privatization of sectors formerly under government purview, and the deregulation of trade. Anthropologist David Harvey explains the neoliberal philosophy: "It holds that the social good will be maximized by maximizing the reach and frequency of market transactions, and it seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (2005, 2-3). In effect, neoliberalism turns the nation-state into a market-state. As law professor Tayyab Mahmud explains, neoliberalism's primary agenda is to facilitate "global capital accumulation unburdened from any legal regulations aimed at assuring welfare of citizens. In summary, neoliberalism seeks unbridled accumulation of capital through a rollback of the state, and limits its functions to minimal security and maintenance of law, fiscal and monetary discipline, flexible labor markets, and liberalization of trade and capital flows" (2011, 663). This is commonly thought of as free-market capitalism, as an exaggeration of laissez-faire economics, and as a prerequisite for globalization of markets. From the vantage point of current day, given the collapse of foreign economies and the U.S. recession in 2008, neoliberalism has come under critique.

The major critique is that the neoliberal economic approach does not take into account discrepancies in access to wealth and opportunity. Not everyone has the same access to knowledge, education, or social mobility. Just as not everyone has the same access to invoke laws or policy due to the aforementioned unequal access to knowledge and wealth. This in turn leads to exploitation, a shrinking of protections for the poor, the rise of precarious labor, and the criminalization of the poor (Wacquant, 2009). Another of the main critiques of neoliberalism is that far from government noninterference, the government does in fact have influence. As Harvey pointed out, that influence has been to "redistribute, rather than to generate, wealth and income" (2005, 159). Because of the turn away from social safety nets, and the emphasis on unregulated capital, neoliberalism polarizes and destabilizes the economy.

The specific trends in neoliberalism are summed up by Harvey as the privatization and commodification of public assets; increased speculative and predatory financialization including stock market manipulations and debt; the management and manipulation of crises, or in other words, the "deliberative redistribution of wealth from poor countries to the rich;" and state redistributions such as privatization, cutbacks in state expenditures, loss of affordable housing, and revision of tax code (2005, 160-65). The consequences translate into low wages and high inequality, and a destabilized economy without safety nets. This form of economics is at play internationally, nationally and at the state and city levels.

Since the focus of this project is on San Francisco, a few examples of how these two economic shifts have manifested are included. Post-Fordism has many exemplars in the San Francisco Bay Area. Silicon Valley is a prime example of information technology and knowledge as industry. Contract labor is common, for example Uber's freelance taxi drivers or the high number of freelance tech developers. There is an emphasis on design, exemplified by the word "creatives" replacing "artists" in local and professional vernacular. Lifestyle categories are replacing class, as the new elite don't see wealth as a class with associated philanthropic leanings. Culture is consumable as a leisure or entertainment activity instead of seen as the maintenance of heritage or advancement of artistic ideas. The aestheticization of commodities can be seen in availability of lifestyle products. Many of the tech workers are international and national transplants, reflecting neoliberalism's global emphasis. These are just a few examples that illustrate the influence of post-Fordist economy in San Francisco.

Neoliberalism also manifests itself in many aspects of economics in San Francisco. Markets are unhindered and unregulated, especially new developments such as AirBnB—the crowd-sourced hotel business—and Uber—the crowd-sourced taxi business. There is an increase in the privatization of public services like transportation that has shifted away from commuter trains to private Google buses. There is a government fear of capital flight that leads to public assets being leveraged to secure private companies. This can be seen in the controversial Twitter tax break, and in the use of national park land to house Lucasfilm and Industrial Light and Magic companies. As pointed out in Jason Hackworth's book *The Neoliberal City*, there has been a "revalorization of the inner core and the devalorization of the inner suburbs" (2007, 81), so although many tech companies such as Google, Yahoo and Facebook have office campuses outside the city proper, employees choose to live in San Francisco and commute. This creates a housing demand within the city that compounds with the lack of affordable public housing and lack of government provisions to protect against no-fault evictions of tenants. The combined aspects of post-Fordism and neoliberalism create a precarious economy made up of workers with few labor provisions, housing with limited security controls, and unregulated new industry.

Californian Ideology

The epicenter metaphor that Christian Frock began this chapter with is fitting for a city with a history of earthquakes. It is also reminiscent of the metaphorical shaking of counterculture and activism that flowered in the 1960s in San Francisco. The rise of Libertarian, capital-driven, manifest-destiny style technology growth may seem like the opposite of the free-loving, back-to-the-earth, hippie mentality that the Bay Area is known for, but many scholars have noted that there is a direct trajectory between the two. Known as the Californian ideology, it is not a reaction to or distancing from counterculture ideas, but an outgrowth from them. These seemingly opposite philosophies have a great amount of shared rhetoric, and a lineage that can be traced through Stewart Brand's *Whole Earth Catalog* and influence. The *Whole Earth Catalog* was a publication that provided access to countercultural tools and ideas related to utopia and self-sufficiency.

The phenomenon was first noted by Theodore Roszak, the scholar also credited with coining the term counterculture, who wrote the book *From Satori to Silicon Valley* (1986). His text preceded the World Wide Web and both tech booms in San Francisco. Roszak was the first to identify *The Whole Earth Catalog* as the catalyst for the blending of current utopian technophiles and the earth-loving, communal counterculture ideologies. He concluded that the stage was already set by rock 'n roll—amps, electricity, light shows—and psychedelics to usher in the synergy of a counterculture looking to technology to solve its problems from within.

A theoretical correlation can be drawn between San Franciscan countercultural interest in communal forms of society and technology's open source ethos, a term coined in 1998 by nanotechnoloist Chris Peterson in Palo Alto, California (Voyce, 2011, 417). Open source describes "a model of peer production in which users were free to access, modify, and collaborate on software code... One might speak of an *open source poetics* or *commons-based poetics* based on decentralized and nonproprietary model of shared cultural codes, networks of dissemination, and collaborative scholarship." (Voyce, 2011, 407). In just under 30 years after the summer of love, the burgeoning tech industry in the Bay Area was developing a business practice of working together to solve ideas communally.

But what happened in those 30 years and what has happened since? Three years before open source was coined, another term had already surfaced: The Californian ideology.
In their 1995 essay, Richard Barbrook and Andy Cameron outlined how the attitudes flowed:

> This new faith has emerged from a bizarre fusion of the cultural bohemianism of San Francisco with the hi-tech industries of Silicon Valley. Promoted in magazines, books, TV programmes, websites, newsgroups and Net conferences, the Californian Ideology promiscuously combines the free-wheeling spirit of the hippies and the entrepreneurial zeal of the yuppies. This amalgamation of opposites has been achieved through a profound faith in the emancipatory potential of the new information technologies. In the digital utopia, everybody will be both hip and rich. Not surprisingly, this optimistic vision of the future has been enthusiastically embraced by computer nerds, slacker students, innovative capitalists, social activists, trendy academics, futurist bureaucrats and opportunistic politicians across the USA. (1995)

Furthering this notion is Fred Turner, who wrote the book *From CounterCulture to CyberCulture* (2006). Turner points out this same ideology but cites one key player in this trajectory: Stewart Brand, a Californian entrepreneur. Stewart Brand created the *Whole Earth Catalog* in 1968 as a way to provide access to ideas and tools related to ecology, independent education, and communal living such as Buckminster Fuller geodesic domes, camping equipment, and fringe publications. The *Catalog* combined Brand's love of science and ecology with his utopian, communal social theory: "The alliance of the *Whole Earth Catalog* project with communal life and thinking resulted in strategies that proved essential for the mutual integration of technologies and lifestyle" (Scherer, 2013, 6). In 1985, after the *Catalog* set the stage for combining counterculture with technological tools, Brand created an electronic bulletin board, the WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link), that served to connect his growing network of utopian theorists and business colleagues. This was followed in 1987 by Brand's Global Business Network that provided a global network between new-age utopian thinkers and corporations. Brand's goal was to use eco-utopian science to influence business strategies, and he would organize workshops at hot springs in Big Sur for corporate leaders from Shell and AT&T. The link between countercultural communal ethos and technology in the San Francisco Bay Area was further cemented by Brand's colleague on Whole Earth matters, Kevin Kelly, who became the founding editor of *Wired* magazine. As Turner pointed out, "In 1993 all would create the magazine that, more than any other, depicted the emerging digital world in revolutionary terms: *Wired*" (2006, 3).

Wired magazine became the go-to text for computer engineers, software developers, code-writers, and technology business insiders alike, founded by libertarian Louis Rossetto. Libertarians were trying to construct a world free of government control, as were counterculturalists and technological innovators. As Turner continued, "In the logic of *Wired* they were simply social, as opposed to technical, engineers...For all his magazine's countercultural rhetoric, Louis Rossetto saw the digital revolution as an extension of a long-standing, if not widely acknowledged, American libertarian tradition" (2006, 208-9). As editor of *Wired*, Kelly spread this manifesto through the language of socialism, with the social network replacing communal living, and with information shared and flowing like the energy vibes of the 1960s. In his own words about digital socialism: "The largely unarticulated but intuitively understood goal of communitarian technology is this: to maximize both individual autonomy and the power of people working together" (Kelly, 2009). Kelly's version of digital socialism relates to the sharing of knowledge in the technological sphere, not a larger idea of political socialism that is about the distribution of capital. Here is where the tipping point can be seen of countercultural ideas of a utopia built on communal sharing, decentralized and questioned authority toppling into the utopian ideals of networking, open source, deregulation, and shared technical advancement. Or perhaps they aren't that different. As Rozak explains:

> But now, if we fix upon this one aspect of the counterculture—its mystic tendencies and principled funkiness—we would not be doing justice to the deep ambiguity of the movement. We would be overlooking the allegiance it maintained—for all its vigorous dissent—to a certain irrepressible Yankee ingenuity, a certain world-beating American fascination with making and doing. For along one important line of descent, it is within this same population of rebels and drop-outs that we can find the inventors and

> entrepreneurs of the California computer industry. The connections between these two seemingly contradictory aspects of the movement are fascinating to draw out and ponder —especially since both wings of the counterculture came to be more fully unfolded here in the San Francisco Bay Area than any place else. (1986, 15-6)

And this overlap of ideology is indebted to the *Whole Earth Catalog*, WELL, the Global Business Network and *Wired*, all of which are connected through Stewart Brand. Through this lineage one can see how the Silicon Valley technology industry of today stands on the shoulders of counterculture. In fact Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, famously quoted the back cover of the *Whole Earth Catalog* in saying: "Stay hungry. Stay foolish." When looked at without this history, the technology industry seems a place of proprietary inventions and massive wealth accumulation. Barbrook and Cameron point out this contradictory phenomenon. "The Californian ideologues preach an anti-statist gospel of cybernetic libertarianism: a bizarre mish-mash of hippie anarchism and economic liberalism beefed up with lots of technological determinism" (Barbrook and Cameron, 1995). Over the years between the rise of counterculture and *Wired* magazine the *Whole Earth Catalog* provides an illustrated landscape:

> One can observe how the culture of revolt gradually distanced itself from its political objectives, while the other central conceptual models of the *Catalog*—such as cybernetics, ecology, management, and psychology—helped to develop the standards of the neoliberal era, which took hold in the environmental movement, computer culture, and post-Fordist corporate management, and also in pop culture and lifestyle. (Diederichsen and Franke, 2013, 8)

The overlap between technology leaders and the countercultural past moved from ideology to rhetoric after the dot com 1.0 bubble burst in San Francisco in the early 2000s—characterized by the rise and fall of early internet-based commercial growth—followed by the U.S. recession in 2008. Sociologist and philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato wrote in 2013 about the financial crisis and how it revealed that the utopian-inspired, technology-based, so-called free market did not have any self-regulatory or self-governing elements and therefore it caused severe instability. He also points out that the Californian ideology has backfired as the notion of the individual is no longer countercultural, but seen as a construct for targeted business and governance. "It is in its relationship to capitalism, however, that the techno-scientific California ideology displays its greatest shortcomings… During the financial crisis, machines failed to provide for any measure of self-regulation… On the contrary, their automation often amplified the disequilibrium" (Lazzarato, 2013, 167). Now in 2016, in the midst of the tech 2.0 bubble, San Franciscans are again witnessing the inability for the individualistic, networked rhetoric around freedom, capital, and technology to exist without dramatically affecting the people and surrounding area of San Francisco.

The Californian ideology is the cherry on top of post-Fordism and neoliberalism, making these two economic frameworks not only seem naturalized, but valorized, destined, and associated with a certain underdog mentality. Californian ideology masks the free market machinery that cause precarious labor, loss of governmental social services, and unregulated wealth redistribution, and instead cloaks it in individualism and a damn-the-man sensibility. It is a sensibility that valorizes things like intervention and disruption without having to pay attention to the proprietary businesses in the background or to the social instability that such an economy creates.

I would like to turn attention now to the ways in which this conversation of economics and ideology ripple from Silicon Valley to the arts in San Francisco. The factor most affected and visible is space. A string of factors arise. The limited geographic area of San Francisco pairs with the social ideology present for innovation—that simultaneously glorifies the individual and sharing of networked ideas while eschewing government interference—that further pairs with the manifest destiny belief that technical innovation is the way to utopian goals. These factors, combined with the money to carry them out, leads to the rapid increase in demand for space and a lack of governmental regulations to ensure social equity in the face of such an expansion.

San Francisco Now: Space is the Place

The background of how post-Fordist and neoliberal economics pair with Californian ideology in San Francisco can be considered in terms of overarching causes. The particular symptoms, as they play out in San Francisco, are elaborated upon below. This section will focus on current economic realities of the city, specifically as they relate to space, artists, and art organizations. San Francisco is an example where an influx of wealth, not poverty, disrupts a city.

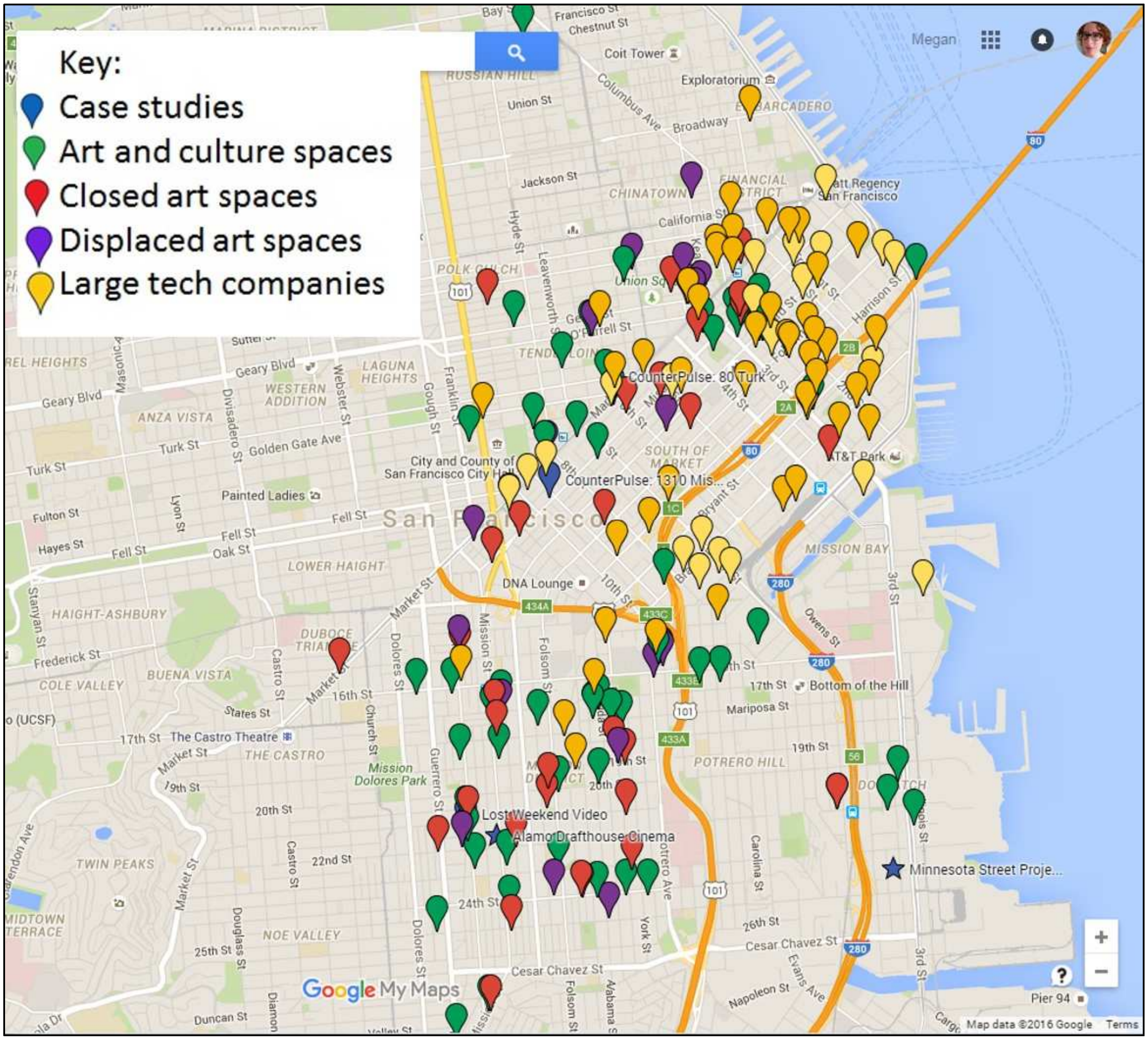
Arts organizations, whether galleries or nonprofits, navigate the world of commercial leases. Commercial rents have been widely documented in San Francisco recently, as technology reporter Adam Satariano noted, “The cost of San Francisco office space has more than doubled since 2009 and by next year will eclipse Manhattan as the highest in the country”

(2014). To add a few numbers to the description, commercial rents have been reported as doubling in just a few short years ($37 a square foot in 2010 to $62 per square foot in 2014 reported by Sabatini, 2014, and alternatively $31 per square foot in 2010 and up to $66 in 2015 reported by Weinberg, 2015a). In both reports the numbers hover around a doubling in commercial rents in a four to five year span. A 2013 City and County of San Francisco report highlighted that the city has 75 million square feet of commercial real estate that is serving an increased demand and related decrease in vacancy rate. The report also notes that San Francisco employment rates are increasing at a rate 50% higher each year than the national average (City and County of San Francisco, 2013). To summarize, the increase in commercial rents is directly related to the increase in business and professional services and by the finite and decreasing amount of available real estate.

The same 2013 report highlighted the number of nonprofits in San Francisco that had closed or moved out of the city between 2011 and 2013. In a striking drop, San Francisco went from 7,865 nonprofits in 2011 to 6,005 in 2013 (City and County of San Francisco, 2013), a loss of almost 2,000 organizations. This number is made up of both social services and arts organizations and didn't provide the figures for each, but both face the same challenges in terms of competing with commercial rents. As rents go up, organizations are forced out. As a journalist pointed out, "Just as economic pressures have altered San Francisco's famously unique and colorful neighborhoods, the city's robust nonprofit community is also undergoing a forced transformation" (Sabatini, 2014). A San Francisco Bay Area-wide survey published by Harder + Company Community Research in March 2016 focused on nonprofits and found that, "Most respondents (82%) are concerned about the negative impact of the real estate market on their long-term financial sustainability" and that "a majority of respondents (68%) think they will have to make a decision about moving in the next five years" and "38% have already moved at least once in the last five years" (Harder + Co, 2016, 6). Although the study looked at the Bay Area more broadly, it states that respondents in San Francisco had even greater levels of concern and anticipated relocation than other counties (Harder + Co, 2016, 31). The study does not segment out data for arts versus social services nonprofits, but the implication is that real estate forces are affecting all nonprofits similarly, including arts organizations.

Commercial galleries are facing this same situation as well. Kenneth Baker, longtime *San Francisco Chronicle* art critic noted, "Now, another gold rush, this one ignited by venture capital’s romance with social media and its spawn of upstart start-ups, has driven commercial rents downtown to levels that have begun to make gallery operation a losing proposition. With conspicuous exceptions...established dealers have been dispersed to other parts of the city, to Oakland or, in a few cases, driven out of business” (2015). This trend was brought into sharp focus as longstanding galleries began to close, not just emerging or young galleries. The tech boom “is one factor driving a sharp rise in commercial real estate in the city and, now, is displacing a handful of long-established downtown art galleries” (Brekke, 2014). As journalist Dan Brekke referred to, the trend is epitomized by the 2014 example of long-standing Geary Street galleries being pushed out of their spaces to make way for a tech tenant in the building (Brekke, 2014), but it is happening widely and rapidly across San Francisco.

The pace of the change has created urgency amongst individuals and organizations to document or attempt to capture the displacement of arts organizations. Northern California’s media outlet KQED has started an online map that pinpoints arts spaces they’ve written about. As KQED says, “With the rising cost of living in the Bay Area, arts organizations across the region have been forced to leave their premises in search of more cost-effective space. KQED has been closely following the impact of escalating rents and forced evictions on the local creative community and the effects of the displacement of artistic activity on the area as a whole” (Sarah, 2015). KQED’s map is very much in progress with only 13 spots documented, the news organization is asking readers for help. SFMOMA’s blog *Open Space* also has been attempting to document art spaces in San Francisco and map 31 closed art spaces. Cara Rose DeFabio is a local artist and performer who has been documenting closed or displaced performance spaces specifically, and created a map of over 40 that have closed. As is the case with mapping projects that attempt to track an ever-changing landscape, these maps often categorize spaces differently, cover separate time spans, and are updated inconsistently.



Accessible at http://tinyurl.com/MZB-SF-2016. Created by Megan Z. Brian in Google Maps, 2016

For the purposes of this project, I have attempted to synthesize the various maps into one map (above), removing spaces that were closed long ago or could only loosely be considered art spaces, and adding those that have closed since the other maps were published. The map above shows art and cultural spaces, color coded as open, displaced or closed since 2010. One major caveat, the map is focused on spaces in the neighborhoods surrounding the case studies of this project—SoMa, Tenderloin, Mission, and Dogpatch—so geographic outliers are left out. Another layer maps large and mid-sized tech companies in the same neighborhoods, to illustrate the correlation. Though not comprising all of San Francisco, in just the areas around the three case studies explored here later the map shows 58 open and unmoved, 23 displaced and 35 closed art spaces. Although the map created for this project is limited in geographic area and time, the map serves to move the ideas about displacement from a feeling or hunch to data.

Alongside journalists and artists, funders and the city have both recognized this rapid trend of arts organizations moving or closing due to rent increases or eviction. In response, two entities formed in 2014 and were active by 2015: the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) and the Nonprofit Displacement Mitigation Program (NDMP). The latter is a city program focusing on nonprofits—both social services and arts related—and is administered by the Northern California Community Loan Fund (NCCLF). From the NCCLF website:

> The Nonprofit Displacement Mitigation Program provides technical and financial assistance to support nonprofits facing displacement or lease renewals at substantially higher rates amidst a volatile real estate market. In April 2015 NCCLF announced the first round of grant recipients, which included eleven social service and five art nonprofits. These awards, totaling more than $1 million, will help these nonprofits remain in the area and continue to serve residents struggling with a wide-range of socioeconomic disparities. (2015)

This fund was created in direct response to the changes in rental market and the ability of nonprofits to afford rent. However, even before the first dispersal was awarded nonprofits were saying that the fund isn't enough (Satariano, 2014). In 2014, the first year, 42 nonprofits had applied for funding, half of which were arts organizations (Sabatini, 2014), and only 16 organizations were awarded in the first year. The fund also comes with several stipulations. According to the guidelines on the application, organizations facing permanent displacement can apply for technical assistance to cover "financial planning, space planning, identifying/evaluating potential sites, negotiating leases or purchase agreements, developing construction budgets and project timelines, and analyzing potential funding sources" (NDMP, 2015). Once an organization has had technical assistance to gain site control, it may apply for financial assistance that can then be used to pay rent increases, relocation fees, or construction. Although a city fund, it is administered by NCCLF and CAST.

Around the same time as the NDMP the Community Arts Stabilization Trust was formed by the Kenneth Rainin Foundation. As Moy Eng, the director of CAST has said:

> CAST got started because artists and arts organizations are being driven out of San Francisco because of the high demand and high prices for real estate. It's a beautiful city, an amazing place to live, but there's only so much real estate. And so we're seeing this exodus of arts groups, and we're starting to lose the cultural identity of the place. We're losing one of the very reasons that people want to move here in the first place— because of the city's unique and incredible diversity of arts and culture. (in Scheinin, 2015)

CAST, in addition to administering NDMP for the city, also created a program to help arts organizations secure permanent real estate purchases. CAST will be covered in more depth below, but for brevity, it seeks to rectify the unpredictable and hostile rental environment by assisting organizations with the purchase of permanent buildings. In this way, CAST endeavors to stabilize arts nonprofits.

In addition to these two entities, in November of 2015 San Francisco voters approved Proposition J that established a city fund for legacy businesses, defined as those that have been in business for 20 years or longer and contribute to the history or community of a neighborhood. The fund makes grants to small businesses or nonprofits that are in danger of being displaced. It also allows for grants directly to landlords who extend long-term leases of ten years to legacy businesses[1]. This ordinance both incentivizes landlords to create long term leases with legacy businesses and provides funding to legacy businesses that are facing displacement due to rent increases. While many of the spaces that qualify are bars and restaurants, long standing arts organizations also qualify. In addition, the city of San Francisco increased its contribution to the San Francisco Arts Commission's Cultural Equity Endowment Fund (Montalvo, 2015) for the Fund's Creative Space grant program that supports facility improvements or acquisitions up to $100 thousand for organizations. This shows that city government, San Francisco residents, and funders alike have all acknowledged the rapid displacement of arts spaces, and are seeking to find ways to step in and help.

Arts nonprofits and commercial galleries are only one piece of the puzzle though. In order to have art in San Francisco there also must be places for artists to live. As widely covered in the press, along with commercial rents, housing has increased as well. In a report from

[1] (1) According to a September 2014 report by San Francisco Architectural Heritage (San Francisco Heritage) entitled "Sustaining San Francisco's Living History: Strategies for Conserving Cultural Heritage Assets," long-operating businesses in San Francisco foster civic engagement and pride as neighborhood gathering spots, and contribute to San Francisco's cultural identity. (2) In San Francisco's current economic climate, many otherwise successful, long operating businesses are at risk of displacement, despite continued value to the community and a record of success. (3) In recent years, San Francisco has witnessed the loss of many long-operating businesses because of increased rents or lease terminations. (4) To the extent that property owners have little incentive to retain longstanding tenants, a long-operating business that does not own its commercial space or have a long-term lease is particularly vulnerable to displacement. A viable strategy for securing the future stability of San Francisco's long-operating businesses is to provide incentives for them to stay in the community, and incentives for their landlords to enter into long-term leases with such businesses. (5) The purpose of the Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund, therefore, is to maintain San Francisco's cultural identity and to foster civic engagement and pride by assisting long operating businesses to remain in the City. (Ordinance 29-15, SEC. 2A.243)

September 2015: “The overall median price for a 1-bedroom in SF hit $3,530 earlier this month; and at the close of this quarter, San Francisco emerges not only as more expensive than any other city in the U.S., but also uniformly so, across its 7x7 square miles” (Erwert, 2015). It is this uniformity of rental prices that is perhaps the most striking. Even in expensive rental markets such as Manhattan, there are pockets of less expensive neighborhoods for housing in particular. In San Francisco the least desirable neighborhoods still have a median rent of over $2,000 for a one bedroom (Erwert, 2015), effectively showing that San Francisco now has no affordable neighborhoods. According to data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development the 2015 median family income for San Francisco was $103,000. This puts low income levels at $65,700 for a single person and $93,850 for a family of four (State of California Dept. of Housing, 2015, section 6932, 5). The polarizing influx of tech wealth has skewed median income to such a degree that it is unattainable for non-tech workers. For artists this means that it is very hard to move to San Francisco, as there are no new affordable units on the rental market. The long-term consequence of this could be predicted as a decrease in replenishment of artists to the area. Artists who already live in San Francisco and benefit from rent control face a shaky future as evictions rise.

In addition to the high rents in San Francisco, many residents are facing displacement due to evictions. Artist and activist Erin McElroy founded the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project (A(E)MP) that creates online data maps to be used for awareness, advocacy and policy efforts. The project takes a two-pronged approach. One wing uses San Francisco Rent Board and San Francisco Planning Department data to map and visualize evictions, whereas the other wing is a storytelling platform, amassing community stories about displacement in San Francisco. A major aspect of the eviction maps is the documenting of no-fault evictions, particularly Ellis Act evictions. The Ellis Act is a California law adopted in 1985 that allows landlords to evict tenants in order to go out of business, but the law has been misused by landlords to evict tenants in order to convert housing to condominiums or to skirt rent control laws. According to the “Eviction Surge” map, evictions within the top five reasons (breach, nuisance, owner move-in, Ellis Act and illegal use) almost doubled between 2010 and 2014 from 924 to 1,686 a year. It also shows a total of 8,619 evictions between 2010 and 2015. Another map, “No-Fault Evictions in San Francisco, 1997-2014” is particularly striking in that these evictions were not caused by tenant behavior or non-payment. These include owner move in (7,134), demolition

(1,165), and Ellis Act (3,896). These numbers track units, not people, a number that would be far higher. Due to the high median rental costs of San Francisco, once someone is evicted from a rent-controlled apartment, it usually becomes financially prohibitive to move to another location within San Francisco.

Why are there so many evictions? One simple answer is that landlords can charge market rate once rent controlled tenants are evicted. But, who can pay these higher rates and where is the demand coming from? According to a 2016 study by PayScale that collected data from 18 top tech companies in San Francisco and Silicon Valley, the median salary for an early career tech worker (under 5 years of experience) is $87,500 and it goes up to just about $135,900 for mid-career tech workers (with 10 years of experience). Many of these tech companies are based just south of San Francisco, in Silicon Valley, and transportation is provided by private shuttles. According to the A(E)MP there is a correlation between private tech bus routes and evictions: “Between June 2014 and July 2015, the number of shuttle bus stop events in San Francisco increased by 46 percent, from 2,032 to 2,978. According to the SFMTA, there are now 205 shuttles in operation in San Francisco, traveling 118 routes” (A(E)MP, 2015). This correlation is further expounded upon in the map “Tech Bus Stops and No-Fault Evictions,” a “map showing that 69% of no-fault evictions between 2011 and 2013 happen within 4 blocks of tech bus stops in San Francisco” (A(E)MP, 2014). The map shows a correlation between the neighborhoods where high-paid, commuting tech workers live (SoMa, Downtown, and the Mission) and the highest concentration of evictions. Though correlation does not necessarily prove causation, the link between tech bus stops and evictions suggests that the increase in a commuting population of high-paid tech workers is related to the eviction of other San Francisco tenants.

Artists are heavily affected by high rental rates and evictions. The San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC) conducted a survey of artists and released the findings in September of 2015. Focused on artists’ homes and workspaces, the study “heard from nearly 600 artists that either live or recently lived in the city. The survey found that over 70 percent of the respondents had been or were being displaced from their workplace, home, or both. As for the 30 percent that weren’t being displaced, potential displacement in the near future was a common concern” (Jones, 2015). Adding to 100%, this means that space to live and space to work was a concern for all of the artist respondents, uniformly. The concern over eviction and rising rent affects both homes and studios. Of the respondents who were displaced or are being displaced, one-third were being displaced from their studios, one-third from their homes, and one-third from both. The remaining respondents experienced anxiety about affordability, unstable living situations, and possible future displacement. Of those displaced from their homes, most were displaced in the last year, followed by the last six months and the next six months. The reasons for eviction match the larger trend observed by the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project: “The survey also found that the most common reasons for artists losing their leases on workspaces and homes were business-related: building conversion, rent increases, new owners and/or owners moving into the space” (Jones, 2015). The survey found that 80% of the artists responding had lived in San Francisco for over five years, and they represented a broad sampling of disciplines including film, performance, writing, music, sculpture, and 2D works. This is important as many media need studio space to work with dangerous materials or large/specialized equipment.

Work spaces for artists are especially vulnerable. “In many cases in the Mission and SoMa, landlords have the zoning rights to turn artist spaces into more profitable residential or office uses. Artists’ average rent is about $21 a square foot each year ($1.75 a month), according to the San Francisco Arts Commission—about a third what landlords can get for housing or office. That has set up several contentious bouts of developers versus artists this year at the city’s Planning Commission” (Weinberg, 2015b). Artists as residents and workers don’t see themselves as separate from the communities of San Francisco; indeed, they are facing similar struggles. As one artist, Truong Tran said as he and others were forced out of the large artist studio building, Studio 17: “Please know that this issue is much greater than the loss of artists’ space. It is about the displacement of communities, and cultures of the working class and people of color. We artists see ourselves in these communities” (in Jones, 2015).

The data above serve to show that the vulnerability of the arts in San Francisco is felt on several fronts. Small and mid-sized arts organizations can’t afford rent and are closing or moving. Commercial art galleries also are closing or moving due to rent increases. Artists are being displaced from their work spaces and homes. This affects current organizations and artists and the high rents make it a challenge for future artists, organizations, or art students to move to the city.

From the outside it may seem as if the San Francisco Bay Area art scene is thriving. In just the first six months of 2016 several new spaces opened. The San Francisco Arts Commission opened its expanded gallery space. The restored home of late local artist David Ireland, 500 Capp Street, opened to the public. The BAM/PFA opened its new, expanded building. CounterPulse opened its new location in March, as did the new Minnesota Street Project (both case studies considered in this paper, below). The Asian Art Museum announced a $25 million expansion plan in March. And, of course, the massively expanded SFMOMA building will open in May. But these larger projects can mask the fragile arts ecosystem that relies on several factors to thrive.

The arts often are described as being an ecosystem in San Francisco. It is also a favorite term for funders such as the Hewlett Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that support initiatives under this heading. The term evokes environmental concerns around sustainability. It makes sense that San Francisco, with its history of environmental activism, would employ ecological terminology to discuss cultural activity.

Renny Pritikin, Chief Curator at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, created a poster in 2008 that hangs on the walls of homes and workspaces of many artists and curators. It epitomizes the arts as an ecosystem metaphor. Included here, it outlines ingredients that must be in place for an art scene to thrive, and includes artists; teachers; schools; studio spaces; various sized galleries, arts organizations and museums; collectors; writers; publications; grants; audiences; hangouts; leaders; and political climate. In some ways the list is intuitive, but by listing all the elements together in one place it illustrates how these elements are pieces within a larger puzzle, much like a biological ecosystem that must be composed of several interrelated factors to thrive. In the arts ecosystem model the distinction between for-profits and nonprofits is not critical, and the system is less about the financial models or scale of activities and more about regional proximity and diversity of offerings. The imbalance or removal of one component jeopardizes the whole. The balance in this network of interconnected factors becomes endangered as new tech wealth reveals the lack of a formalized arts infrastructure in San Francisco. Whereas poverty is a well-known destructive force for cities, San Francisco demonstrates a new scenario wherein wealth can be equally destructive.

PRESRIPTION FOR A HEALTHY ART SCENE:

01
A LARGE POOL OF ARTISTS THERE'S A CRITICAL MASS OR TIPPING POINT THAT MAKES A SCENE

02
TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES WHICH HELPS SUPPORT THE POOL OF ARTISTS

03
ACTIVE ART SCHOOLS WHICH FEED INTO THE POOL OF ARTISTS AND GIVE ARTISTS TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

04
STUDIO SPACE THAT'S AFFORDABLE AS WELL AS LIVE/WORK LAW THAT ALLOWS ARTISTS TO OCCUPY LIGHT INDUSTRIAL SPACES

05
ALTERNATIVE SPACES THAT GIVE EXHIBITION AND RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ART AND IDEAS

06
ADVENTUROUS ART DEALERS WHO TAKE ON NEW ARTISTS, SUPPORT ARTISTS WITH SALES

07
ADVENTUROUS COLLECTORS WHO BUY LOCALLY AND BUY NEW WORK, MAKE THEIR COLLECTIONS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

08
SOPHISTICATED WRITERS TO DOCUMENT, DISCUSS AND PROMOTE NEW IDEAS/CONTINUING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

09
PUBLICATIONS FOR THEM TO WRITE FOR

10
NEWSPAPER CRITICS WHO ARE THOUGHTFUL AND SOPHISTICATED AND TALENTED

11
FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR ARTISTS AND WRITERS

12
ACCESSIBLE MUSEUMS AND CURATORS WHO TALK TO EACH OTHER AND DO STUDIO VISITS WITH LOCAL ARTISTS

13
INTERESTED AUDIENCES WHO ATTEND ALL OF THE ABOVE AND READ ABOUT IT

14
ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED MATERIALS OR BUSINESSES (SUCH AS HIGH TECH MATERIALS IN THE SF BAY AREA OR FILM INDUSTRY IN LA)

15
SOCIAL SPACE WHERE NEW IDEAS ARE BEING GENERATED ABOUT ART, ABOUT SOCIETY, ABOUT THE ROLE OF ART

16
HANGOUTS/PARTIES/SALONS/LECTURE SERIES/ RESTAURANTS/BARS WHERE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IS MANIFESTED

17
ARTICULATE ARTIST LEADERS

18
HEROES, ICONOCLASTS, VILLAINS (PEOPLE EVERYONE LOVE TO HATE)

19
ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITIES

20
PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL CLIMATE THAT ENCOURAGES ART AS OPPOSED TO, SAY, GIULIANI USING HIS OFFICE TO GO AFTER THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

21
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARTISTS TO GET INVOLVED IN POLITICS

22
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ART (CITY OR PRIVATE)

23
EVENTS THAT BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER SCHEDULED MULTI-GALLERY OPENING NIGHTS FOR EXAMPLE

by *Renny Pritikin*

Renny Pritikin. *Prescription for a Healthy Art Scene.* 2008. Reprinted with permission from the artist.

As curator and art critic Frock illustrates through her observations of commercial arts spaces closing:

> It is an astonishing amount of change in the Bay Area's compact art scene, especially as these changes also represent a significant number of artists' exhibitions and public events suspended or cancelled during transitions, while still other artists are without representation altogether. The art community is an ecosystem that survives on the health of the commercial galleries. It is, to be blunt, how many artists make a living and promote their work. If you care about living in a community of art and artists, the health of the whole scene matters. The ripple effect of losing commercial galleries is that nonprofit organizations also receive less support and this then jeopardizes opportunities for artists to make art, eclipsing art at the grassroots level. (Frock, 2014)

Losing commercial art galleries compromises the ability for artists to sell their work and make a living. The closing of experimental art spaces limits the outlets for artists to take risks. As Frock continues, "Notable here is a consideration of the type of organizations that have been compromised—for the most part, these are experimental venues that offer platforms for new and challenging contemporary art by living artists. There has been no surge of new spaces to fill their absences" (2014). Adding to this is the need for colleges and universities to train future generations of artists. San Francisco has dedicated art schools such as California College of the Arts (CCA) and the San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) as well as substantial art departments as San Francisco State University (SFSU), the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), and Mills College. These institutions draw in and develop new artists, as well as employ established artists as professors. They can only exist if a student body can afford to live in the region to attend these schools. So here, the need for affordable space affects galleries, nonprofit experimental arts organizations, artists' homes and studios, and also new artist development alike. To reference Pritikin's prescription, high rent affects all sorts of communities in San Francisco including those who are needed to write about and curate art. As art critic, Baker wrote, "In this century, San Francisco has become inhospitable to gallery activity and art production alike through escalating rents...and above all by what appears to be a desertion of old cultural forms by new money" (2015). Baker alludes to another essential part of the arts ecosystem: an audience to support it. He continues: "The pleasures of art are complex and cannot be hurried. They remain available in inestimable abundance, but they cannot be quantified by an admission price, a sale price or even the price of one's time. In a culture obsessed by what can be quantified, and better yet monetized, this point has become increasingly difficult to communicate" (Baker, 2015). He nods to the influx of San Francisco population that was alluded to earlier, those who align with the Californian ideology. Within the San Franciscan tech culture that values innovation, creativity, and collaboration—insofar as it can be measured and monetized—it can be difficult to explain the importance of slowness and ideas that are not related to a commodity. It is additionally hard to garner city government support or regulations to safeguard the arts within this economic framework.

As the fragile housing and arts infrastructure of San Francisco is pushed out on multiple levels by the cost of space of all kinds, even those organizations and artists who stay face the anxiety of displacement, as seen in the SFAC and Harder + Co surveys. This sort of anxiety and shaky future make it difficult for artists or organizations to have long-term plans, which can hinder risk taking. The arts in San Francisco are faced with the current reality of space scarcity and precariousness, within a larger post-Fordist, neoliberal, and California ideological framework that does not provide the public infrastructure to support the arts ecosystem. San Francisco does have arts funding through Grants for the Arts and the SFAC, but the resources have not grown at the rate that keeps up with nonprofit organizations' rising costs. And though the San Francisco government is scrambling to provide additional funds to combat nonprofit and legacy business displacement, it is seen as piecemeal and too little too late. Additional funding is only one factor, and does not mitigate the lack of policy around rent and real estate protections for arts organizations that could shield them from displacement in the first place. Arts organizations, being vulnerable to economic shifts, can serve as coal-mine canaries for what happens when urban development takes place without robust public infrastructure. This project will look at three entities that are adopting and adapting models to stay afloat in San Francisco under these circumstances. Each is attempting different approaches, but they share common ideals and methods.

III. Case Studies

Lost Weekend Video

For just under 20 years Lost Weekend Video has offered for rent popular and indie movies in the Mission neighborhood of San Francisco. With its 27,000-title inventory the store stocks the shelves with cult, Criterion, foreign, and independent movies, but according to Jeremy Wheat, new releases and television are the main earners. Wheat, who has helped manage the store for the past 11 years, is a self-proclaimed “free-spirited bohemian” who regularly hosts comedy nights. Like many longstanding San Franciscans, he is drawn to the outliers. Says Wheat, “whether that be musicians, artists, writers, thinkers—these are my people. I come from creative people, and that’s where I’ve always felt most comfortable” (2015). Wheat’s proclivity for a creative community meshes well with the neighborhood video store. As reporter Laura Wenus noted, “Lost Weekend is as much community space as it is a video archive” (2016a). Although not a formal art space, the store serves a creative function for the neighborhood, providing access to entertainment and inspiration. As one of Lost Weekend’s owners David Hawkins said, “Retail shops like ours, Le Video, Amoeba, Green Apple and many others in the entertainment wing of retail used to be the anchors of neighborhoods. That had a lot to do with why certain neighborhoods were more popular” (in Wenus, 2016b).

Lost Weekend Video is located in San Francisco’s Mission District that is known for being the warmest and sunniest microclimate in the foggy city. Valencia, Mission and 24th Streets are lined with popular restaurants, bars, and art galleries. The neighborhood is known for its vibrant nightlife as well as art, with 40 public works and 210 murals (San Francisco Indicators Project, 2011). The area is zoned as a neighborhood commercial transit district. The popular corridors are zoned as individual commercial, with the surrounding streets reserved for residential transit, and 2-3 unit residential lots (City and County of San Francisco, 2015). It has traditionally been home to Latino residents. The Mission is about twice as dense in population as the average in San Francisco, at 32,000 people per square mile (San Francisco Indicators Project, 2010). Median one-bedroom rent is $3,450 in the neighborhood. The Mission more recently has seen an increase in gentrification and associated activism and protests.

Recent years have brought massive population change to the Mission. The past few years have also been a challenge for Lost Weekend Video. As Wheat put it, renting videos “is the least popular way of viewing entertainment. And at one time, it might've been in the top three. But it was certainly the only way to get stuff at your house" (2015). The rise of Netflix in recent years, followed by other streaming sites such as Amazon Prime and Hulu, has had direct impact on in-person video rental. "According to management, business has dropped 60 percent in the last four years. Lost Weekend's staff says it can't compete with Netflix and other legal and illegal video-streaming services" (Hernandez, 2014). In addition, many laptops are no longer manufactured with disk drives, so along with viewership trends, fewer people can view DVD or Blu Ray disks with at-home equipment. The video store, according to Wheat, has seen its customer base shift to those with fixed incomes like retired people, and those that like a browsable library, like families. Cinephiles, those who share a love for movies, aren't a large enough niche to sustain the store, and increasingly, alternative titles can be found online through sites like Fandor.

The decline in video store rentals due to streaming technology is only one part of the equation. Valencia Street, where the store is located, has seen ever increasing rents, and Lost Weekend has not been immune (Eddy, 2014). According to the store's website, "Our rent, while market rate, has continued to rise & video rentals have continued to decline at a precipitous rate" (Lost Weekend, 2015). At just shy of 20 years of operation, Lost Weekend is not covered by the protections of Prop J, the city ordinance that was passed in late 2015 that helps legacy businesses fight displacement. In the face of declining business and rising rent, Lost Weekend enacted several rapid changes to stay afloat. As comedian Nato Green said, "Like a cockroach in a nuclear holocaust, Lost Weekend Video stubbornly refuses to yield to the wave of gentrification scorching Valencia Street" (2015). This section will present the store's strategies that began a few years ago and continue to evolve through the current moment.

Cinecave/Cynic Cave

At the end of 2011, Lost Weekend Video created a Kickstarter campaign to raise funds for the building of a screening room in its basement. The store raised $9,000 in early 2012 and were able to outfit what is now the Cinecave. Seen as an "easy synergy" (Wheat, 2015), the 25-30 person mini-theater was designed to show movies that complemented the store's collection and interests. This shifted the store from a purely rental operation into a rental and entertainment venue. The line of reasoning was that people who like movies would congregate for screenings even if the rentals were waning. The hope was that ticket and concession revenue would add additional revenue for the store, and perhaps also increase rentals. The Cinecave was outfitted with old theater seats and the walls were covered in movie posters. The small stage in front was lined with Christmas lights. However, the venue was underground—literally in a basement—but also figuratively as the screenings were intended to fly below the radar of rights and licensing bodies that impacted marketing ability. “So basically, one couldn’t promote to such an extent that it would alarm a movie studio. And people just wouldn’t show up, regardless of how many copies of a handout calendar they collected” (Wheat, 2015). Screenings in the Cinecave did not draw the hoped-for attendance.

Another group of people gravitated toward the low-ceilinged, cozy underground room with a short-depth stage: comedians. Lost Weekend tested the cross-genre programming waters with a monthly comedy show. “The first one was a roaring success, so it quickly established itself as a goer. So I think after the second one, it went to weekly. And after that, then we started booking other nights, and now I think we have two of the best weekly shows in San Francisco” (Wheat, 2015). Comedian and experimental music aficionado George Chen redubbed the basement the Cynic Cave. Stand-up comedy needed a dark, intimate place for performers to practice, and audiences quickly caught on that some of the best comedy talent was making its way through this small, basement room. “In that time, the Cynic Cave has become the beating heart of San Francisco’s alternative comedy scene. There are regular standup shows, chat shows, game shows, storytelling shows, and shows for national headliners like Natasha Leggero to work out their tours. If you want to see something beautiful and weird that may never happen again, go watch comedy in Cynic Cave,” says comedian Nato Green (2015). In financial terms, Lost Weekend instituted a classic 50/50 door split with the performers and kept the profits from concessions. This shift to a hybrid rental-entertainment venue helped incrementally with rent; however, it wasn’t enough to sustain the business. “Even at the highest level of profitability, all the comedy did was primarily fill the store with creativity and provide a scene and, you know, catalyze artists, who love the space. Beyond that, it kept the lights on. That is all. It was never a cash cow. And the boon to it was that it inspired creative people” (Wheat, 2015). Unfortunately, the entertainment model lacked a few key traits that would allow the store to make more profit. “The layout of their space would not allow them to get the necessary permits, as they don’t have the required number of exits. Additionally, to be a successful venue they needed to sell one business-saving substance: alcohol. To get a liquor license, Lost Weekend would have to go through an extensive process. Such an effort would also require an exemption, as the Mission is a special use district that restricts the issuing of new liquor licenses in the neighborhood—though exemptions have been made" (Hernandez, 2014). These challenges limited the viability of the Cave to sustain the video business. With this experience under its belt, Lost Weekend set out to transform further in order to support its yearly rent increases.

1-2-3-4 Go! Records

In 2015 Lost Weekend Video launched an IndieGoGo campaign to raise funds to open a second location in Oakland, "If only because the handwriting was on the wall that Oakland might be more friendly to small businesses and because it was adapting to gentrification in a way that we were familiar, as early gentrifiers of the Valencia Corridor" (Wheat, 2015). With just under $30,000 raised, the store fell short of its $80,000 goal, halting the feasibility of opening a new shop in Oakland. Switching to a nonprofit model was floated but the store realized the process would be time consuming, and time was one of the things the shop did not have. As Wheat elaborated:

> Lost Weekend has found it impossible, with their long-term landlord, to get more than a one-year lease. That was challenging because at a certain point, it seemed like since the store was failing and on life support, that it might behoove the owners to apply for nonprofit status. That is a process that probably takes, at a minimum, if you're being fast tracked, a year and a half. And I would say that is like cutting through some red tape, calling in a few favors, and probably slipping some bribes...And ultimately, at that point, even as a nonprofit entity, if one doesn't have a pile of bricks to call home, what good does that do? (2015)

With time running out, Lost Weekend decided to get a roommate. The video store joined forces with 1-2-3-4 Go! Records to share its space further. 1-2-3-4 Go! Records had a shop in Oakland and were looking to expand to San Francisco with a second location. This arrangement had a local example to build from: another video store, Le Video, had merged spaces with independent book store Green Apple to share rent and space. With another local store as precedent, Lost Weekend joined in partnership with the record store, and the lease was renewed for another year with an "increase small enough to make it feasible for the two specialty vendors to share the burden of rental costs as well as the space" (Wenus, 2015). This partnership allowed three forms of live and recorded presentation—video, music, and comedy—to avoid displacement or just plain closure by coming together in mutual support. The model was a marketplace in which one location hosts several businesses. It was an effort that seemed like it could work.

However, as the year progressed, trouble arose with the marketplace model. As Wheat explained:

> The arrangement was always much like a food court. So if you saw the record store doing a brisk business, it did no more for the video store than rent would get paid in a timely manner. Just because you go to a food court and someone's buying ribs from the barbeque place does not mean that the pizza place is doing any better business. And what the video store found, what Lost Weekend found, was that because there was a record store in the front window, we would have our regular customers come by from a dinner engagement and have someone say, 'Yeah, I walked by Lost Weekend. They're a record store now.' So what we effectively did was we lowered awareness that we were still a vital video store. (2015)

With even less rental business, Lost Weekend was starting to have its doubts again. Compounding this, as the lease was coming to an end in spring 2016, 1-2-3-4 Go! Records signed a lease in the storefront directly next door, where the clothing store Dema was going out of business. Faced with the loss of 1-2-3-4 Go! Records, Lost Weekend had to decide between negotiating another year-long lease along with scrambling to find another roommate, or closing its doors.

Alamo Drafthouse and Le Video

Meanwhile, a few blocks away, the Alamo Drafthouse was finishing renovation on the New Mission Theater. This first-run and art-house movie theater opened in December 2015 and serves alcohol and food in a bustling atmosphere. The Alamo Drafthouse, originally from Texas, knew it was setting up in a city with several independent theaters already in business—such as the Castro, Roxie, and Clay theaters—and was anxious to be a good community member. The Alamo Drafthouse saw that Lost Weekend Video was in trouble and invited it to be roommates. The Alamo Drafthouse offered Lost Weekend a space in its lobby. "Even though [San Francisco's] idealism and friendliness to weirdos is largely the stuff of legend, they came in knowing that and with the handwriting being on the wall, and knowing of their close proximity to us, the idea is... that they would give Lost Weekend Video free retail space in their lobby, and all of the utilities that are used in the day-to-day routine" (Wheat, 2015). Not only could Lost Weekend Video share the theater lobby space, but the option to do so rent and utility free couldn't have come at a better time. As store owner Hawkins put mildly, "They're giving us very good terms" (in Jones, 2016). Lost Weekend is planning to build a kiosk in the lobby to rent from its 27,000 title collection to moviegoers. Liz Duran, Director of Private Events & Community Engagement at Alamo Drafthouse, said, "I think having that setup in the lobby will help the moviegoing experience. The audience is going to get a lot more out of going to an Alamo movie by having the video store within our walls" (in Wenus, 2016a). Traditionally, movie theater lobbies are home to marginal markets like arcade games and snacks. This partnership creates a like-genre symbiosis between theater programming and video rentals.

In March, Lost Weekend Video hosted sold-out final comedy shows. Anna Seregina, a comedian who has performed in the Cinecave for years, travelled from Los Angeles to perform in the final days. She summed up what many felt on the final night:

> I cannot believe the Cave is going to be gone. Though, truthfully, it always kind of felt too good to be true. There was always some lingering feeling of disbelief that we were allowed to do something so cool in such a cool, hidden place. It has been magic. It, along with the people who run it, has felt like home. I can't even fully speak to the extent of the role it has played in reshaping San Francisco comedy—again, magic. Come say bye to the coolest venue in the world. (Seregina, 2016)

Sergina's message was a nod to the unique, dark, underground space, but also to the community it created, and careers it bolstered. Lost Weekend hopes to continue its Cynic Cave style comedy programming within the New Mission Theater, though many of the comedy nights are temporarily moving to the Little Roxie—a smaller theater next door to the Roxie— and PianoFight—a new comedy venue in the Tenderloin. With the move, the brick and mortar storefront on Valencia Street closed at the end of March 2016. This closure was punctuated by the end of the Valencia Street lease and the move of 1-2-3-4 Go! Records to the storefront next door.

The story has another layer beyond the move of Lost Weekend Video into the lobby of the Alamo Drafthouse's New Mission Theater. Le Video, the seminal video store mentioned before, was not able to make its roommate situation with Green Apple books viable, and it closed operations in late 2015. The Le Video collection of 90,000 titles is the most extensive collection of rare, cult, and independent movies in San Francisco. The Alamo Drafthouse reached out to Le Video with an interest in its archive. Tim League, Founder of the Alamo Drafthouse, knew Megan Ellison, the movie producer and Founder of Annapurna Pictures.

Ellison had stepped in a year prior to save Vidiots, a legendary video rental store in Santa Monica, California (Panzar, 2015), and League convinced her to step in once again. From the Alamo Drafthouse's press release:

> The only reason to be in this business is because we love movies. The Alamo Drafthouse family loves movies. Annapurna Pictures' Megan Ellison loves movies. And San Francisco's legendary Le Video loves movies. So this is a partnership that not only makes sense, but feels fated. An important and exhaustive cinephile curation will be maintained by this endeavor. (Borders, 2015)

The goal is to preserve Le Video's extensive collection and keep it from being dispersed among private collectors. "So this was all Alamo's deal to acquire the Le Video collection. Lost Weekend has no monies [sic]" (Wheat, 2015). Although Lost Weekend Video could not share in the purchase of Le Video's archive, the partnership with Alamo Drafthouse is now twofold. Lost Weekend will become a hosted roommate, and also will become the caretakers and distributors of the Le Video archives, though the exact details of this partnership are not yet formalized. "And we are somewhat the gatekeepers of what will be done with it in the short term...And I feel fairly secure that the collection will stay in the light of day, and at least for the foreseeable future, will be available to San Franciscans" (Wheat, 2015). The sense of excitement in the midst of fuzzy details is echoed by Alamo Drafthouse: "Us purchasing the collection was a spitballed prayer in the rain, and how it will unfold from here is an experiment in arms with our good pals at Lost Weekend, who have their own rental stock to integrate as well" (Alamo Drafthouse, 2015). Though the details of how this will work in practice are in flux, the partnership and collection acquisition represent yet another working model for Lost Weekend.

The video rental store that went from store to entertainment model to marketplace, is now entering another phase that is somewhat similar to a museum model in spirit. Lost Weekend will soon be caretaking an extensive archive and curating selections for public consumption. The video store is now an aggregator of collections, with the videos becoming thought of as an archive instead of as inventory. As Wheat said, "Ideally, I see Lost Weekend having a selection from the Le Video collection in a way that honors us both… I would feel a sense of duty and an honor in curating a small collection of Le Video's titles, in addition to our own" (2015). This sense of duty to an archive, and of public access to it in a curated way, is very close in a general way to what museums do. With art, it is often because it is too expensive for most members of the public to purchase, so museums display it as part of a civic sharing. Though videos are not expensive to rent, they are rarefied in a way. According to the Alamo Drafthouse Creative Manager, Mike Keegan, “Every time there’s a shift in format viewing like, let’s say, VHS to DVD to Blu-ray to streaming, only a really small percentage of movies make that leap every time. When people are at home just streaming stuff, there’s the ease of selection but the breadth of history isn’t there. So I see video rental stores as sort of public archives” (in Wenus, 2016a). Shifting technologies have made popular and contemporary movies instantly available; however this move has simultaneously made classic, rare, cult, and independent movies less accessible to the public. The model of Lost Weekend Video with Alamo Drafthouse is a prototype for a new level of duty that video rental stores may be stepping into. If anything, the love for movies has increased, not waned. What has changed are the modes of access, and with those changes, the model for rental stores. As League said in the Alamo Drafthouse press release, **“**Despite the fact that great video stores like Le Video are closing all over the country, I am confident that a new iteration of the video store experience can exist and thrive even today” (in Borders, 2015). This new iteration is a shift away from being an entertainment provider and more toward being a caretaker for objects with a sense of responsibility to a medium. Though not formally a museum model—there is no board or endowment—this new model does adopt some of the characteristics of a museum: it is mission driven, collection based, and provides public access to a rarified archive.

Many questions remain for this new partnership. Over the next few months Lost Weekend Video and Alamo Drafthouse will be working to answer them. Where will the archive be housed? How much of the archive will be available for rental? Will the two collections be merged or kept separate? Will Lost Weekend still be able to host live comedy? And perhaps the biggest question of all: will Lost Weekend Video be able to support this new endeavor, even with hosted rent and utilities? Will revenue be sufficient to sustain the staff and care for the collection?

Lessons

Lost Weekend Video has changed its approach several times in the past five years, each iteration in the hope of lasting just one more year. Wheat, of course, considers the changes in movie trope terms:

> One analogy that I've kept in my hip pocket for a while is like, we rent all of these eighties youth movies, where it's important to hold off the encroaching nasty businessman and save the youth center or midnight basketball or the dance school or whatever, or the kung-fu dojo. And we sort of are that stereotypical eighties midnight basketball dojo… We are part of a living, breathing stereotype. (2015)

Although the first two iterations—the Cinecave and 1-2-3-4 Go! Records—were not ultimately sustainable in the long run, they offered lessons along the way. The store used the space it had to build a mini-theater, and when screenings didn't work, it was welcoming to comedians. When that wasn't enough, it was welcoming to a music store. When that didn't work, it was open to changing spaces altogether. "Beloved institutions such as Lost Weekend Video know that nostalgia is not enough to keep a business running. And that means shifting their business models in hopes of weathering yet another disruptive storm" (Hernandez, 2014). The through line in Lost Weekend Video's iterations was partnership.

Collaboration has been crucial to the survival of Lost Weekend. In the first two cases, the store partnered with other niche analog entities: live comedy and vinyl records. In this way, three areas that cater to specialty audiences came together in a mutually beneficial space. Comedians gained an underground club to test their material, and the record store gained a San Francisco location in addition to its Oakland one. Different genres that face challenges of audience and the affordability of space could support one another, even if not ultimately viable.

The partnership with Alamo Drafthouse, and the acquisition of Le Video's archive, is a same-genre collaboration. All three entities value cinema and, in this case, instead of three struggling entities mutually supporting one another, a thriving organization helped waning ones. The Alamo Drafthouse was in the unique position to buy a video archive from a closing business and offer space to another video store to continue its business. This partnership can be seen as a prototype for how organizations with similar missions can use success in one area to support another area that is struggling. In this particular case, a live, theater-going movie enterprise hopes to subsidize the continued existence of video rentals and access to archives that don't exist through streaming technologies.

Lost Weekend Video over the past five years has gone from being purely a video rental store to becoming a hybrid live entertainment venue, to then becoming a marketplace with live venue and a roommate. Now the store is embarking on a museum-like journey of responsibility. Wheat plays it off casually, saying, "We threw a few things against the wall and a couple of them stuck” (2015). In each iteration Lost Weekend changed rapidly and nimbly, being open to the type of collaboration in which parties pursue their goals in a mutually beneficial way.

In all cases the store was also helped by having a larger mission of community, and seeing Lost Weekend Video as a piece of that community. As it says on the store’s website, “Our ultimate goal with all of these projects is to prevent yet another invaluable collection of films from disappearing from public use into private collections, but we hope to do this by evolving our model while continuing to promote the throwback concept of a place...where people can gather to be enthusiastic about film or music or our still lovely Mission District community. We also hope to continue to nurture the amazing & seemingly endless batch of new comedy talent emerging from the Bay Area” (Lost Weekend, 2015). The store never saw itself as just a video store, so the changes weren’t just about saving a store, but about trying to keep a community in existence in San Francisco. As Lost Weekend owner Christy Concord said, “But what we can continue to serve as is like this reminder of the community that Valencia Street used to have, in terms of artists and creative people, and people who wanted to talk to each other” (in Dilling, 2015). Here, the means and goal match, as both are about being in this together in San Francisco. The organizations are working together to pursue their shared larger goals.

CounterPulse

For over 25 years CounterPulse has been dedicated to risk-taking dance and performance, with an eye to community and emerging artists. What began as two organizations, 848 Community Space and the Bay Area Center for Art and Technology, CounterPulse has grown to be San Francisco’s hub for contemporary and community performance. Julie Phelps, Artistic Director, prefers a broad definition of what CounterPulse does:

> We specialize in elevating under-heard voices and fostering engaged communities. We have a suite of artist-centered activities, including incubation residencies, a fully curated season of events. We also do community arts programs, engaging the low-income residents of the Tenderloin and the SoMa we were previously located in—arts discourse, creative discourse, arts participation and art making. So really, we specialize in doing no one thing, but really responding to the emergent ideas and needs of community and finding exciting ways to advance the cultural landscape of San Francisco. (with Beckham et al., 2015)

According to CounterPulse's promotional brochure, the nonprofit organization supports 1,000 artists and 10,000 audience members, and puts on 300 events and performances a year. Operating for many years out of its home in the SoMa neighborhood, this small organization has had huge impact on supporting performing artists. It seeks to foster diversity and alternative expression. As Phelps said, "CounterPulse, in certain ways, represents the diversity and the keep-San Francisco-weird culture that a lot of people are moving to San Francisco for" (with Beckham et al., 2015).

For ten years CounterPulse was on Mission Street in SoMa located, as its name implies, South of Market Street. Traditionally the neighborhood was home to working-class and transient workers, warehouses, light industry, and auto repair shops. In the 1970s and 80s it became a haven for alternative gay culture. The 1990s saw the development of live/work buildings and later an influx of tech companies. SoMa is zoned as a mixed-use district, with commercial and office zoning punctuated by residential enclaves (City and County of San Francisco, 2015). The neighborhood has a density of about 23,000 people per square mile (San Francisco Indicators Project, 2010), which is about a third higher than the San Francisco average, and median one-bedroom rent is $3,890 (Erwert, 2015).

In early 2015, CounterPulse faced the end of its ten year lease in SoMa, and with it a rent increase. At first it was able to extend the lease three to four months with a 50% rent increase, but after that the rent doubled to $10,000 a month and the organization was forced to move. Around the same time, Twitter received a controversial tax break from the city of San Francisco (Coté, 2014; Lang, 2015) and moved in down the block. As Phelps said, "All of a sudden we were coming to the end of our lease at 1010 Mission. Twitter had moved onto our block and we were facing an uncertain future" (with Beckham et al., 2015). The year prior, Executive Director Jessica Robinson Love left the organization. Long time staff person Julie Phelps stepped in as Artistic Director and Tomás Riley, a spoken word poets and arts administrator, was hired as the Executive Director in January of 2015. Riley was brought in to ensure a dedication to community and a consistency of vision through the transition.

Opportunistic Partnerships

Originally, CounterPulse received financial help from the newly established NDMP to help stave off displacement from the rent increase. At the same time, the Kenneth Rainin

Foundation was helping to found CAST, in partnership with NCCLF and the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD). According to Phelps:

> Little did we know that a parallel effort was going on…to mitigate the efforts of the economic boom that was happening in San Francisco, by providing an alternative to the cycle that the city had seen so many times before, hemorrhaging arts organizations and cultural organizations as the city grew. And fortunate enough for CounterPulse, these initiatives needed a conduit, and we were prepared and financially had the track record, had the community impact, and we needed a building. So we became an ideal recipient of the support and partnership that had led to all these people coming together around this neighborhood. So that’s how we got here. (with Beckham et al., 2015)

CAST started quietly in 2012. Shelley Trott, the Director of Arts Strategy & Ventures for the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, who lived through the displacement of the late 1990s first tech bubble, recognized that San Francisco was probably entering another displacement crisis and began conversations to do something about it:

> So in late 2012, December of 2012, the Rainin Foundation board decided we wanted to act quickly to mitigate this displacement. And we went to NCCLF...and we started to brainstorm solutions and...designed a new philanthropic model that would secure permanent affordable space for arts and culture...And we committed to a $5 million grant over five years, to launch the Community Arts Stabilization Trust. So CAST is a mission-based nonprofit real estate development and holding company founded to stabilize the creative sector. (with Beckham et al., 2015)

Simply put, CAST set up a model in which the trust purchases real estate for arts organizations and then works with them to build their capacity to purchase the buildings from the trust over seven or more years. When a nonprofit buys out CAST, that money is then recycled to purchase real estate for other organizations. In this way, it purchases buildings at current rates, freezing the costs before they rise further and removes arts organizations from the threat of rent increases and competition for space in a commercial market. Thereby it builds stability in the arts. This is similar to a land trust model wherein a trustee purchases and holds real estate for another entity. In a classic land trust the trustee holds the land but the management, operations, and decisions are made by the trust beneficiary (Murray, 2007). CAST is slightly different as the beneficiary organization will pay back the trustee overtime, at the original purchase price, to own the property itself. As Trott said, “So CAST is carving out an alternative or affordable market by capturing property, derestricting it to arts use, holding it for the creative sector, and offering it for purchase or lease at well below market rates" (Trott with Beckham et al., 2015). CAST leverages not just funds, but expertise to navigate complex financial tools.[2]

Just as CounterPulse was facing a huge rent increase, CAST was looking for a first project. As it turned out, the first project would involve two organizations: CounterPulse and the Luggage Store Gallery. The Luggage Store is a nonprofit, multidisciplinary art gallery founded just under 30 years ago, whose building on Market Street was at risk of being sold to investors (Flores, 2015). Neither organization had enough square footage to qualify for the New Markets Tax Credit, a Federal tax incentive for investors to support community businesses. With technical assistance from NCCLF and CAST, the Luggage Store and CounterPulse qualified for the credit (Riley, 2015) that helped fund the purchase of real estate for each organization. The Luggage Store not only stayed in its building, but enabled its subtenant, Hospitality House Community Art Program, to stay (Flores, 2015). At the same time, CAST purchased an underused former porn theater in the Tenderloin, just one block off Market Street at 80 Turk for CounterPulse. This move, some four blocks away from its SoMa location, allowed CounterPulse a permanent home and a chance to build out a new and larger theater.

The location at 80 Turk was brokered by the NCCLF. Leiasa Beckham, NCCLF's Senior Real Estate Consultant, looked for existing building stock that could house a theater of CounterPulse's size, knowing that city policies for distressed real estate allow nonprofits flexibility to adapt existing property. NCCLF then worked with the property owner of 80 Turk to purchase the building. Says Beckham, "Their lease was running out. And we did some matchmaking, worked with the owner, who we convinced to sell us the building" (with et al., 2015). The building had previously been an adult theater and had sat vacant for several years in the Tenderloin neighborhood, just off Market Street.

[2] More on CAST: "It's a mission-based nonprofit real estate development and holding company founded to stabilize the creative sector. And it does this by securing permanent affordable space, as I mentioned, for under-resourced creative enterprises that do not have the capital or capacity to navigate the volatile real estate market. And our goal is to preserve the diverse and dynamic culture for which the Bay Area is known and celebrated...So CAST purchases property and leverages the investment by working with our partners to access complex financial tools like New Market historic preservation tax credits and transfer development rights to support renovation. We stabilize the tenants by offering affordable long-term leases, with options to purchase in seven to ten years. During that time period, we build the capacity of organizations to become owners of their building. The venue becomes a permanent community asset and a cultural hub that activates and uplifts the neighborhood. When the arts partner purchases the building seven years later, it does so at the original purchase price, and CAST recycles those funds towards another project." (Trott with Beckham et al., 2015)

With CAST funding and NCCLF matchmaking, CounterPulse had a building to occupy. However, the building was in disrepair, offering the bones and location, but not the infrastructure to support CounterPulse's programming. The partners paired with Public Architecture, an organization with the mission "to provide the network and knowledge necessary to use the design of the built environment as a tool for social gain" (Ress with Beckham et al., 2015). Amy Ress is the Director of Public Architecture's One Percent Program that "challenges architects and designers to commit 1% or more of their working hours to public service. And it's an online program that has a matching system that connects those designers to nonprofits that have an unmet design service need" (Ress with Beckham et al., 2015). Through this program architecture firms can offset their earnings with philanthropy, and community organizations can receive pro bono architectural services. Ress paired CounterPulse with Mark Jensen of Jensen architects who has a longstanding passion for the arts in San Francisco. Jensen calls the arrangement, "reciprocal altruism" (with Beckham et al., 2015), considering his contribution to the arts as feeding into a cycle that in turn contributes to the community of San Francisco, where he then gets to live and work. Jensen designed 80 Turk Street pro bono for CounterPulse.

There is yet another partner in this undertaking: the City of San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) that has an interest in trying to make neighborhoods cleaner, safer, with more jobs, and to fill empty or blighted buildings. The Tenderloin and Mid-Market neighborhood where the new CounterPulse is located is a key area for OEWD, so the office stepped in with funds. As Riley said, "they definitely have stepped up, in terms of recognizing the risk that we're taking by taking on the building" (2015). The city, then, is not only supporting the move in financial terms, but sees the project as part of a larger Central Market economic strategy begun in 2011 to change the mid-Market area. According to the strategy draft by the city of San Francisco, it hopes to: "enhance and activate the public realm...enhance the creative arts community...stabilize the existing community...reduce vacancies and catalyze development... build community capacity… [and] improve safety" (2011). In this way, CounterPulse, as an arts organization, is critical to San Francisco's Central Market plan to transform the Tenderloin neighborhood, and the city has a vested interest in the organization's success.

80 Turk Street

The building at 80 Turk Street is in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, located between the Civic Center and Union Square regions. Zoned as a residential-commercial combined district (City and County of San Francisco, 2016), the Tenderloin has the highest population density in the city, between 53,000-161,000 people per square mile (San Francisco Indicators Project, 2010). This is due to the fact that many of the buildings are Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) hotels, studios or one-bedrooms. The median rent for a one-bedroom apartment is one of the lowest in the city at $2,190 a month (Erwert, 2015). The area is known for its seedy reputation of illegal drug use, prostitution, crime, and strip clubs. Relatedly, it is home to a concentration of social service organizations. There is also a proliferation of theaters, for both large-scale productions and alternative offerings.

The space that CounterPulse is renovating "dates back to 1922, and most recently housed a porn theater named the Dollhouse" (Musiker, 2015a). The internet has moved porn consumption online and the theater has been left unoccupied in recent years, though there are rumors the main space was used for raves and the upstairs as a grow house. With a staff of eight and a budget of about $1.3 million, CounterPulse's Phelps sees the new space as "alive with options" (with Merritt, 2015). Along with the new neighborhood, the new space triples the organization's square footage.

With the new 80 Turk location, according to Jensen architect Frank Merritt, they were able to "capitalize on the bones" (with Phelps, 2015). Upon entering there is a real lobby, a space the previous building did not have. The lobby continues into the basement for restrooms and coat check (the restrooms in the previous space were located on the side of the stage). The main theater space remains intimate with 120 seats—just 25% more than in its previous theater. The renovations allowed for accessible seating and an elevator. The goal was not to increase the theater size, as the community audience CounterPulse caters to is an intimate one. The theater itself is a black box with white box flexibility. There is a 30' x 30' sprung floor to enhance the experience for artists. Along with the physical space, CounterPulse was able to upgrade to new LED and tungsten lighting, and Meyer Sound.

The new space has a backstage storage loft and stairs to the basement dressing rooms that have bathrooms and a shower for performers, all of which the old space did not have. The basement also has a rehearsal studio, and CounterPulse is planning to offer the lowest studio rental rates in the city. In addition to the studio there is a space that CounterPulse is intentionally leaving raw and it can be used for workshops, set building, gallery shows, meetings, and rehearsals. Phelps prefers to keep the spaces raw and open so meaning can be built upon them. “And that’s why this room seems so far from done, because it’s not done. It won’t ever be done. This room is a living room. The raw resource of space will continue to live through the hands of artists and cultural innovators, by way of the mission of CounterPulse” (Phelps with Beckham et al., 2015).

Upstairs the second floor was zoned for live/work and, with the purchase of the building, CounterPulse was able to retain that zoning. The most exciting part about upstairs is the apartment for travelling artists. With rent and hotel prices skyrocketing in San Francisco, the apartment allows for national and international artists to travel for the development or presentation of work. While staying there artists have 24 hour access to adjacent developmental space. Also upstairs is another studio space with hardwood floors for rehearsals, workshops or smaller performances. Additionally, the upstairs is the location of the CounterPulse staff offices.

The three levels of 80 Turk Street allow for simultaneous activities in the upper level, main theater, and basement studio, with shared congregation in the lobby. For Riley, “the pinnacle of our success would be to have all spaces utilized all the time” (2015). For Phelps, it is less about space, which she sees as a canvas not a container. Instead, Phelps is focused on place, and encourages people to “create place when there is no space" (with Merritt, 2015). Phelps is explicit that the new location does not mean a change in CounterPulse’s vision, instead it allows the organization to continue its mission.

> It’s a stabilization trust, you know? We don’t have to meet insanely higher rents to be in this building. We intentionally wanted and felt an affinity towards this facility because it doesn’t represent an expansion to a 300-seat theater, that we all of a sudden need to book work that will sell the house. So we get to do both. We get to stay true to the path that we were already on—it was a really natural evolution of community and artistic inquiry —while also expanding, in response to a more robust facility. (Phelps with Beckham et al., 2015)

The evolution of community and inquiry relates to CounterPulse’s track record of partnership that Riley promises to continue in the new neighborhood: “we have to land in the Tenderloin as an authentic partner in the community” (Riley, 2015). The community of the Tenderloin is distinct, as mentioned earlier. It is a neighborhood defined by city planning in terms of zoning and development limitations. Restrictions on height and development has made it near impossible for SRO hotels to be torn down and repurposed, and many are residential hotels with rooms and suites kept at affordable rates by social service nonprofits (Krause-Jackson, 2015). And according to Amy B. Cohen, Neighborhood Program Development Director for the OEWD:

> The neighborhood continues to be what it really was when we started, which is a whole lot of families, very poor, lots of seniors, lots of immigrants. Still crime, still issues around addiction, mental illness, safety and housing quality that we have yet to solve, but we're working on. (Cohen with Beckham, et al., 2015)

What the city sees as a challenge, CounterPulse sees as an opportunity to continue its community mission. As Riley says, the "Tenderloin is the highest concentration of youth and family in the city" (2015) making it ripe for education and youth outreach. CounterPulse's approach is very much in-line with its mission and working method of partnership. The Tenderloin is home to a wealth of social service organizations, and CounterPulse plans work closely with them:

> But what we have planned is to build off of that model in meeting the residents where they are, and take that into other spaces run by the TNDC [Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation that manage 27 SROs] and other partners, to engage children, youth, and families—working with Glide, working with the Curran House across the street from us, and the Larkin Street Youth Services—to perform a similar service, I guess, asking them to engage in the act of art making on their own terms, and then inviting them to take their performance work to our stage, and making sure that it's accessible for the youth and families in the neighborhood. (Riley, 2015)

This outlook is not new for CounterPulse, and comes from a place of genuine commitment to community:

> So finding those places where there's genuine mutual exchange between the artistic work that's happening at CounterPulse at the communities that we're trying to engage is—I mean, in a certain way, it's much more difficult to find those points of overlap; but it's also significantly easier, that you're not manufacturing an exchange. You're fostering a natural inclination of two people, two communities, to intersect with each other and share stories. (Phelps with Beckham et al., 2015)

By focusing on the new neighborhood, CounterPulse continues its mission while remaining open to the changing forms that that may bring. "We don't want to be that itinerant arts organization that comes to bring art to the people. We want the people to create the art for themselves, and use us as a platform, rather than us trying to hold them to the platform" (Riley, 2015). At the same time as CounterPulse is excited about the opportunities that a new and permanent space affords, it is very aware of its role in the transformation of a neighborhood with many stakeholders, not all of whom have the same goals.

Neighborhood Revitalization

CounterPulse is wary of gentrification and its role within it. Many San Francisco neighborhoods are experiencing gentrification. In fact, one would be hard pressed to find anywhere in the city that wasn't experiencing a rise in rents and property value that wasn't pushing out lower income communities and small businesses. Phelps articulates her thoughts on CounterPulse's move to the Tenderloin neighborhood:

> So when we moved to this neighborhood, there was both the sort of mapping of what it would be to move our audiences here and our artists here; but also the soul searching around, are we [causing] gentrification? And what does it mean to be moving to the Tenderloin? I mean, we moved four blocks down, right? But it was actually a significant move. And then in the end, we have always found, even through our stated and published strategic plan, that we are doing both. We are supporting and incubating artists, while also responding and fostering community. (with Beckham et al., 2015)

For CounterPulse it is a balance between finding a location so it can continue the performance programming that serves its long-time audience and also being in tune with its immediate surrounding community. This commitment to the Tenderloin is directly related to the purchase of the 80 Turk building. The permanency allows CounterPulse to have a longer term vision for the future: "It's a deeper kind of investment. Like when you work with children in the Tenderloin and work to cultivate an educated audience—the work that CounterPulse currently presents isn't necessarily inviting to a child of the Tenderloin. But maybe if we spend enough time and put in the work, fifteen, twenty years from now, they will be," says Riley (2015). CounterPulse's newfound longevity allows it to focus on education to build new audiences, as well as continue to present and commission work as it always has.

The city of San Francisco is a partner in the relocation of CounterPulse and also in what is called the revitalization of Central Market. Its policy outline started back in 2011 with the "Central Market Economic Strategy Draft" and continued in more depth in 2015 with the "Central Market / Tenderloin Strategy." This strategy document, created by the OEWD, the San Francisco Planning Department, and the Office of the City Administrator, has a few major goals:

> Towards the Mayor's goal of shared prosperity, the update process set out to solve three very different but concurrent urban planning questions: 1) What interventions are needed to create a healthy, mixed-income neighborhood that offers safety and well-being to all people who live, work and visit—especially a fragile low-income population that calls this area home? 2) How can San Francisco improve quality of life in a large area with such deeply ingrained challenges in a matter of years, not decades? and 3) How can the updated strategy be implemented in a way that promotes coordination and alignment among an ever-expanding list of public and private stakeholders looking to contribute? (Cancino et al, 2015)

The plan outlines several actions to simultaneously attract people to the neighborhood through events and arts, while also physically cleaning the sidewalks and parks; and increasing police presence. There is also an emphasis on creating incentives for affordable housing as well as small businesses and nonprofits. This plan outlines increasing social services and housing for homeless populations, and mental health resources as well. The arts are a large part of the strategy plan. In the section about arts, the newly opened Tenderloin Museum, PianoFight theater group, and CounterPulse each receives an icon that identifies them as representing economic opportunities. The icon is a money symbol surrounded by a circle of arrows. The arts organizations are not associated with the other two icons, one representing benefits to low income communities and the other representing clean and safe shared spaces. In some ways, the strategy document is heartening in that it looks to increase jobs, cleanliness, and vibrancy in the Tenderloin neighborhood while also recognizing the importance of supporting the existing community with housing, social services, and job opportunities. Without that counterbalance, the strategy would be easily criticized as a plan for gentrification. What is interesting, is that the arts are central to the strategy as a whole, but their value is under-recognized when they are sequestered into the economic opportunities bucket, apart from the categories of community building and safety.

Arts organizations are characterized by the city in two ways—one of needing to be saved and the other as actors in the cause to serve others. District Supervisor Jane Kim said, "I appreciate the importance of permanent physical centers to provide stable spaces for generating creativity and audiences for the arts" (in Flores, 2015). Kim's comment both touches on the importance of supporting arts organizations to remain in San Francisco as well as the benefit they provide to audiences. Mayor Ed Lee, who is often criticized for his tax breaks for tech, among other things, said of the Central Market strategy:

> A major transformation is underway on Central Market, and arts are central to that revitalization. Long-time neighborhood institutions like CounterPulse and The Luggage Store not only anchor the growing arts district but maintain the fabric of creative nonprofit organizations that characterize Central Market. Creative endeavors like CAST propel the City's efforts to enhance the role of arts organizations in the neighborhood while ensuring the longevity of these important institutions. (in Flores, 2015)

Kim and Lee laud the role of arts organizations in San Francisco, especially as they relate to a neighborhood that the city is trying to change. In the meantime, Riley is somewhat suspicious about the city strategy, while realizing his organization benefits from it:

> I can't zoom out and wonder why the city has chosen to make this arts district initiative a priority, when it could've done any number of things…How much of it is politically driven to create a nicer profile, for an administration that is also driving people out of its own city and transforming the socio-cultural landscape in an unprecedented way?...Is it really about creating an arts district? Or is it just my greedy landlord, who wants more money? And you know, the do-gooder in me says it doesn't matter where the money comes from, it's what you do with it. But at the same time, there's a certain culpability that scares me in participating in it. (2015)

Riley acknowledges the position that the city partnership in the relocation of CounterPulse puts the organization in. In one way, CounterPulse becomes an example that the city can use for political purposes. At the same time, putting arts at the center of a city initiative is provocative and heartening. Phelps emphasizes her approach as part of the city revitalization plan as marked by responsibility, responsiveness, respect, and accountability. She says, "I understand the complications of associating with urban revitalization, especially under the current economic and political powers that be in San Francisco," and goes on to say that "by accepting the complications of being at the table, I then get to have a say in what it might look like and whose opinions get to be included" (Phelps, 2016). Phelps is also mindful that the city revitalization story may overshadow the story of private funders. According to Phelps, the city has committed $200 thousand so far, which is 3% of the overall $6 million in fundraising needed for the CounterPulse move, renovation and eventual buy-back of the building. The majority of the funding has come from private entities such as Rainin Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and businesses. CounterPulse may not have control over the larger city plan for the neighborhood changes, and the implications of those changes; yet Phelps remains cautiously optimistic:

> And the arts are known for bridging difference through building community amongst people who otherwise have nothing in common, other than having shared a

> transformational experience. And that's really CounterPulse's specialty. And that's why it's important that organizations like CounterPulse, and CounterPulse specifically, move to neighborhoods like this, literally at the crosshairs of the demographic shift of the city and the economic boom of the city, so that we can build bridges that allow the whole community to ride the tide of the success of San Francisco right now. (with Beckham et al., 2015).

CounterPulse has long operated on the fringes of San Francisco, with activism, community, and experimentation at its core. In many ways, the city partnership propels CounterPulse into a new territory and spotlight. CounterPulse may be just one piece in a larger political plan, but Riley and Phelps remain dedicated to risk taking and community activism at the core of their mission.

Challenges

The new CounterPulse location comes with several challenges beyond being implicated in a city revitalization plan. Staff capacity has been challenged during the project. Phelps speaks about the transition as another full-time job on top of her already full-time job of being an artistic director. This has stretched the capacity of the staff at CounterPulse and also their partners. There has been a steep learning curve as well, as Phelps said, "you don't even know how to speak the language that is expected of you to get this job done, but you're going to have to do it anyway. And you're going to have to do it right now (2016). According to Phelps, there was no secret to how the capacity was found to do this project, and that it "depended on exceptionalism and personal passion" (2016).

While CounterPulse's collaborative spirit has allowed for a complex series of opportunistic partnerships that led its survival as an organization, the narrative can gloss over the complications of working with so many stakeholders. As Riley jokes, "I think that the psychological weight, the weight of negotiation, constantly negotiating with the many different partners, is part of the work. It should be part of [the] job description" (2015). Between CAST, NCCLF, real estate owner conversation, the 1% Program, Jensen Architects, and the city's OEWD decisions can be slow. That is compounded by the speed at which nonprofits and their boards operate, as well as the loss of the Executive Director a year ago and the onboarding of new leadership.

Originally thought to open in early 2015, CounterPulse's opening at 80 Turk was pushed back to October of 2015. It hosted walk-through tours and announced its fall season, only to have construction delays force the opening date back further. The opening was moved to early 2016 and, then again, to the end of March of 2016.

These delays caused massive amounts of disruption for CounterPulse. CounterPulse staff moved out of the previous location in SoMa but with the new location delayed, the staff set up offices in the nearby PianoFight venue. This represented an opportunistic hosting partnership that supplied the staff with space for several months, but also impacted work as they would be displaced each afternoon as the venue converted to a bar. The fall season had to change entirely, relocating ten productions to theaters and performances spaces around San Francisco, and delaying a few additional productions to spring 2016. While a testament to the collaborative spirit of the arts in San Francisco—in that so many organizations swiftly stepped in to make their spaces available—CounterPulse was still responsible for the costs associated with moving performances, and the staffing power behind it. The spring season faced similar problems, with some performances being moved to other locations and others delayed until the building was finished. The delayed performances represent a loss in potential revenue for CounterPulse. Along with the delays to the schedule, the facade renovation has also been pushed back to later in 2016. When CounterPulse opened in late March, it did so without a change to the outside of the building. Phelps is looking forward to the outside of the building matching the renovated inside: "then the building would truly be complete, and our ability to incubate new work from the inside of the building will be matched by our presence in the neighborhood and really literally and physically being part of the Tenderloin, with a new facade" (2016). Phelps said that the delays have taught her the importance of "falling in love with plan B" (2016). The delays, although out of CounterPulse's control, rests on the organization. The delays raised other kinds of problems as well. As Riley explained, "the New Market[s] Tax Credit increases at 3% equity, but that doesn't offset the costs of construction delays. So every day we're behind schedule, we lose money. And unfortunately, CounterPulse is bearing the burden of that expense, in terms of the partnership. Nobody else is losing money except CounterPulse" (2015). The financial impact of the move and the delays poses a fundraising goal much larger than an organization of their size would be accustomed to.

Fundraising has been a challenge for CounterPulse. The organization not only faced leadership change at the beginning of the project, but had a small staff unaccustomed to projects of this size. According to Phelps, "It's been so incongruent, the fundraising that has needed to go along with this project and the capacity of CounterPulse" (2016). The organization has a small staff to begin with, and a staff who are new to a capital project of this magnitude. CAST and NCCLF, beyond the acquisition of 80 Turk, were challenged with building the capacity and expertise of CounterPulse's staff to take on such an endeavor. After opening, CounterPulse now faces the challenge of raising the second half of its campaign once it is no longer the headliner in San Francisco news.

Lessons

CounterPulse's recent transition is notable on many fronts. The city's revitalization strategy puts art at the forefront for neighborhood change. As Riley says, "That, first of all, arts is being placed at the center of a neighborhood revitalization project is really unique" (2015), regardless of what ambiguous intentions and feelings it raises. It acknowledges both that arts organizations are at-risk entities within a city undergoing massive economic change, and also that the arts impact neighborhoods positively. Phelps relays this aspiration:

> For over 20 years, CounterPulse has served as a platform and incubator for socially relevant arts experiences. By giving a stage to underrepresented voices, CounterPulse instigates social change. Right now, there is no better neighborhood to center our advocacy than the Tenderloin. Along the swiftly changing Mid-Market corridor, CounterPulse's new location is at ground zero for the change San Francisco is experiencing. By partnering with service organizations, like CAST, neighborhood residents, advocacy groups, and for-profit corporations, we build the bridges that ensure the entire community can ride the tide of this incredible transformation. Building a permanent home for artists will be a significant part of ensuring the vitality and inclusivity of cultural life in San Francisco. (quoted by CAST, 2015)

As explored earlier, CounterPulse takes its role in community and mitigating gentrification, seriously. The neighborhood change it seeks is one of inclusion and stability, not of disruption. The permanency of the new space at 80 Turk is essential to the long-range mission of CounterPulse, but it is also a distinctive model.

The deal through CAST removes CounterPulse from a tenant relationship, protecting the organization from rent increases that forced it to compete in a commercial market. According to Riley, "best-practice-wise, the idea of buying up buildings and then offering them to arts organizations at below market rate is pretty innovative—for the arts" (2015). The model for land trusts have existed for some time, and are usually for holding land for environmental conservation or for affordable housing. The CAST model of purchasing real estate builds off these existing principles but with the novel difference that the beneficiary works to buy the property over time, fixed at the original price, so the nonprofit can eventually replace the trustee as owner. This model leverages private foundation funding and public incentives to allow nonprofits to acquire land and buildings that they would otherwise not have the resources to secure. This sort of permanence allows for developing audiences over time, dedicating an organization to education, a consistency of mission, and risk taking.

Along with this new model for public/private land trusts came the building of expertise. CAST built its model off the Ninth Street Independent Film Center. In 2001 various film festivals and film distributor organizations that occupied 145 Ninth Street in San Francisco worked with philanthropist Steven Oliver to buy their building. A year later the organizations partnered to form a nonprofit to buy back the building over time from the investors. CAST learned from that past model by having Oliver on its board, however the CounterPulse/Luggage Store Gallery partnership was the trust's first formalized approach with their model. The lessons learned are not necessarily for the benefit of CounterPulse directly. "There've been a lot of challenges in being a guinea pig project and essentially, working to consult on the designing of a model that will only benefit CounterPulse very briefly, before CAST moves onto the next project," says Phelps (2016). While the CounterPulse staff benefitted from the prototype model, Phelps sees the bulk of the lessons transferring to the next projects for CAST. She says, "The real estate expertise that CAST brought to the table, it pales in comparison to the real estate expertise that CAST now has at the table. It's like this project has actually done the thing of building expertise more than benefiting from expertise" (Phelps, 2016). The lesson learned here will be carried into the next projects that CAST undertakes.

A major lesson is one of partnership. As Riley put it, "We feel a little bit like that lady in *Streetcar Named Desire*, right? She's always living off the kindness of others" (2015). In the case of CounterPulse, it, along with the Luggage Store, pioneered the CAST model, a partnership that also spawned further partnerships with NCCLF, the 1% Program, Jensen Architects, and the city's OEWD. "[It] is a story of passionate people, of passionate people coming together, of people who believe in working together to build something, to raise barns, almost in the most traditional sense, rather than working towards individual gain, and what that results in is the community-based work of the city and the cultural fabric of the city," say Phelps (with Beckham et al., 2015). Beyond the partnerships involved in the development of its new space, CounterPulse continues this spirit into working with neighborhood organizations and services. Both are fostered by collaboration as an essential idea. “When resources are scarce, it’s important that we share them. That’s at the core of my belief,” says Riley (2015). Although with CounterPulse, a very distinct set of partnerships arose to bring about the success of securing 80 Turk Street and its build out. Cohen of OEWD says, “I also think just the opportunistic and flexible way that they collaborate is replicable” (with Beckham et al., 2015). Although these exact circumstances may not be present in situations other organizations face, the openness to partnership can be a lesson learned.

Valuable takeaways from CounterPulse’s transition include part it plays in San Francisco’s Tenderloin revitalization efforts; the opportunity that permanence affords the organization in realizing its mission; and the role of partnership. Above all, it champions artists and the arts in their role within a city and communities.

Minnesota Street Project

Minnesota Street Project is different from the other two case studies described so far in that it does not have decades of operation under its belt. In fact, it opened in March 2016. Unlike the other case studies, it is not struggling to survive, but a project conceived to alleviate the struggle of other arts organizations. In short, Minnesota Street Project is a three-building arts campus in the Dogpatch neighborhood of San Francisco. It was started by Andy and Deborah Rappaport. Andy Rappaport is a venture capitalist and was partner at August Capital. He is also involved with Noise Pop Festival. Deborah Rappaport sits on the board of the Headlands Center for the Arts, BAM/PFA, and Creative Capital in New York. With Andy Rappaport’s retirement a few years ago the couple began thinking about investing in real estate. This dovetailed with their love of art in the manifestation of the Minnesota Street Project. “So at the bottom of all of this, this is a real estate play” says Deborah Rappaport. What the Rappaports have done “is acquire buildings and spaces that we can provision to be able to offer below-market spaces with some stability and some predictability, to galleries and to artists” (D. Rappaport, 2016).

A few other characters were engaged as the project progressed. Gallerist Julie Casemore was brought on as the Director, overseeing the gallery building. Artist Brion Nuda Rosch was hired as the Director of Artist Studios. His art practice, as well as his previous gig as a bar manager, focuses on bringing people together. Before getting into the specifics about Minnesota

Street Projects, its buildings, and its model, it is important to first look at the context and motivations behind it.

Two years ago the Rappaports were casually meeting with friend, gallerist Catharine Clark, and "bemoaning what was going on and talking sort of conceptually about something like what we have ended up with here" (D. Rappaport, 2016). "What was going on" was the displacement of galleries. As Deborah Rappaport put it, Minnesota Street Project:

> was conceived about two years ago, initially in response to all of the galleries beginning to lose their spaces in the Geary Street buildings, 49 and 77, and our feeling that if there was anything that we could do with our particular resources and knowledge to help, that we needed to do that. And that has mushroomed into what we are now. (2016)

From there the Rappaports, along with Catharine Clark, invited the Art Dealers Association to come to the gallery and voice their concerns while the Rappaports listened. The most pressing issue was galleries being forced to close their doors or find other locations. Space was crucial and also the most precarious. "Galleries need a physical presence, whether that's where most of their sales come from or not. It's the way they build careers for their artists, it's the way they build inventory for the art fairs that they have to go to" (A. Rappaport in Musiker, 2015b). This ignited the spark. "And from that meeting, we got a lot of interest. We got gallerists who were particularly curious and wanted to learn more, and eventually wanted to jump off this cliff with us. And it grew from there," says Deborah Rappaport (2016). From there the Rappaports, who were already wanting to invest in real estate, began looking for buildings for arts use.

As they looked for space, the Rappaports continued to listen. They saw that the same rental challenges galleries were facing, were faced by artists. Deborah Rappaport saw that artists were "leaving in droves because of the real estate problem" (2016). They quickly realized that in addition to galleries, they needed to support artists. Some artists had already been displaced—for example the Redlick building that evicted 70 artists from Studio 17 to make way for offices. Other artists who still had space were not confident that it would last. Rosch said, "Right now every artist I speak with in the city, as much as they love where they're working, I have not been able to have a single person tell me that they are ensured that they'll be there for longer than a year or five years. No one's quite sure of what the status of their building is, because of the changing climate of development in the city" (2015). For the Rappaports, they saw the acquisition of real estate as a way to provide stability and predictability not only to galleries, but to artists as well. Rosch continued, "We are doing this with good intentions; we're not doing it to just fulfill our own egos” (2015). The project was a direct response to needs the Rappaports saw in San Francisco for the arts.

The Buildings

From the initial conception two years ago, the Rappaports purchased three neighboring buildings in the Dogpatch neighborhood and began construction around May of 2015. The project opened with the 1275 Minnesota Street building in March 2016 with the other two to follow later in spring 2016. The Dogpatch district of San Francisco is located on the southeast side of the city, bordered to the east by the bay waters. A flat area adjacent to the docks, it was traditionally an industrial region. The 1990s saw an influx of warehouse conversions and live/work new construction. According to 2010 census data the area is low in population density, at about 7,000 people per square mile, or less than half the average density of San Francisco (San Francisco Indicators Project, 2010). As of fall 2015 the median rent for a one-bedroom was $3,970 (Erwert, 2015). Technically zoned for production, distribution and repair, there are also nearby areas for heavy industrial use (City and County of San Francisco, 2015). Recently biotech and healthcare companies have built new construction, making the northern edge of the district a hub for health sciences. San Francisco built a Muni train line, the T Train that runs from Downtown along Third Street through the Dogpatch and out to the Hunters Point neighborhood. At one end is AT&T Park, the baseball stadium, at the other end is low income housing in Hunters Point. Between the two is the Dogpatch, that is potentially slated to be the future home of the Warriors basketball stadium. Artists also occupy spaces in the Dogpatch. SFAI graduate student studios are in a large building along Third Street, adjacent to the Museum of Craft and Design. The Noonan Building, two block off Third and 20th Streets, houses many artist studios as well. CCA is located in the adjacent neighborhood of Potrero Hill.

Many available buildings and properties in San Francisco have been bought by developers and transformed into housing or office space, taking advantage of the rapid increase in rental rates for both commercial and residential property. The Rappaports looked all over San Francisco before finding the three Minnesota Street buildings, which benefitted from being within this special zoning district. As Deborah Rappaport explained, the area was declared the Southeastern Zoning District:

> And within that district, there is zoning for what are called PDR buildings. It stands for production, distribution, and repair. What that means is warehouses, light industrial

> warehouses. And the zoning saves them. They cannot be developed into office space [or] residential space. There is a pretty severe restriction on retail space. But what it does allow is arts uses, which are ill-defined. Which is good. It's anything that's an art use is permitted. (2016)

This meant two things: that the Rappaports were not in competition with commercial and residential developers in bidding for the properties. It also allowed the Rappaports to acquire all three buildings without asking for special favors from the city, since arts use is well within the parameters of the zoning codes.

They tapped Mark Jensen to be the architect. Deborah Rappaport knew Jensen from serving together on the board of the Headlands Center for the Arts. Jensen, an avid supporter of the arts in the Bay Area, is the same architect who worked pro bono for the CounterPulse 80 Turk project. The three Minnesota Street buildings offered 220,000 total square feet for the architect to adapt.

The first building to open is the 1275 Minnesota Street gallery building. The 35,000 square foot space has two stories worth of galleries around the perimeter of a double-height 4,200 square foot atrium with mezzanine. The atrium has Roman steps at the far end for seating and the area makes for a promenade between galleries that can also function as a public programming space and rental venue. The atrium is envisioned as being a place for presentations, sculpture, projections, performance, and temporary exhibitions. Besides the atrium there are three rotating gallery spaces, including one specifically for media art. These spaces are intended for used by out-of-town galleries that want temporary space or for the tenant galleries that may wish to expand for certain presentations. This allows for the flexibility of tenant galleries to host larger exhibitions, or for outside galleries to host pop-ups or travel a show to San Francisco from New York or Los Angeles, for example. The front entry is flanked by a restaurant and a bar that will open later in 2016.

The main feature is the eleven permanent gallery tenants made up of established and younger galleries. The galleries operate on a shared services model, with each operating out of their gallery space independently but sharing other areas. "The business model behind it, from the tenants' perspective, is that we have bundled into shared services a lot of the non-gallery specific needs that a gallery has" (D. Rappaport, 2016). These needs include a shared packing/shipping area, break room and kitchen, a place for tools, and ADA restrooms. Of the variety of types of galleries, Deborah Rappaport says they have a "really interesting range, which is what we wanted...everybody from the start-up to the very well established. Because I think it just keeps things more interesting for everybody. You know, it keeps it more interesting for our visitors, and also for our tenants" (2016).

The eleven galleries represent some that have been displaced in the past few years, and others that are looking for stable and reliable spaces. In April of 2015 gallerist Paule Anglim passed away. The Paule Anglim Gallery has over a thirty year history in San Francisco, with a home at 14 Geary, next to several displaced galleries. Gallery director Ed Gilbert has renamed the project Gallery Paule Anglim, and moved to Minnesota Street. Bass and Reiner is a new gallery, started in 2014, that was one of the displaced spaces from the Redlick Building. It has been searching for a home since the eviction in summer 2015. Eleanor Harwood moved her Mission gallery that she has operated since 2006. Et Al is a young gallery in the basement below a dry cleaners in Chinatown that has shown since 2013. It is used the Minnesota Street opportunity to open a second location Et Al. Etc, that hosts collaborative shows in partnership with galleries outside the Bay Area. The Jack Fischer Gallery closed its 49 Geary location and moved to Potrero Hill in 2013. This next move brought them to Minnesota Street. Julie Casemore, the Minnesota Street Project Director, also moved in her entity, Casemore Kirkaby, that has operated out of a interim space in the Mission since July 2015. Rena Bransten also joined the cohort. This gallery has operated since 1974 and been housed at 77 Geary for 27 years but were evicted in January 2014 to make way for tech firm offices. It relocated to Market Street as a project space until its permanent home at Minnesota Street. Nancy Toomey, formerly Toomey Tourell Fine Art, moved from 49 Geary. Another 49 Geary transplant, Themes and Projects also moved. Started in 1999 in Palo Alto as Modernbook Gallery, it specializes in books and art. It moved to 49 Geary in 2010 and is now at Minnesota Street. Ever Gold Gallery moved from the Tenderloin location it has occupied since 2009 to Minnesota Street, replacing the word Gallery in its title with Projects, and shifting to longer-term exhibitions and projects. Lastly, the San Francisco Arts Education Project is a tenant. SF Arts Ed was started in 1968 by artist Ruth Asawa to advocate for the creation of an arts high school in San Francisco. It achieved that goal and now it provides art classes in schools. Though not moving its entire operation to Minnesota Street immediately, it has offices and its visual art program. Deborah Rappaport lights up when she says, "They will have their offices in the building, and they're also going to be doing all of their visual education in the building. They have a great space for their performance art, but they've never had a place for their visual arts programs that has been stable and adequate. So there will be kids in the building all the time" (2016). The gallery building opened March 18 with each gallery launching simultaneous exhibitions. The rotating gallery's first partnership is with nearby art school CCA, as a venue for its MFA thesis exhibition.

The second building is the 1240 Minnesota Street studio building. In contrast to the public gallery building, this one is private and houses studios for thirty-five permanent artists alongside a few rotating temporary spaces for visiting artists or artists that need a larger space to realize work for a short period of time. The studio spaces range between 250 and 800 square feet each. The building is 22,000 square feet and also operates on a shared services model. Shared spaces and resources include large working tables, storage, a digital media lab with printers, scanners, and traditional print presses. There is also a shared woodshop, staging room, and meeting room as well as an outside area for a kiln or other open air work. Rosch sees the shared services model as a way to increase the value of the individual studios and create community, "We're kind of building a campus, in a sense" he says (2015). Beyond the shared services, the studios offer stability and flexibility, as the thirty-odd tenants sign leases "with an emphasis on long-term" (Rosch, 2015) and the rotating spaces allow for opportunities for visiting artists to comingle.

Rosch and the Rappaports were agnostic about the types of artists who will have studios. Early on the Rappaports realized that they couldn't accommodate the demand of all the artists in the Bay Area who needed space, so they set up an application process. "And we got over 250 qualified applicants. So we're able to accept, more or less, 10% of the people we could have accepted into the program. If we had ten times as much space, we could fill it tomorrow" (D. Rappaport, 2016). Rosch did not focus on any one medium when looking for tenants, instead, he says he is drawn to "contemporary, relevant, intentional art being made in San Francisco and the Bay Area and beyond" (2015). On March 18 Minnesota Street Project announced the thirty-five artists who will be permanent studio tenants. The names range from well established artists to a few just out of masters programs. As for media, they span conceptual, painting, sculpture, photography, performance and video[3]. There are two residencies: Little Paper Planes and the

[3] Tenants: Beth Abrahamson, Miguel Arzabe, Brittany Atkinson, Binta Ayofemi, Elisheva Biernoff, Lisa K. Blatt, Nate Boyce, Val Britton, Rachelle Bussières, James Chronister, Erica Deeman, Anthony Discenza, Arash Fayez,

Storeroom that are hosting temporary residencies for artists, writers, poets, and archives. Brion's vision for the studio building extends beyond just the artists that are provided studios. He sees the concentration of artists in one building as serving as a beacon to draw in activities from other parts of the city. Rosch says it can be a platform for collaboration with other institutions:

> Who are the people that are in touch with their visiting faculty, visiting artists, visiting curators? Anyone coming in to talk, doing projects. At every institution, I want a contact that can call me or email any day of the week and just say, 'Oh, next month so-and-so's coming to town. They're free on this afternoon.' (2015)

In this way, the studio building can be a destination for visiting arts professionals and artists so they can visit, meet, and collaborate with Minnesota Street artists. The studio building is set to open in April 2016.

The third building is the 1150 25th Street office building. Although not technically a Minnesota Street address, it is directly on the corner of Minnesota and 25th streets. The building has three spaces. Firstly, it is an office building that houses the Minnesota Street offices as well as the Rappaport's family entities such as their investment group. In addition, the building has full-service, turnkey office and desk spaces for rent. As with the artist tenants, Deborah Rappaport says she is "agnostic about what people are" (2016) for the office tenants as long as they focus on art or social good. The bulk of the space is for art storage and services. "We will have approximately 100,000 cubic feet of fully conditioned art storage, and then a whole lot of other either semi-conditioned—so gallery-conditioned, basically—space, and then unconditioned bulk storage for crates and exhibit props" (D. Rappaport, 2016). This storage space will allow private collectors to rent climate controlled space to house their art collections. The building also works off a shared services model, with shared receptionist, kitchen, copy room and shipping area. The office and storage building is set to open in April 2016.

Rebekah Goldstein, Taraneh Hemami, Dana Hemenway, Kelly Lynn Jones, Lynn Hershman Leeson, Evie Leder, Tom Loughlin, Chris Lux, Sean McFarland, Klea McKenna, Masako Miyazaki, Cait Molloy, Alison Pebworth, Mitzi Pederson, Rachelle Reichert, Brion Nuda Rosch, Elizabeth Russell, Ron Moultrie Saunders, Jesse Schlesinger, Chris Sollars, Henna Vainio, Catherine Wagner
LPP+ Residency: Madeline Gallucci, Janina McCormack, Women Artists Magazine (Tricia Gilbride and Caroline Knowles), Debbie Carlos, Tom Comitta, Vivian Sming, Indira Morre, Marshall Elliott
The StoreRoom Residency + Archive: Coltrane Church, Sun Ra Archive + Black Panther Archive, Gee's Bend Makers + Lonnie Holley, Looms + Weavers, Salvage, Rana Hamadeh.

The Model

When Deborah and Andy Rappaport set out to address the problem of galleries and artists being displaced by rent increases, they had no other arts examples to rely on (Lutz, 2015). Instead, they looked at the spectrum of possibilities. On one end was the nonprofit model and at the other end was purely capitalist businesses and they looked at this range of possibilities with an open mind, because as Deborah Rappaport put it, the "appropriate approach to any given problem shouldn't be dictated by the IRS" (2016). She furthered:

> But between those extremes is a vast landscape of solutions. One of which we're using here, which is this is structured as a for-profit. Andy and I are the partners in that for-profit business. So I mean, we have board meetings in the car on the way to work in the morning. It gives us much more flexibility, in terms of the sorts of things we can just decide to do, without having to go through any kinds of processes or getting legal opinions or whatever. And it also means we can make decisions fast enough that two years from the initial idea, we're opening. (D. Rappaport, 2016)

Speed and process were the deciding factors, and the Rappaports invested their own money and resources into acquiring the three buildings of Minnesota Street Project, construction, and staffing.

Andy Rappaport, a venture capitalist, is well versed in start-up investing. Although there is no set definition for what a start-up is, generally it describes a new business, funded by private investors in an entrepreneurial way. Start-ups are usually initiated with the intention of creating innovations to solve a problem or disrupt an established market, though start-ups are mostly marked by the speed at which they start, grow, and either fail or sell. Deborah Rappaport said, "It sure feels like a start-up on a day-to-day basis in here. You know, we're very lean and very busy and everybody's pitching in and doing a lot of stuff. It is, I suppose, a species of a start-up" (2016).

Their decision to veer away from being a nonprofit was determined by the urgency of the problem the Rappaports were seeking to solve. "This needed to happen fast or everybody would have left and it would have been impossible to get them back—either gone out of business or moved… because the rents were too high" (D. Rappaport quoted in Whiting, 2015). Two years is incredibly swift to conceive of a project, buy buildings, renovate, and open. As Rosch put it, "Can you imagine if we had more hands involved with what was funding this? We wouldn't have gotten anywhere. We would've had a board established at this point, without any construction started" (2015). Deborah Rappaport recognizes that nonprofits play an important role in San Francisco and for the arts, and is dedicated to continuing her support of them through her presence on boards and fundraising. According to Deborah Rappaport, “some things can only be solved with a nonprofit solution” (2016). However, this particular venture was driven by the need to have an immediate, and a “much greater, longer lasting impact” (D. Rappaport, 2016).

Although Minnesota Street Project is a for-profit model, it does not intend to actually make a profit. As Rosch quipped, “If you looked at the numbers of what it’s costing to build out these studios and you looked at what we’re going to charge, it doesn’t make any sense, like on any spreadsheet, that it’s even going to clear paying itself back” (2015). Deborah Rappaport explains, “We are for-profit, but personally, we’re not taking any profit out of the project. We expect to break even. We don’t expect to break even immediately. The closer-term expectation is that the project will be self-sustaining” (2016). Andy Rappaport takes the long-view: “We’ve created a building for art galleries, and it’s going to take us decades to amortize the cost of that building” (in Goldstein, 2016). The emphasis is on the long-term, knowing that Minnesota Street Project will operate at a loss for some time, but eventually reach an equilibrium to support itself.

Intended as a way to retain galleries and artists in San Francisco and offer stability in the long run, the Rappaports have imposed rent control on themselves. The gallery spaces and studios are offered at one quarter to one third market rate and have a known increase of no more than 3% yearly (Lutz, 2015). This makes possible several things. Firstly, it provides affordable immediate space for galleries and artists that would otherwise be displaced or face the anxieties of an uncertain rental future. “We think and we hope to convince people to stay in business” (D. Rappaport in Weinberg, 2015b). The imposed rent control provides a guarantee of what can be expected into the future for both galleries and artists. “You know, the way we’ve structured our leases, our charter tenants know not only what their rent is now, but what it is going to be in twelve years, because we’ve imposed rent control on ourselves. So there are escalations, but they’re already defined… So that gives people a lot more freedom because they’ve got so much more visibility into what their economics are going to be” (D. Rappaport, 2016). This touches on additional benefits, beyond immediate access to affordable space and a known future. Affordable rent allows younger galleries and artists to have access to space. And the stability of rent allows more established galleries and artists to take risks. With these in place, it provides galleries and artists with a secure foundation to experiment from. Of course, the big question is, knowing how inflated real estate costs are in San Francisco, and the expenses related to construction, how can the Rappaports offer below market rates for studios and galleries?

The first cost-saving structure is the shared services model of each building. At each site, there are temporary studios or galleries so tenants can "rent smaller permanent space than they might elsewhere because there will be flex space for rent as needed for large exhibitions. This format, plus amenities like a shipping center, staff kitchen and 24-hour security, will bring the effective rate down to one-half to one-third what our gallery tenants would pay anywhere else," says Andy Rappaport (in Whiting, 2015). Sharing common area and amenities means that each tenant doesn't have to shoulder the costs alone, and this structure is repeated across the gallery, studio, and office buildings.

Another way that the Minnesota Street Project is able to keep rents below market rate for the galleries and studios is that the aspects of the office building that house art storage and services are at market rate, and that revenue subsidizes the gallery and studio buildings. In addition, external event rentals get funneled back into the project, as well as the sale of artist multiples created in the studio building. As Deborah Rappaport said, "What that means is that the income-producing, profit-producing elements of the program, which include the storage and services, includes event rental and programming and various things that we're doing to support the studios project, will over time, in aggregate, be enough to keep the project financially self-sustaining" (2016). In this model, the individual buildings do not sustain themselves, but the campus as a whole does.

Challenges

Given the immensity of the Minnesota Street Project and the lack of prior models to point to, there were certainly challenges along the way. Deborah Rappaport says the initial challenge "was convincing ourselves that we weren't out of our minds" (2016). They were convinced they weren't crazy through conversations with gallerists and the San Francisco Art Dealers Association. The first challenge was not only deciding that the route was not to rely on existing organizations to solve the problem and supporting them, but to start their own project. The second challenge was then "convincing galleries that we weren't out of our minds. This is a new, and at least as far as I know—and I don't use this word lightly—a unique model of a more community-minded gallery space, where each gallery is its own business, they make their own individual business decisions, but they do it inside this envelope of shared services, of shared spaces, of a little bit more community" (D. Rappaport, 2016). Galleries and artists had to be convinced to take the risk with them. As Deborah Rappaport said, "This was an entire trust exercise" (2016). Artists and galleries had to overcome the worry that the Rappaports were just another landlord, and trust that their intentions were good. There is also the challenge of embracing a very different location, with many galleries moving from Downtown to the Dogpatch. Beyond these worries, artists and galleries had to be willing to participate in a model of shared space. As Deborah Rappaport continued, "It's got to be people who really want to buy into that community model. Which isn't everybody. It's not everybody for the gallery building, and it's not going to be everybody in the studio" (2016). And in order to work, since the business model runs within narrow margins, it only works if all spaces are full.

Minnesota Street Project, however, has had almost the opposite problem. There are many more galleries and artists that want and need space than the buildings can serve. As Rosch says of the studio building that received 250 artist applicants, "We have thirty spaces. That's not fulfilling the need of the city" (2015). The studio building also can't supply space for all mediums of artistic practice either. According to Deborah Rappaport, "We can't do any hot work, can't have any toxic materials. You know, there are some things we simply don't have the capacity for" (2016). And with eleven gallery spaces, it is able to sustain only a handful of the galleries in what is otherwise an inhospitable economic environment. As with any project, it is not only faced with the problem of not being able to serve the volume of need, but also it can't address the broad spectrum of types of needs. It can't address artist or arts professional housing, art student needs, nonprofit needs, and the list could go on. However unreasonable it is to expect one project to address the multitude and volume of challenges within the arts, it is one that is felt nonetheless.

One of the major critiques of the project is that it takes the pressure off the city government to provide this type of infrastructure and support for the arts. While Minnesota Street Project is recognized as a positive force in sustaining galleries and artist studios, some wonder if this trend transfers the responsibility of arts support from city onto private shoulders. The fear is that it creates a precedent that absolves public infrastructure of culpability. It allows the city to function as usual, side-stepping its role in the creation of the real estate problem to begin with and relieving its duty to rectify it. This is less of a challenge for Minnesota Street in particular, but seen more as a factor in a larger conversation around public and private responsibility for the arts. At the same time, it is recognized that city government is not as quick or as innovative as the Rappaports were able to be.

One of the benefits of space and amenities sharing is that it creates an affordable and sustainable place for artists and galleries to rent. The three building also operate as a site of a shared financial package, with profitable areas like the art storage building subsidize the gallery and studio buildings. The clustering of like-use spaces, people and organizations allows each entity to sustain one another, however, if the enterprise were to fail, it is the equivalent of putting all one's eggs in the same basket. Like a start-up, this model has high rewards but is also high risk. The other clustering of spaces—such as the Studio 17 studios or the Geary gallery buildings—in effect caused massive artist and gallery displacement with the turnover of only two buildings. While Minnesota Street Project offers a centralized site to house artist studios, galleries, and collections, it also takes on the risk of and responsibility to all those entities simultaneously.

Another factor in the clustering of like-use spaces is that it creates a destination location for art in San Francisco. As Rosch said, “It’s a resource within itself for the artists and the galleries here, but it’s also a resource for the community to come to one location and have this much at hand” (2015). It means that larger events around simultaneous openings can happen, and also puts artists and galleries in close proximity to one another for idea sharing and collaboration. However, the concentration of these offerings, paired with the remote Dogpatch neighborhood, also isolates the project. It removes the galleries from Downtown foot traffic or casual attendance. As Rosch extrapolated, “You could look at it and say it’s like an art mall” (2015). The concentration of arts combined with the isolation of the Dogpatch neighborhood, has drawn parallels with destination events like Burning Man. Andy Rappaport resists this comparison: “Our objective is to do things that resonate with the entire community and pull the entire community together, as opposed to creating yet another opportunity for an elite segment of the community to pull itself apart and have its own party” (in Goldstein, 2016). Andy Rappaport cites the addition of educational offerings for children as one of the examples of inclusion. The restaurant, public areas of congregation, and tenants with a range of practices add to the vision of inclusivity. The Rappaport’s goal is not to remove art to a secluded, exclusive location but to combine efforts to make the space more welcoming. Only time and experience will show if the removed neighborhood and concentration of offerings propels or inhibits audiences.

Lessons

Even in its beginnings, the Minnesota Street Project model can provide several lessons. The first is a lesson of opportunity. The Rappaports had the resources, the time, and the vision to be able to act quickly on a need they saw within the arts in San Francisco. But, beyond that it is a story of common interests. The Rappaports were interested in supporting the arts in San Francisco, a vision shared by gallerists, collectors, and artists. They were able to bring the shared overarching goals of different entities and types of art production, sales, education, and services together under neighboring roofs, in order to sustain them as a whole. It's a multipronged approach of studio space, gallery space and art storage/services that addresses the needs of each while creating a mutually beneficial business structure for all.

The Minnesota Street Project is poised to be a prototype for others. In many ways, given that Minnesota Street Project can't singlehandedly address the volume and breadth of needs of the arts in San Francisco, existing as a role model is crucial. "You know, they're looking at this as potential inspiration for others to take their lead. Because there needs to be about five projects, ten projects like this in town to fulfill the amount of displaced artists" (Rosch, 2015). This sort of thinking is part and parcel of the Rappaport's larger vision:

> And you know, my feeling about everything, not just this, is that if everybody just takes the piece of the pie they're best at, the entire pie is going to get filled in. Right? So we're not trying to singlehandedly hold up the Bay Area art scene. That would be absurd and the height of hubris. We're just trying to do what we can within our piece of the pie and to, you know, if we're going to go with that pie metaphor, to incentivize others to be an example. (D. Rappaport, 2016)

And they see the Dogpatch neighborhood, specifically, as prime for arts spaces. After all, the zoning is right, and as industry and shipping in San Francisco changes, so will the Dogpatch. "But eventually, a lot of these spaces are going to become available. And our vision is that people will see what we're doing—and we're being as public as we can be about our model—and do it themselves" says Deborah Rappaport (2016). This grand vision would see the Dogpatch as a place for art expanded beyond the entities already there—SFAI and Noonan studios, the Museum of Craft and design, and nearby CCA—to make the neighborhood a hub for art. The only way Deborah Rappaport sees this happening in the current economy is through working together. “I think things got so dire that people realized that the only way to survive was to survive together” (D. Rappaport, 2016). This sentiment extends beyond just the walls that the Rappaports have built under which people and organizations share space and amenities; and beyond their neighboring buildings that share profit and expense to mutually support one another; it extends to their philosophy of the arts as a whole in San Francisco and their hopes that the responsibility for art is shared on a macro scale.

IV. Analysis and Models

This projects has so far delved deep into the general and specific economic backdrop that San Francisco arts organizations and artists are facing. Three specific case studies have been explored. The following analysis will focus on two areas. First, the arts ecosystem approach, as defined by the case studies, and how scholars agree or diverge from this local perspective. Arts ecosystem will be considered in tandem with neoliberal cities, gentrification, and the tech sector as they intersect. Second, collaboration will be posed as a through line of the case studies. The case studies will be situated within the combined definitions of collaboration from business models and art practice.

Beyond the analysis within these two frameworks, the case studies will provide models and lessons from San Francisco. The three case studies will be further analyzed for their distinctive qualities and similarities. Without calling for a direct replication of approach, the case studies offer up real world practices and examples that can inform a larger conversation.

<u>Arts Ecosystem</u>

Case Study Perspectives

Besides reacting to capital forces, the three cases studies share a language around art as an ecosystem. All three case studies used words usually associated with biological ecosystems such as diversity and sustainability. In an echoing of Pritikin's *Healthy Art Scene* (2008) they emphasize longevity not of an individual entity, but as an interconnectedness of entities.

This intersection of entities is what the case studies meant by arts ecosystem. San Francisco is geographically bound on three sides by water, and this concentration of space leads to thinking of the city as a series of interrelated influences and actions that are carried out within the seven by seven mile area. As the Executive Director of CounterPulse, Riley pointed out, the geographically-bound city can pose a challenge because it creates a space akin to a closed ecosystem (2015), without room to branch out for support. However, this same geographic characteristic also binds the arts together. There is a sense of all sharing in this together.

The term ecosystem was brought up several times by the case studies subjects. For example Jensen, the architect for the new CounterPulse and Minnesota Street Project, emphasized an ecosystem wherein the arts cannot exist "without this intersection [of] different organizations” (with Beckham et al., 2015). At the same panel, Cohen of OEWD namechecked the “collective ecosystem approach” (with Beckham et al., 2015), as did Trott from the Rainin Foundation when she said, “We are committed to achieving a vibrant and sustainable arts ecosystem in the Bay Area” (with Beckham et al., 2015). Minnesota Street Project’s founder Deborah Rappaport said of the interconnectedness of factors, “There have to be galleries, and there have to be artists’ nonprofits, and artists need to be able to afford studios” (in Whiting, 2015). Andy Rappaport elaborated by saying, “What my wife and I realized is that we need to think holistically about that entire ecosystem, and ask how can we help to sustain critical mass around all of these constituent parts so that each of them can draw from the others in the way they need to in order to survive” (in Goldstein, 2016). Where the Rappaports drew the connection between galleries, nonprofits, and artists as parts of an arts ecosystem, Trott elaborated to emphasize various sizes of arts organizations:

> But we were also incredibly interested in sustainability of arts organizations, and specifically small and mid-sized. We recognize that there is an incredible culture of small and emerging arts organizations and artists working in San Francisco, really incredible fertile ground that feeds the city’s vibrancy and culture; but the middle tier was sparsely populated. And we feel that it’s part of our mission to help those emerging and small organizations grow into robust mid-sized organizations, so that we do have a healthy ecosystem. (with Beckham et al., 2015)

Not only is the arts ecosystem approach about the interplay between small, mid-sized, and large arts institutions, it’s also about commercial galleries and artists, according to the case studies. Part of this equation is also art schools, critics, and cultural workers of all kinds. This version of the arts ecosystem approach implies a dual emphasis. Firstly, the presence and trajectory of artists is highlighted, as one of the reasons for a variety of types of organizations and spaces, so an artist can build a career over time. The second implied emphasis is on audience, culture, or community, with the arts poised as a vehicle to those things.

The case studies mentioned diversity, another term commonly used to describe healthy ecosystems. In ecological frameworks, diversity in species of plants and animals makes an ecosystem stronger, as it minimizes biological or environmental threats’ ability to wipe out an entire system. For example, having a diversity of types of trees means that when a disease targets one type of tree, there are other species that are not susceptible, so even if one type of tree dies out, there will still be others where birds can roost. The case studies extend this metaphor to arts, linking a diversity of artists, organizations, and offerings, as a signal of overall strength.

The other word that was encountered often in the case studies was sustainability, also a biological ecosystem term. Here, sustainability isn't about the longevity of a particular species, it is thought of as the persistence of processes and systems. To extend the metaphor to an arts ecosystem, sustainability is often not about a particular organization, but about the endurance of an interrelated system of entities and characteristics. Deborah Rappaport linked the notion of interdependence to the term when she pointed out that if people work together, "the solutions are going to be much more sustainable" (D. Rappaport, 2016). Interrelatedness and longevity are the key factors for sustainability. Lost Weekend's Wheat pointed out that the loss of arts ecosystem in San Francisco was depleting the development of comedians from amateurs to headliners, and that this was a matter of sustainability (2015). To take Wheat's comment one step further, the sustainability analogy isn't about preserving or prolonging current specific organizations, artists or audience, but about supporting the systems that generate future organizations, artists or audiences, or allow current entities to grow and change. It's less about stopping a stream and keeping it as is, and more about preserving the mechanisms of having streams, so that fresh water can continually flow.

Beyond the support of artists and their careers, the case studies also spoke about the arts ecosystem as related to culture or community, and often associated it with the word vibrancy. As Trott said about Rainin and CounterPulse: "We are committed to achieving a vibrant and sustainable arts ecosystem in the Bay Area, and we believe that art must be integrated into the fabric of civic life, valued as essential to positive community development, and considered vital to the region's culture of innovation" (with Beckham et al., 2015). This was echoed by Deborah Rappaport when she talked about the impetus for starting Minnesota Street Project: "We were talking about how we didn't want to live in a city that didn't have a vibrant arts community" (in Whiting, 2015). Vibrancy is the one term in all this that is not borrowed from biological ecosystems. It is a term that may seem like jargon, or suspiciously vague with non-defined but positive seeming attributes. Vibrant has a few meanings. One is defined as being dynamic, another as being brightly colored, and the last as reverberating. To get poetic, the first definition, then, could be linked to diversity and the last to sustainability. Being bright could be considered standing out, or being distinctive. I would add a few more related characteristics to vibrancy, namely how arts create a rich inner and public life through critical thinking.

One way to look at vibrancy is to explore what the case studies viewed as the opposite, or what the loss of vibrancy would look like. The fears of the case studies about the loss of an arts ecosystem were clear. The first is a very practical fear: the loss of artists and organizations, which would deteriorate the diversity, and therefore the strength of the arts ecosystem. Wheat pointed out that artists and comedians alike were disenfranchised in San Francisco and this led to their moving away (2015). Riley continued the topic by pointing out that artists tend to live on the fringe of the socioeconomic spectrum, “where they’re always at risk, or marginalized in that way, and that we’re just kind of getting by. And so we need the protection of things like rent control and co-ops and land trusts and those types of things that keep us in the city. Otherwise, everything that brought people to San Francisco in the first place is going to disappear” (2015). Beyond the recognition of the need for artists to have protection to perpetuate the characteristics of San Francisco, Riley called for similar protections for organizations: “And I think you have to provide that kind of stabilization, in order for organizations to remain innovative” (2015). CounterPulse’s promotional brochure stated its position again: “San Francisco is changing fast. Our city’s cultural vibrancy is at risk. Now, more than ever, you crave a space for the uncommon, the meaningful, and the awe-inspiring. We need a safeguard for emerging arts and cultural innovation” (2015). Here we see a link between the term vibrancy to mean something that is idiosyncratic, important, and filled with wonder. Perhaps this is related to the idea of vibrancy as something that is diverse, lasting and bold.

The opposite of vibrancy, then, would be something uniform, transient, and dull. Again, if vibrancy is related to audience, then the opposite is cultural uniformity. Riley summed up his worst fear for San Francisco:

> One of my biggest fears is that in a certain way, we’re standing sort of equidistant between cutting edge and complete cultural uniformity, because the city is being so inundated with a like-minded, unilateral vision of what the world is supposed to be. And I worry that stages throughout the city and the Bay Area in general are going to start conforming to that because they need audience. And if you’re all catering to the same audience, then suddenly you’re all presenting the same thing. And that would be like CounterPulse’s version of hell. (2015)

It is perhaps the lack of diversity of perspectives that is the antithesis to vibrancy. According to the case studies, vibrancy is a part of civic life; a strengthening characteristic; a main reason for San Francisco being such an attractive location in the first place; and a quality that carries a uniqueness of place.

Outside the three case studies' perspectives on arts ecosystem, there are many perspectives about what that term means. It is important not just to look at how the case studies define it, but the meanings associated with arts ecosystem in the larger arts field and the ways in which it is used to pursue certain outcomes.

Creative Placemaking

Many terms get paired with arts ecosystem, such as cultural ecology, cultural vitality, and creative placemaking. These are generally terms that are associated with arts advocacy and funding, and they shape the conversation about how art is spoken about on a broader level. In 2010 Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa created a white paper for the NEA and U.S. Conference of Mayors titled *Creative Placemaking*. Designed as a plea to city planners and policy makers, the document spoke about the arts as a cluster of interrelated entities—that is very close to the arts ecosystem approach—though they called it the "creative economy" and represented it as a Venn diagram of people (creative workers), places (audience), and organizations (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010, 9). They put forward a broad definition of artists, or "creatives," encapsulating designers, architects, art directors, artists, animators, writers, authors, musicians, photographers, directors, announcers, entertainers, actors, and dancers (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010, 10). This broad definition is inclusive of many forms of creative work, but it is unclear if this is to mirror a popular conception of what creatives entail, or if it is their attempt to move the dial of the national arts conversation away from a narrow definition of art makers (painters, sculptors, media artists, photographers, dancers, etc.). One impact of the broadening of this definition of creative work, is that it includes professions that participate more readily in capital markets. Indeed, this is most likely intentional, as the main thrust of Markusen and Gadwa's paper is about how creatives contribute to livability and economic development. Their central argument is as follows:

> Creative placemaking serves livability, diversity, and economic development goals. Livability outcomes include heightened public safety, community identity, environmental quality, increased affordable housing and workplace options for creative

> workers, more beautiful and reliable transportation choices, and increased collaboration between civic, non-profit, and for-profit partners. Economic development quickens because arts and cultural investments help a locality capture a higher share of expenditures from local income. Instead of traveling elsewhere for entertainment and culture, or going to a big-box retailer or shopping mall, residents are patrons of local talent and venues, earnings that re-circulate at a higher rate in the local economy. Re-using vacant space generates local property and sales tax revenues that can be devoted to streets, lighting, sanitation, greenery, and police and fire. Additional jobs and incomes are generated in construction, retail businesses, and arts and cultural production. New businesses, in the creative industries and others, are attracted to these communities. (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010, 5)

This argument places creatives, or the arts, as catalysts for city and neighborhood change, specifically in the areas of quality of life and attracting capital. This could also been seen, from an outsider's perspective, as a recipe for how to use the arts as a catalyst for gentrification. In addition, it places the arts in relation to a livability scale that is about safety, beauty, and economics, rather than art for its intrinsic value.

Arts and Culture Ecology

One year later, Ann Markusen, Anne Gadwa and others published a report for the James Irvine Foundation that realigned their lens from a national scale to a state level in *California's Arts and Culture Ecology*. It included the same Venn diagram of people, places and organizations that was a year earlier titled "creative economy" and was now titled "creative ecology" for this report. This switch from a presentation that used economic language, to one that used ecosystem language is not be missed, and it is reflected in the focus of the report. As they wrote, "This study breaks new ground in measuring the extent of arts and cultural activity in California and revealing the interconnections between organizations, people, and places" (Markusen et al, 2011, 7). This interconnectedness approach is similar to the case studies' use of the term arts ecosystem.

The report balanced two imperatives. The first, echoed their previous report, is that the arts leads to economic development. They focused on the numbers of people that are employed by arts organizations, the number of audience members reached, and the revenue generated. "We show the overall impact of people and organizations on California's economy in terms of jobs, income, output, and state and local tax revenue" (Markusen et al, 2011, 2). The argument that the arts lead to an increase in industry is very similar to their report from a year prior.

This 2011 study adds another layer beyond economic for assessing the value of arts to a region. They highlight three contributions that the arts make: community, cultural diversity, and intrinsic value (art for its own sake). "California's arts and cultural nonprofits do not primarily aspire to generate economic impacts, but to create beautiful and meaningful arts and cultural experiences and make them available to the general public" (Markusen et al, 2011, 5). They continue:

> In California's arts and cultural ecology, nonprofit arts organizations play a key role. They form a huge seedbed for new arts and cultural forms and are also major caretakers for cultural heritage and fine art. They provide food for thought, underscore meanings and interpretations of past and present, and deliver delight and beauty. They are often the originators of ideas and forms that result in creative industry products and services that generate many more jobs and incomes than those generated directly by their operations. (Markusen et al, 2011, 7)

This definition gets closer to what the case studies meant by city vibrancy: a diversity of perspectives, a boldness, and a continuity of past to present. This report focuses on the external impact of the arts: community vitality and economic impact. Just as their previous report focused on economic benefits of art to a city, this report also failed to highlight the opposite question: how cities can economically support the arts? It also did not touch on a dimension of arts ecosystem that the case studies highlighted, which is a focus on the career trajectory of artists.

Cultural Vitality

The case studies mentioned city vibrancy, a term that also is used somewhat interchangeably in cultural conversations with cultural vitality. In 2006 Maria Rosario Jackson, Florence Kabwasa-Green and Joaquín Herranz wrote *Cultural Vitality in Communities* in which they described arts ecology as presence (artists and organizations), participation (audience), support (funders), and impact (Jackson et al, 2006, 14). They write that the concept of an ecology suggests "a wide variety of arts-related entities (some explicitly arts-related and some not)—large, midsize, small, nonprofit, public, commercial, and informal—as necessary for cultural vitality" (Jackson et al, 2006, 21). This is very close to the arts ecosystem discussion from the case studies, which recognize an interconnected system of entities of various sizes.

The book focuses on indicators of arts-driven vitality. "Specifically, we define cultural vitality as evidence of creating, disseminating, validating, and supporting arts and culture as a dimension of everyday life in communities" (Jackson et al, 2006, 4). The majority of the text is devoted to providing a framework for measuring vitality, and it is clear that it is intended for urban planners and policymakers. What the text does not do, however, is delve into why vitality is important. It highlights indicators of vitality but does not define what vitality actually is. Vitality is assumed to be a positive trait, and one that is brought about by an arts ecology. This, as with the other reports explored here, focuses on the external impacts of art to audience, and how the arts are an interconnected web of entities. The authors also do not focus on artists and their career trajectories.

Silicon Valley and Arts Ecology/Economy

In 2005, Maribel Alvarez studied the art tendencies of Silicon Valley in her book *There's Nothing Informal About it.* Whereas Markusen, Jackson and others emphasized how the arts influence cultural vitality and innovation, Alvarez looks at the opposite trajectory: how an industry focused on innovation, like tech, influences art production and appreciation. Her findings resonate with the Californian ideology, and take it steps further to be directly about art in the San Francisco Bay Area region.

Alvarez builds on Marukusen's definition of creatives, in that within Silicon Valley or the tech field, the word creative has an expansive definition, and relates to graphic design, brand strategy, advertising, usability design, problem solving, prototyping and beyond. Art, on the other hand, occupies an area that is seen as separate. There can be a hostility toward nonprofit arts organizations as arbitrators of art value that is separated from everyday life. This connection to everyday life is an important one for Silicon Valley. Alvarez found that the arts undertaken by residents of Silicon Valley are often informal, or hobbies, such a low-rider cars, quilting, or playing a musical instrument at home. "The study's findings conjure a picture of an existing informal arts field in Silicon Valley that is expansive, entrepreneurial, resilient, and adaptive, while at the same time highly idiosyncratic, dispersed, and ephemeral" (Alvarez, 2005, 9). The art that is attended is along the same lines, such as an open mic at a cafe, a DJ, or a hip hop group. There is a valorization of the informal at play.

According to Alvarez, this tendency toward informal arts participation is linked with the values of the technology sector or as she puts it, the ways that specific subjectivities "lean toward anarchic (informal) artistic inclinations have also been conceived, nurtured, incubated, and produced inside the Valley's corporate culture" (2005, 30). In thinking back to the Californian ideology section, one can see how the ethos of the region, specifically as connected to the tech industry, would relate to a negative impression of formal arts and an appreciation for arts that seem more grassroots or DIY. As Alvarez says, "The Valley's corporate ideology and myth of origin emphasize a 'break' from tradition, and a tendency to be suspicious of 'old school' institutions. For the most part these ideologies favor informality and chide highbrow social relations" (2005, 31). These ideas match the emphasis on individualism and disruption echoed in the Californian ideology. In particular, Alvarez cites Peter Hall on three main points:

> Within the ideological and cultural predisposition considered necessary for the implosion of technological and economic achievement in Silicon Valley, Sir Peter Hall identifies three key characteristics: (1) a "heroic tradition" of individuals inventing, innovating and taking the lead to build new industries and new social formations; (2) "outsider" inventors and entrepreneurs that tend to be people from the middle-class and often self-taught; and (3) adherence to and belief in "creative destruction," the processes by which new practices and social dynamics displace older ways. (2005, 30-1)

Although individual invention, outsiders, and new practices seem like perfect parallels to formal arts and artists who thrive on similar ideas, this regional mythology valorizes it to the point of rejecting arts organizations as the status quo and also relies heavily on diffuse interests. As Alvarez continues: "These practices affirm a robust sense of human agency and offer hope for egalitarian cultural transformations by representing alternatives to the status quo. At the same time, these social performances depend to a large extent on ideologies of exceptionalism that make the practices difficult to map and integrate into 'community-building' agendas" (2005, 42). These principles are also what make fundraising in the region so challenging.

In speaking about arts fundraising with Deborah Rappaport who is both of the tech world and of the art world, she said, "The model here is very different because we don't have the very old families, the institutions aren't as old, and there just isn't the same history of that kind of support of the arts" (2016). She attributes it to two things. Firstly, a lack of arts education in schools: "Nobody ever told them it was important" (D. Rappaport, 2016). Secondly, that new wealth does not come with the same imperative to give back as older, East Coast wealth does: "You know, it's not like the East Coast model of philanthropy in the arts, where the families go back a long, long time. And even if they don't, there's just this sort of more in the air that says once you have done well, you have to give back to the civic institutions” (D. Rappaport, 2016). But Alvarez adds a third layer, which is about how the change in mindset around creativity drives a change in philanthropy and involvement in arts:

> The unintended consequence of this high-tech driven gesture towards greater creative autonomy and democratic aesthetics (embodied in a variety of personal digital technologies and championed from Silicon Valley to the world from companies such as Adobe Systems) was a realignment of some of the assumptions that ruled the traditional patron-driven art world inherited from the Gilded Age of the late 19th century. In other words, the new high-tech class of creative “nerds” generally showed little interest in joining the boards of large museums and symphony orchestras, and focused instead on questions of inclusivity and pluralism for individual creators and innovators... (2005, 20)

The emphasis on informality and idiosyncratic interests pair with an individualism surrounding ideas of wealth and success that add up to a region, industry, and related community that is not interested in traditional forms of arts participation—whether making, attending, or supporting.

Neoliberal Cities

San Francisco, while facing the particulars of the Californian ideology and its relation to arts participation and support, is also affected by neoliberalism. Jason Hackworth’s 2007 book *The Neoliberal City* describes a change in city government that can be observed in cities across the U.S., including San Francisco. As explored previously, neoliberalism is the idea, now naturalized, that “government should be used only sparingly and in very specific circumstances, rather than interfering with the marketplace” (Hackworth, 2007, 9). How this has played out in cities, Hackworth explains, is twofold: first, it makes city governments into facilitators for the market, and two, it makes cities rely on debt for infrastructure needs. Hackworth explains the first point:

> “Good” governance at the municipal level is now largely defined by the ability of formal government to assist, collaborate with, or function like the corporate community. Extant regulatory powers such as land-use zoning have been weakened, as have redistributive impulses in the area of social services and housing. Neoliberalism has become naturalized as the ‘only’ choice available to cities in the United States and elsewhere. (2007, 10)

To the second point, Hackworth points to less federal aid to cities, that causes an “increasing reliance of cities on debt for social service and capital infrastructure” (2007, 24). Cities are expected to lower barriers to capital, facilitating and serving markets to prevent capital flight. One of these tactics is to create mega-projects in the city core. Examples of this are marketplaces, sports arenas, office complexes, or a commercial core within a city. “Such efforts can be considered neoliberal not least because they entail a turn toward the market to solve social problems in particular regions, and because they often involve a significant privatization of publicly held land or resources to reach completion" (Hackworth, 2007, 151). Here, a resonance with the creative placemaking and cultural economy can be seen. Both use market justifications to persuade city policy. As touched on very briefly earlier, this can be seen as leading to gentrification. Hackworth explains gentrification on a material and metaphorical level:

> On the most basic material level, this involves the revaluation of inner city space —the replacement or displacement of the poor by the more affluent. On a symbolic level it represents much more. Gentrification can be seen as the material and symbolic knife-edge of neoliberal urbanism representing the erosion of the physical and symbolic embodiment of neoliberalism's putative other—the Keynesian activist state. In other words, gentrification is much more than a politically neutral expression of the real estate market; it involves the replacement of physical expressions of Keynesian egalitarianism like public housing with a privately led segmentation of inner city space. (2007, 98)

The creation of market-driven city centers also ties in with post-Fordism's relation to commodity. Returning to a quote from the beginning of this project about the conflation of aesthetics and commodities, it refers in part "to the increasing transformation of culture and cultural activity, especially leisure and recreation, into cultural industries, that is, commodities sold in the market to individual consumers who, in turn, increasingly identify cultural gratification with consumption, rather than as an independent activity, geared towards, say, creative learning" (Amin, 1994, 31). With this explanation, it is now possible to situate art centers within the neoliberal and post-Fordist context.

Revisiting the creative placemaking and cultural economy/ecology reports, it is important to recognize art within neoliberal and post-Fordist contexts. These reports were concerned with cultural ecology and how it plays into city planning and city vitality, and they use economic development as their persuasive argument. These studies advocate to and within a system of neoliberal economics and values. While this strategy may be adopted for the benefit of a non-capitalist end result, it also reinforces neoliberal ideals at the same time. This type of appeal works within the economic ideas of neoliberalism and downplays the intrinsic value of arts, as well as artists' career trajectories. The three case studies use the word ecology differently. It is still about people, places, and support but the qualities it imbues them with are different. There is a focus on supporting artists and fostering their movement through systems from school to development at small organizations to larger ones throughout their career. Rather than appeal to a city to wrap them into a market-driven city core, the case studies emphasize sharing resources and audience. The case studies under-emphasize how art plays into the larger economy of a city, and are more focused on how the city can act less as a market facilitator of capital, and how cities could function as a salve for market forces instead.

These reports make two assumptions: that artists are present and that market factors will drive arts ecology. San Francisco has entered the next phase beyond vitality and a city core: the arts in San Francisco succeeded in creating an enticing city that attracted wealth, technology, and businesses. However, those elements are the very factors that are driving the increase in real estate and subsequent displacement of artists and arts organizations. On top of this, the change is happening at such a rapid rate that the city has not been able to create a robust public infrastructure to mitigate the effects of the influx of affluence on the displacement of the arts.

The interweaving of forces in San Francisco leaves arts organizations that can't turn to city government and must rely on the same market forces that threaten them. The case studies can be seen as examples of organizations that are a consequence of and subsequent reaction to neoliberalism and the Californian ideology. The lack of city infrastructure for the arts forces arts organizations to rely on entities that exist within the neoliberal economy but that have egalitarian leanings. In the case of Minnesota Street Project, the Rappaports are the private business that emphasizes community support over capitalist earnings. Lost Weekend also found a benevolent partner in the New Alamo Drafthouse. CounterPulse is a mixture, with a small portion of a city-funded revitalization effort, but as primarily the beneficiary of private foundations and companies. In a market not known for its benevolence, these are encouraging exceptions. Each case study exemplified partnerships that re-created the social supports for arts and culture that government once provided.

Each case study represents a cocktail of of free-market neoliberal economics with a dash of social consciousness previously reserved for governments. Lost Weekend exists as a market force, earning income off of movie rentals, and relying somewhat on a commercial market. However, the store's rent is provided for free by a larger market-driven organization that decided to be altruistic in the pursuit of the common goal of supporting cinema. CounterPulse is an instance where the city government stepped in with a revitalization plan that borrowed both from egalitarian liberalism of old—that of keeping public housing and supporting social services—with the neoliberal agenda of driving market forces to a city center. At the same time, private forces such as foundations and a pro bono architect partnered to buy and renovate a building thus removing CounterPulse from the market forces of real estate. In this instance, markets recognized the fallibility of markets and opted to remove CounterPulse from their volatility. Minnesota Street Project is also an instance of a market force recognizing the failure of capital to support the arts, and opted to use capital in a compassionate and distinctly non-capitalistic way.

Collaboration

In addition to the case studies placing themselves within an arts ecosystem framework and how that approach has been attributed meaning through advocacy and neoliberalism, there is another important through line: collaboration. In all three case studies, organizations joined up with one another, working together to face their challenges. Collaboration emerges as a foundational concept in relation to the three case studies, and although it is a common word, it can and has been used in various ways in vernacular and scholarly writing. Before applying the concept to the case studies, it is important to know how the term has been defined and the way in which this project will apply those meanings.

Two areas where collaboration has been discussed extensively—business and art—both tie in to this thesis. The case studies involve both nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Collaboration in business models has been written about at length, and can be directly related to the case studies as they operate as businesses. The three case studies are also arts organizations, and relate not only to the world of economics and business models, but to art and art practices. This is also a realm where collaboration has been discussed at length. Both these areas will be explored with the goal to view the broad spectrum of definitions and connect the through lines in order to get a handle on this word.

Collaboration in Business

There is no single definition of collaboration from a business model standpoint. The simple and broad answer is that collaboration involves working together, but this is a vague notion. Firstly, it may be useful to look at the opposite model. The classic business model is hierarchical, with lines of authority that are higher at the top and lesser on the bottom. Labor is produced along roles and procedures associated with specialized skills. Decisions are made in relation to the market with discrete, straightforward exchanges. Peer organizations are competitors in the market. A collaborative model is less hierarchical, and more cooperative rather than competitive.

There are two strains of thought when it comes to defining collaborative business models. To begin, Dr. Walter Powell, an organizational sociologist and professor at the Graduate School of Business at Stanford, defines collaborative—or networked forms—as separate organizations that have actions that benefit both entities and whose resources are pooled:

> In network modes of resource allocation, transactions occur neither through discrete exchange nor by administrative fiat, but through networks of individuals engaged in reciprocal, preferential, mutually supportive actions. Networks cans be complex: they involve neither the explicit criteria of the market, nor the familiar paternalism of the hierarchy. Basic assumption of network relationships is that one party is dependent on resources controlled by another, and that there are gains to be had by the pooling of resources. In essence, the parties to a network agree to forego the right to pursue their own interests at the expense of others. (1990, 303)

In this definition, collaboration occurs when two distinct organizations share resources to the point of being dependent on one another. This makes their work together mutually beneficial. This does not mean, necessarily, that their goals are the same, or that decisions are made jointly, but that there is a symbiosis of actions that benefit both in working toward what may be divergent goals.

Another definition is offered up by three professors who look at collaboration from a research and teaching perspective. Frustrated with the loose association of collaboration with dialogue, they write:

> The principals in a true collaboration represent complementary domains of expertise. As collaborators, they not only plan, decide, and act jointly, they also *think together*, combining independent conceptual schemes to create original frameworks. Also, in a true collaboration, there is a commitment to shared resources, power, and talent: no individual's point of view dominates, authority for decisions and actions resides in the group, and work products reflect a blending of all participants' contributions. (John-Steiner, Weber, Minnis, 1998, 776)

In contrast to the previous definition in which two separate entities each fulfilled its own tasks but in a mutually beneficial way, this definition represents a proposition where all aspects of decision making from start to finish are jointly shared. Rather than being separate entities that rely on one another, this definition sees the players as intertwined on a more intellectual and foundational level—a process that begins, progresses, and ends jointly.

The two definitions of collaboration—one as distinct but mutually beneficial, and one as a joint process—are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Dr. Barbara Grey, Director of the Center for Research in Conflict and Negotiation at Penn State, and leading scholar on collaborative business models, outlines four forms of collaboration:

> Appreciative planning involves information exchange in the interest of advancing a shared vision. Dialogues create a forum for exploring solutions to a multi-party conflict. Collective strategies involve reaching agreement about how to implement a shared vision. Negotiated settlements represent solutions to conflict among stakeholders. (1996, 59)

Though Grey's analysis is designed to help businesses work through conflict, her definitions are not much different from the two we have seen. The first and third are very close to the mutually beneficial idea. They involve entities sharing their distinct knowledge with each other in order to benefit one another in one instance, and reaching a decision on how to implement the mutually beneficial actions in the other. This definition can be summed up as independent parties sharing skills and knowledge dependently. The second and fourth definitions mirror the idea of jointly arriving at shared decisions, however solutions oriented this comes across, it is getting at the same definition. These two strands of collaboration are reaffirmed by further studies: one that surveyed more than 1,000 directors of organizations (Thomson, Perry, Miller, 2009) and Catherine Alter and Jerald Hage's 1993 book *Organizations Working Together*, which studied corporations that used cooperation and alliances rather than hierarchy and competition to succeed.

There are two strands of understanding when it comes to collaboration: the joint aspects of decision making and the discrete but mutually beneficial aspect of taking action. Rather than trying to synthesize these two theories to make a standard definition, it is more useful for collaboration to retain its malleability as a word, and instead operate as a term that could be imagined as part of a four quadrant graph. On the y-axis is decision making that ranges from hierarchical to joint. On the x-axis are actions that range from competitive to mutually beneficial. This would mean that the more competitive the actions and more hierarchical the decisions, the more traditional the business model. And the more mutually beneficial the actions, and the more joint the decision making, the more collaborative the model is. This leaves room for organizations or initiatives to fall anywhere within those quadrants, so the term collaboration exists more as a scale rather than a firm definition.

Collaboration in Art

Moving from business models to art practice allows for an even broader understanding of collaboration as is applies to the case studies. The case studies, as arts organizations, not only work with artists and their practices, but their organizational models can be informed by them as well. Although artistic practices and business practices are different, existing on different levels of economy and with different goals (art can even be seen to subvert the very ideas behind business goals), they are both reactive and responsive to the same social, political, economic, and cultural shifts.

Quite a lot has been written about collaborative business models in light of post-Fordism (Alter and Hage, 1993; Grey, 1996; Powell, 1990; Thomson, Perry, Miller, 2009) as well as art practices in the post-Fordism economy (Bishop, 2004; Burnham, 1968/2014; Kester, 2011; Lind, 2007; Stimson and Sholette, 2007). Both areas see collaboration as a response to post-Fordism's shift from mass production and material labor to an economy based on service, knowledge, flexibility, communication, and targeted, customized production. In business, the rise of collaboration is tied essentially to the drift away from labor as related to material and toward labor as service; to the shift from products to knowledge accumulation; and from mass-produced to customized output. In art, practices move away from the solo artist who produces masterworks to more collaborative, site-specific pieces; works that are largely immaterial or performative; and work that is formed through process and interaction with a community.

Writers about art practice, as with business scholars, are interested in defining collaboration. The definitions explored in art are both simpler and more expansive than the business definitions. First, to the simple. Grant H. Kester, whose 2011 book looks at collaborative art in a global context, says of collaboration: "Its primary meaning is straightforward enough: 'to work together' or 'in conjunction with' another, to engage in 'united labor'" (1-2). The idea of shared labor is echoed by Holly Crawford in her 2008 anthology on collaborative art practices: “Very simplified: Collaboration is a process that is engaged in by two or more persons that work together towards a specific end; that end may be an object” (xi). We see these two keys words pop up again in Maria Lind’s 2007 essay on the collaborative turn in art when she speaks of collaboration as “where some form of conscious partnership takes place, whether interaction, participation, group activity or another sort of intended exchange and process of ‘working together’” (16). “Working together” seem to be the two magic words, but these two words are open to many forms of interpretation, perhaps purposefully, in order to remain broadly defined.

“Work” in an art sense can be a noun, as in an artwork, or a verb, as something that one does. “Working” could be to construct an object or a processed based piece. It could also mean laboring in the same physical space, or on different components’ materiality. It could also mean sharing intellectual work. “Together” is also vague, as it does not specify if the togetherness is about occupying space or location or time, or togetherness as in ideation or shared authorship. This is perhaps intentionally vague as artists use all of these strategies in different ways, so “working together” can become a catch-all definition.

A few writers have expanded upon the “working together” definition. Silvia Bigliazzi and Sharon Wood’s anthology of collaboration in art since the Middle Ages locates collaboration “primarily within the cultural sphere, as a joint effort between two or more parties achieving a result that is greater than, or at least different from, the sum of its parts.” (2006, 1). Here the joint effort, or working together, is still present, but they expand the definition to include the end product, or result. This, like the business models above, focuses on the mutually beneficial aspect of collaboration. Two other scholars focus less on the end result and more on the joint efforts, like the business models above, theirs are less about what is created, but how it is created. Tom Finkelpearl, whose 2013 book on social cooperation in art, sees collaboration as when “participants are equally authors of these projects, especially in the initiation and conceptualization” (5-6). And Cynthia Jaffee McCabe’s 1984 essay on artistic collaboration says, “In its classic sense, the concept of artistic collaboration involves two or more painters, sculptors, printmakers, performance artists, or video artists gathering together, pooling ideas, and with equal participation creating an object” (15). Here and in the case of Finkelpearl, not only is collaboration about working together, it is about equally or jointly participating in the conceptualization and process of working together. Although these definitions are a bit simpler than the business definitions, they reflect a similar attention to the scale of joint decision making and mutually beneficial actions.

There is another more poetic and expansive definition of collaboration within art practice. Robert C. Hobbs in his 1984 essay on artistic collaboration since the 1960s focused on culture in the larger sense. Hobbs says, “Artists create art, but culture, which is a dialogue, is created by all” (1984, 65). Bigliazzi and Wood speak about collaboration as the cooperation of forms—across history, genre, or authors—to create meaning. This theory is sociological in nature and posits that knowledge, meaning, and culture are collaboratively constructed. Although abstracted from the particulars of art practice, it is refreshing to think about such a broad definition, and see artists, historians, and social actors as collaborators who work together to construct culture in an ongoing process.

Collaboration and the Case Studies

It is helpful to consider the three case studies in relation to the business model definitions of collaboration. The scale that these definitions provide, that of joint decision making and mutually beneficial actions, prepares a framework for the case study models. It is also helpful to see how collaboration is defined within the sphere of art. The simple definition of collaboration as working together opens up many conceptual doors, as does the expansive definition of collaboration as the co-creation of culture.

In the first case study, Lost Weekend Video collaborated with various stakeholders throughout its adaptive journey. After its first crowdsourced fundraising effort—that could be considered a collaboration with its public—Lost Weekend collaborated with a network of comedians in the Cinecave, providing a jointly needed resource. The comedians gained a space for the development of new material and also hosted touring acts. It also served as a way for Wheat to develop and host events while Lost Weekend earned extra income to help with rent. After the store’s second crowdsourced fundraising effort it was able to remodel and bring on 1-2-3-4 Go! Records as a roommate. This was also a mutually beneficial collaboration as the record store was able to expand into San Francisco from Oakland and build its city audience and the arrangement allowed Lost Weekend to further subsidize its rent. The most recent collaboration with Alamo Drafthouse also fits the mutually beneficial definition. Lost Weekend gets space to continue to operate and the Alamo broadens its sphere of cinematic offerings. Both also get to share in the preservation of the physical archive of films from Le Video. An apt comparison, as Wheat mentioned earlier, the collaborations felt reminiscent of a 1980s style save-the-rec-center movie.

CounterPulse is an example of a range of collaborative efforts. Firstly, CounterPulse collaborated with philanthropic organizations such as CAST, NCCLF and the 1% Project. This was mutually beneficial as it allowed those organizations, and particularly CAST, to prototype a new model of land trust and gain expertise in that area. The relationship with the Luggage Store Gallery benefitted both parties as their combined square footage qualified them for the Federal New Markets Tax Credit. The collaboration with Jensen Architects gave CounterPulse pro bono architecture, and Jensen Architects could offset its taxes with the donation. The city of San Francisco also was a partner, as along with CounterPulse gaining a permanent location, the city gained an emblem for its revitalization efforts to Central Market. To Riley, collaboration is not unique to San Francisco, though it is magnified by the geographic compression of the city. “It just stands to reason that if you have less land, there are less spaces, fewer spaces,” says Riley, “And in the long term, when I was talking about my fear of the shift, the demographic shift of San Francisco, I think the more we—I don’t know, to use an old metaphor—the more we circle the wagons, the better off we are, in terms of just being able to support one another and stop viewing each other as competition” (2015).

Minnesota Street Project, although spearheaded by a small group of individuals, was collaborative in that it created buildings that cooperatively share services to keep costs low. In this way it is mutually beneficial to the galleries and artists involved, as they all buy into the model to help themselves and each other. The balance between the art services/storage building is mutually beneficial, as it subsidizes the studio and gallery buildings, while also providing private collectors with art storage. In its totality, Minnesota Street Project creates a campus of artists, galleries, and collectors, creating a mutually beneficial hub. To co-founder Deborah Rappaport, it signals a shift that she’s seen in recent years in San Francisco: “I think things got so dire that people realized that the only way to survive was to survive together. And this every-person-for-themselves strategy of it all being a zero sum game and there’s only X number of donors and they only have Y amount of money and the first one to it wins doesn’t work” (2016).

The three case studies are examples of the type of collaboration defined by mutually beneficial actions, even when entities have different goals. The other definition, of joint decision making, was not prevalent, and could be because joint decision making takes time—a luxury none of the case studies had. The third definition, that of the co-creation of meaning and culture as a collaborative process echoes the arts ecosystem approach. Given that the partners in each case study recognize themselves as part of a common fabric across the city, these efforts recognize culture as an ongoing, collaborative process, woven together by people and organizations.

Further Distinctions and Similarities

Beyond the case studies' relation to the arts ecosystem/ecology approach, economics, and collaboration, the organizations have further distinctions and similarities that illuminate their models. Though these characteristics are specific to three organizations, they have qualities that may resonate for others. After looking at particular distinctions and similarities, the models and lessons will be presented.

In terms of distinctions, each case study has particular relations to neighborhood, market, and art. Firstly, Lost Weekend Video is the one case study that is a store (though the galleries within Minnesota Street could be considered in the same category). Lost Weekend faced a rising lease cost paired with a decline in the video rental market. It is also the case study that primarily focuses on forms of entertainment: movies, comedy and music. In the end, its partnership is one of symbiosis between itself and one host organization within its same neighborhood.

CounterPulse is different than Lost Weekend in that it moved neighborhoods—from SoMa to the Tenderloin—and faces the challenges of new context and audience. It is the one case study that is distinctly part of a city-driven revitalization plan. It is a public/private collaboration, with sources of support from the city (though only a small portion of the funding pie) and from private entities. CounterPulse focuses on experimental performance and dance, and is a nonprofit, a fact that distinguishes it from the other two case studies. It is also the one example that went through extensive partnering, but in the end is a single organization with its own space.

Minnesota Street Project is a series of extended partnerships that bases its success on the longevity and symbiosis of shared services. Minnesota Street is the case study that is a new organization in a new neighborhood; however, its tenants are all previously existing entities from various parts of the city. It is a private/private partnership between for-profit organizations and private individuals. In some ways it resembles the symbiotic relationship of Lost Weekend and Alamo Drafthouse, though Minnesota Street Project is more robust with multiple organizations and individuals sharing spaces and services, and with rent being exchanged. Minnesota Street is also the example that focuses primarily on visual art.

Despite their distinctions around art types, neighborhoods, and financial classifications, the case studies have a startling number of similarities. Although the organizations focus on different cultural output—entertainment, performance, visual art—they each have *live elements*. CounterPulse is the easiest example, as its core program is to commission and present live works, such as performance and dance. Through the Cinecave, Lost Weekend gained an appreciation and drive for live comedy that it hopes to continue. The store's partnership with the Alamo Drafthouse also puts it in close contact with film as a social event. Minnesota Street Project has a dedicated media art room as well as an atrium for live events and performance. Live work is an important factor for all three. This through line could point to two factors: firstly the perceived value of non-static forms of art, and secondly an interdisciplinary arts approach within San Francisco organizations.

In each of the case studies, the organizations *responded to the needs of artists*. Lost Weekend developed a strong connection with developing comedy talent. Wheat hopes to continue to find space for emerging comedians who need small, intimate places to create and test material. The design of CounterPulse's 80 Turk building was created with artists in mind. The equipment, rehearsal spaces, dressing rooms, and apartment all address the needs of performers. Minnesota Street Project directly addressed artists' need for affordable and stable studio space. The centrality of artists' need to each organization's transformation shows their dedication to artists.

All three case studies' locations also have implications for audiences. Each example represents a mixture between *initiated and uninitiated audiences*. For Lost Weekend, as a video store and entertainment venue, it was increasingly a destination organization. Although on the popular Valencia Street corridor, the foot traffic didn't generate much in additional rentals or event attendees. At the Alamo Drafthouse the store has the benefit of being within a genre-specific destination venue, and the store gains interest-specific foot traffic by occupying the theater's lobby. CounterPulse has a devoted audience of performance lovers. Its entry into the Tenderloin neighborhood allows it to cultivate new audience through education and partnership with already established social service and community groups. Minnesota Street Project aggregates audiences from each gallery and artist, comingling them in a hub of activity. The Rappaports hope to create a friendly atmosphere through offering family activities and synchronized openings. Place, then, becomes an opportunity for community and audience development.

Each case study represents a particular relationship between *space and place*. All three relate to space in their quest to keep it, their quest to find new space, and their quest to begin in that new space. Lost Weekend moved only a few blocks away and in the same neighborhood, so it remains in a familiar place. CounterPulse, too, moved only a few blocks but changed neighborhoods—landing in the Tenderloin as a place represents an opportunity to emphasize community outreach and education programs tailored to its new neighborhood. For Minnesota Street, the Dogpatch is a neighborhood that is seen as ripe for more arts organizations to develop. In these examples, securing space is the biggest challenge whereas place is the largest opportunity for development.

In relation to space, each was affected by a *relation to changing technology* in commerce and consumption. With Lost Weekend, the change in video viewership to online was a major factor in its decrease in profit. CounterPulse was the beneficiary of a change in pornography viewing to online as it left behind a vacant pornographic theater for renovation. The galleries of Minnesota Street Project recognize that the art market is moving online and to fairs. The Rappaports know this, but are convinced that brick and mortar galleries are still important in the development of artists, and the project reflects that.

In terms of qualities that the case studies shared, *urgency, opportunity and flexibility* were key. Lost Weekend and CounterPulse faced pressing rent hikes. Minnesota Street Project, although not facing high rents of its own, responded to the urgency of increasing rents for galleries and artists. All three sought new opportunities. For Lost Weekend it was a series of fixes such as creating a live space in its store, taking on a roommate that wanted to move to a San Francisco market, and partnering with a new theater and taking on an archive from another shop. CounterPulse seized opportunities from foundations, a new nonprofit real estate holding company, pro bono work, the city, and federal government. Minnesota Street founders used their retirement as an opportunity to invest in real estate and the arts. In all of these examples, flexibility was required, whether it be to move buildings, move neighborhoods, or shape vision around the possibilities of a structure that could address the needs in the city. The pairing of urgency, opportunity, and flexibility were key characteristics to the success of the three organizations.

Each case study involved the *renovation of existing real estate*. For Lost Weekend, first it renovated its own space and now it moves into a 99 year old theater that has been recently renovated by Alamo Drafthouse. CounterPulse also renovated a theater, but this one had previously focused on porn. Minnesota Street Project renovated light industrial buildings to become galleries and studios—perhaps the biggest transformation in terms of usage change for the buildings. In contrast, none of the case studies worked with new developments or were subsidiaries of housing, retail, or market developments like malls or new construction projects. None of the studied organizations waited to be invited by developers, city housing projects, or entrepreneurial market ventures—they were their own entrepreneurs.

Each case study bears a relation to *city policy and zoning*. All three involve organizations that were at the mercy of unregulated commercial real estate rental markets, highlighting a lack of a city policy around arts protection. Lost Weekend Video also came up against cabaret permitting that limited its ability to have the Cinecave function as a legitimate venue and hindered its ability to serve alcohol—a potential profit source. CounterPulse benefitted from city zoning and regulations. Firstly, the Tenderloin area is shaped by a mixture of policies that keep new development at bay, leaving vacant buildings. Many large buildings are owned by nonprofit organizations. Secondly, the theater at 80 Turk was zoned for live/work so CounterPulse is able to keep the apartment upstairs for travelling artists. It also benefitted from being part of a city revitalization project, though small in actual funds. Minnesota Street Project benefitted from city zoning that permitted only light industrial and art uses for spaces in the Dogpatch area, a fact that preserved the buildings from being turned into luxury housing or tech offices. In an ironic turn, though each organization was forced to change because of lack of city policy to protect arts organizations from commercial rent increases, two of the organizations also benefitted from city zoning policies.

City policy and zoning is a factor, but it would be irresponsible to overlook the *private benefactors* in each case. Lost Weekend Video benefitted from the major donation of Ellison, via the Alamo Drafthouse, to buy the Le Video archive. It also benefitted from the Alamo Drafthouse's donation of space to move the store into the New Mission Theater's lobby. CounterPulse's move was made possible through CAST, the NCCLF, many private foundations, and the 1% Project/Mark Jensen Architects that donated time, money and their design efforts. In the case of Minnesota Street Project, the Rappaports themselves were the financial backers. In each case private entities were not purely driven by neoliberal capital gain. Each had a philanthropic element or focus on social good, community and the arts. This lesson reveals a reliance on private partnerships in the absence of robust public protections.

Models and Lessons

Models

Although each case study is associated with unique opportunities and strategies, their models can offer an occasion for reflection and learning. In each case, organizations adapted or adopted existing models and each time with a twist.

In the Lost Weekend Video example, the store went through several models. Beginning as a rental store, it transformed into a hybrid store and *entertainment venue*. This model saw live and static entertainment forms coexisting. From there it added a *marketplace* element when the store took on 1-2-3-4 Go! Records as a roommate. A marketplace is a single location that hosts multiple stores, each with separate but complementary inventory. This showed flexibility in aligning with cross-genre entities for space sharing. In the end, the store's move to the New Mission Theater is marked by two things. First, it is an alignment of a larger same-genre market entity subsidizing a smaller one because of a belief in a shared mission. Second, the acquisition of an archive paired with the changing market for video rentals shifts the store to assuming a caretaker role. Its inventory becomes more like an archive or a collection, and it becomes the curator and conservator of a rarefied medium. This adopts the spirit of a *museum*, insofar as it emphasizes care, curation, and public stewardship of a collection. The twist is that patrons can take the items home. There are several ways these models could be extrapolated. Organizations who cater to niche audiences or have products with a waning market could change the way they think about themselves. Instead of existing in a supply and demand paradigm, these challenges could be met by becoming caretakers. This can be furthered by partnering with other rarified purveyors or with entities that deal in more popular forms of the same genre.

The CounterPulse case represents a *public/private hybrid* of support and effort. This alliance between city, philanthropic, and private organizations can be an example of how they can work together to be mutually beneficial. The model is one of a *land trust*, where a trustee holds property for a beneficiary for a directed purpose. This removes CounerPulse from the rental market, permanently shifting its paradigm. The twist is that CounterPulse will acquire its building, purchasing the asset from CAST, which is a divergence from a traditional land trust model. This prototype could be applied in other regions where organizations face precarious rental futures as a way to permanently remove them from these forces. The model does rely on the assumption that real estate values will increase, otherwise the beneficiary organization is forced to pay back an original price that has depreciated.

The Minnesota Street Project is an interesting example of a market force acting like a public salve. Firstly, the organization's efforts mimic a *start-up* model, in that the project is fast, nimble, and reacting to a market need (CAST could also be considered a form of a start-up in this way). The twist is that it is a start-up that is without ambition to accrue capital. It is a for-profit acting similarly to a nonprofit, in that its focus is on providing a public benefit by supporting struggling arts organizations and artists. In staying a for-profit, it sidesteps the need to apply for nonprofit status; the need for a board, which can be time consuming; the need to rely on fundraising; and the need to rely on city services. It is a case of benevolent entrepreneurship and this model makes a case for how *shared services* and a campus model can create a system of mutual support. There are a few ways this project can be an example for others. Firstly, other organizations could share services to decrease the amount of individualized spaces need for each, and in so doing, lower necessary square footage and therefore rent. Secondly, pairing with profitable offerings like art storage, can subsidize the rent for partners. Lastly, it is a model for entrepreneurial philanthropists that could be replicated in other regions where available real estate can be utilized to cluster and support several organizations in need.

Lessons

Throughout the discussions, case studies, and analysis, there are a few key through lines. The goal is not to present the case studies as models for direct replication, but as lessons to inform. These lessons are presented with full acknowledgement that these real-world examples draw from practices of a select examples; in a select city; in a select timeframe. However, each is informed by the past, aware of its present context and influential on the future of arts in the region. They can be looked to as examples of how to link steadfast missions or values with a flexibility of practice. Using the three case studies as examples, the following lessons can be gleaned.

The ethos and existence of an *arts ecosystem approach matters*. Poetically, it is the form of collaboration in which individuals and organizations co-create culture. It could be argued that there is a co-creation of culture happening at all times, regardless of whether the arts are involved. This is where the idea of vibrancy of culture plays a role. The case study subjects spoke several times about not just creating a culture, but creating a vibrant culture, and the role of art in that distinction. Vibrancy relates to dynamism and a diversity of perspectives. Reverberation is also part of vibrancy, and can be construed as a quality of longevity or sustainability. The third aspect of vibrancy is a boldness of color, which can be understood as a distinctiveness or uniqueness of culture to an area. Arts add the texture, meaning, and variety to a co-created culture.

In a pragmatic sense, the arts ecosystem approach requires all levels of arts-related activity to be interrelated in order to succeed, not only in creating a culture for an audience or a city, but in fostering the development of artists along their careers. This involves art schools; small, mid-sized and large arts organizations; residencies; fellowships; galleries; performance spaces; rehearsal spaces; studio spaces; writers; publications; critics; funders; collectors; attendees; and advocates. Borrowing from biological definitions, it is this diversity that is directly related to the strength of an ecosystem and its sustainability. In regards to recognizing themselves within a larger fabric of an arts ecosystem, the case studies project an ethos that can inform others. In this way, the lesson is about sustaining many forms and levels of arts-related entities and activities, rather than focusing on just one organization at a time.

Another through line is the role of economics, namely neoliberal economics, in the context of the case studies. Each organization shows a balance of how to *work with and against market frameworks* simultaneously. Each organization found itself in direct antagonism with escalating rents as a consequence of free market capitalism without civic safety nets. The solutions that all three turned to represent a mixture of working within the neoliberal economic framework and finding pockets of ways to work around that same framework. Each case study worked with market entities, whether real estate, architects, philanthropy, or other businesses. Two of the cases also utilized what city policies they could harness, whether it be zoning or city revitalization plans. In this way, the case studies worked within neoliberal markets and outside them to find a way out of the bind of capital. They showed agency and creativity in relation to the neoliberal economy, leveraging both city planning and zoning, along with pockets of benevolent market benefactors.

This is related to the other form of collaboration that entails mutual benefits for parties involved. Each case study was a menagerie of *opportunistic partnerships*, drawing from public and private sectors at times. The lesson appears to be to look for passionate, benevolent benefactors whether from city departments, foundations, mission-driven businesses, or private entrepreneurial individuals. Another dimension of opportunistic partnerships is not only in the finding of another, but in the flexibility of an organization to take advantage of those opportunities. The case studies continued the idea of collaboration beyond securing space, and into how they operate at steady-state and beyond. Whether in neighborhood collaboration, shared services, or the sharing of the care for a collection, each of these cases is an example of market forces being collaborative rather than competitive.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, the three case studies—Lost Weekend Video, CounterPulse, and Minnesota Street Project—offer a glimpse into the context and creative solutions at play in the arts in current-day San Francisco. They also offer examples that can inform other regions or organizations facing similar challenges. This project offers insight into how post-Fordist labor, neoliberal economy, and the Californian ideology created conditions that forced arts organizations to change their operating models.

These changing models borrowed from pre-existing forms, but each with a twist. One moved from a store to an entertainment venue, to a marketplace, to a caretaker/museum model, but with the twist that it remains a rental service. Another used a land trust model to secure permanent real estate, with the twist that it will pay off debt overtime to become its own trustee. Lastly, one used a nimble start-up model to quickly address a market need, with the twist that it does not expect to earn capital from it.

In each case, the organizations blended a focus on the larger arts ecosystem mission with opportunistic partnerships. A two-pronged approach, each balanced flexibility with collaboration between interdisciplinary public and private entities with a deep commitment to the value of arts and artists. Each also worked within market-driven economics and against them, through their partnerships. They each relied on benevolent market partners and two relied also on city zoning. This approach uses options from both sides: the regulatory aspects of city planning and capital-driven, yet benign market entities. Additionally, in two of the cases formal philanthropic organizations were sidestepped entirely.

The overarching theme, of course, is the importance of space. Each organization was able to buy property, provide rental space to others, or assume property hosted by another party. In each case, organizations were removed from the whims of the commercial rental sector. In one case, the organization is removed from rent all together by being fully hosted within another organization's space. In another case with owned property, the organization no longer needs to worry about rent increases. In a third, the property owners intentionally removed themselves from market-driven rent increases, and dedicated themselves to self-imposed rent control.

This snapshot into three cases of arts organizations that were able to successfully weather the economic storm offers a deep examination into a particular context and set of actions. Although different times and different regions present varying challenges and solutions, this project offers the potential of lessons learned that can inform other contexts or a larger conversation.

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