

Coop Fund  
Amalle Dublon &  
Constantina Zavitsanos  
Devin Kenny  
John Neff  
February 11 – March 31, 2018

Coop Fund, Amalle Dublon & Constantina Zavitsanos, Devin Kenny, and John Neff present newly-commissioned and existing artworks that destabilize conventional approaches to education, economics, and the labor of artmaking. A series of public programs and workshops provides a critical component to the exhibition.

Artists Space is an organization whose name discloses its foundational mission and purpose. The frankness of this nomenclature, however, is deceptively complex, as it foregrounds a critical reflexivity within its own expression of availability. Put simply, there are many different ways of interpreting how a space for artists should conceive of itself.

The artists in this exhibition blend relations of production and conditions of presentation, surfacing the structures that frame their work. John Neff's *Manhattan Project* (2016–18) is an hour-long video constructed around a number of structured interviews conducted with artists, art teachers, and the curatorial and administrative staff of Artists Space. These conversations, intermixed with scenes from Neff's daily life, such as him drinking alone and with friends, and footage captured during a break up with a long-term boyfriend, become the work's primary material.

The Manhattan, a mix of whiskey, sweet vermouth, and bitters, becomes the video's adversary and obsession, infusing the work with mischievous, fuzzy logic and loose narrative connections. Neff makes multiple trips to Manhattan from his home in Chicago: to screen his feature-length *Tony Greene Movie* (2014–16), to celebrate his boyfriend's birthday, and to visit Artists Space. The Manhattan is enjoyed by conceptual artist Tom Marioni, whom Neff interviews, and provides the graphic for the weekly meetings that Marioni hosts in his studio, known as the Society of Independent Artists. Marioni's artwork *The Act of Drinking Beer With Friends is the Highest Form of Art* (1973–) emerges as a clear influence.

For Neff, and by association his subjects, the social codes of drinking exist both in opposition to and extension of artistic production in its professional mode. The artist's inquisitive, relational approach finds its antinomic form in *Two Comparisons* (1998/2018). In this, originally exhibited at Chicago's L.A.R.C. in 1998, the gallery's walls and windows are treated with different types of commercially available white paint and window cleaner, which provides a parallel between the artist and the figure of a contractor, and a nuanced study into neutrality and difference.

Likewise evading a normative approach to object making, Coop Fund proposes to develop an experimental funding platform that accumulates financial resources through member subscriptions and redistributes funds to artists through a cooperative decision-making process. Established this year, and tracing its origins to a series of discussions held at Artists Space in early 2017, the organization's founding members are Emma Hedditch, Lydia Okrent, and Elsa Brown.

Specifically, Coop Fund encourages needs-based proposals from individuals who require living costs to support and formalize collaborative work. It reflects a belief that personal and collective concerns are interrelated, and that cultural funding should be structured accordingly. Collaborative work is often inadequately remunerated in the arts, and collectives are made to compete for fixed sums that must be divided between multiple members, while the living costs of artists are rarely accounted for. The members of Coop Fund have produced a booklet, presented in the gallery, which details information related to the project.

Coop Fund presupposes an innate, tentative friction toward the nonprofit sector—inclusive of “alternative” entities such as Artists Space. Though outwardly progressive, these spaces tend to obscure the systemic tax avoidance that is endemic to the development of the 501(c)(3) status in the U.S., and justify an absence of public investment in social infrastructure. Likewise concerned with the movement of resources away from existing institutional structures and into other areas is Devin Kenny’s contribution to the exhibition. Provocatively collapsing critiques of the nonprofit sector with those of the prison-industrial complex, Kenny utilizes Artists Space as the site for a computer that mines cryptocurrency to be converted into US dollars and donated to bail funds.

Bail is a system that acutely impacts lower-income communities, and in so doing highlights stark social inequities across lines of race and class. New York-based nonprofit publishing platform *The New Inquiry* launched the app Bail Bloc in November 2017, to pool the spare processing power of a network of personal computers to mine cryptocurrency to be passed on to bail funds through grassroots organizations such as The Bronx Freedom Fund. Collaborating with the Dark Inquiry collective, the creators of the app, Kenny has dedicated a Bitmain Antminer S7 computer solely to this process. Kenny’s work challenges the social function of the institution, manifesting its potential to intersect with the interests and needs of a wide range of communities. The amount generated by the miner, however, can be expected to be far less than, for example, the exhibition budget itself, manifesting a probing skepticism toward the reach of social and racial justice work when positioned within the current economy of artistic production in a city such as New York.

Other works by Kenny in the exhibition include *Not This Featuring Brian Encinia, Betty Shelby, Jason Stockley, Peter Liang and Jeronimo Yanez*, a spectrographic video that features the rap song “Not This” by the artist’s musical alias Devin KKenny, with production and additional vocals by Vyle. This serves as a scathing indictment of a legal system that thrives upon anti-Blackness, and that sees police, such as those named in the song’s title credits, walk free even after being accused of murdering Black people. A barbecue—produced by Alabama Joe, who turns oil drums into grills with which he hosts free cookouts in Brooklyn—has been reconfigured by the artist into a Faraday cage, a device made of an electrically conductive material that can block electromagnetic fields

and signals in order to secure drives containing sensitive data. Kenny's work arrives through his dexterity with various technical languages, giving multiple perspectives into the latent social and economic anxieties of the militarized information age, and foregrounding a Black vernacular creativity that occurs in jubilant counterpoise to systemic racial inequities.

Many of the exhibition's works behave as models: in the sense of material propositions that literalize the mechanism that they illustrate, and as metaphorical or rhetorical examples of how art can break beyond normative dynamics of author and interpreter, and of artist and viewer. Amalle Dublon & Constantina Zavitsanos contribute a series of video and sound works that are installed alongside a Mach-Zehnder interferometer they built to demonstrate the Quantum Eraser experiment of 1999. The outcome of this experiment depends on whether it is measured or observed (even when the observation occurs after the outcome in question). This asserts questions of indeterminacy that have resonated across numerous disciplines. Yet Dublon & Zavitsanos' work makes a powerful rejoinder to the epistemological uncertainty that might follow within a traditional postmodern framework. They suggest that an idea of dependency is embedded in the concept of entanglement. This is because, even when they seem spatially dissociated, particles in quantum entanglement can never be described separately from each other, and must always be understood to bond as a system. For Dublon & Zavitsanos, this has important implications upon their ongoing study into care, debt, and nonlinear temporality.

Dublon & Zavitsanos' *a composition of waters (adjusted to fit)* (2018) depicts the compression of an experiment and a ritual undertaken by the artists with a ripple tank. Recorded at the artists' home, this is presented as a video which has been paused for the duration of the exhibition due to concerns about access (the video can be screened in Artists Space's basement upon request). Each of the artists in the exhibition has in different ways embraced a pluralistic, process-based approach to artistic production, prompting critically unresolved questions regarding the aesthetic and social responsibilities of artist and art institution. Projections occur throughout in a psychological and material sense, formulating an engagement with the implications of both presence and shadow. While often making decisive interventions on the level of system and structure, each artist remains nonetheless concerned with activating

their investigations through methods of abstraction and play, to obscure processes as much as to reveal them.

This exhibition follows a series of internal conversations and workshops held between the staff of Artists Space and the five exhibiting artists in early 2017, at a time when Artists Space was without an Executive Director. Called *Authorization Sessions*—the title a reference to live recording and to psychoanalytical investigation—this work was driven by the staff’s desire to interrogate the institution’s organizational arrangements, and to reorient and invent anew its practices. It was undertaken with the directive for artists to prioritize personal interests and methodologies as an attempt was made to provide periods of time where artists could steer the internal organizational and creative working practices of Artists Space, breaking with assumptions around authority and authorship. When there is no institutional leader, the authority has to go somewhere, but where? What ways of working might be opened up by these conditions? The ambiguity of the initial proposal inevitably provoked as many problems as advantages, but the work undertaken created intimate ties between the artists and organization, as well as between the group of artists themselves. While some of the artists index their respective contributions to these conversations, this exhibition is organized as a second, distinct phase of work.

The primary content of this booklet is divided into two categories. A first section gathers materials related to the current exhibition, in the form of documents, images, song lyrics, and original texts. The second part contains items that were produced as part of *Authorization Sessions*, including a heavily abridged transcription of a conversation held between the artists at the project’s conclusion. Given the fragmentary and internal nature of the project, only a fraction of what was generated is represented herein.

The final page outlines a series of programs and workshops developed as a constituent part of the exhibition, as well as information regarding a book drive for incarcerated people, initiated by Devin Kenny.

**Certificate of Incorporation of  
*Coop Fund, Ltd.***

**Under Article 2 of the Cooperative Corporations Law  
of the State of New York**

The undersigned, all being of full age, and at least two-thirds being citizens of the United States, and at least one being a resident of the State of New York do, under and by virtue of the laws of the State of New York, associate ourselves with the intention of forming a cooperative corporation for the purposes hereinafter specified, and certify as follows:

1. The name of the corporation shall be Coop Fund, Ltd.
2. The purposes for which the corporation is formed, and the business and objects to be carried on by it are as follows: to provide, for the mutual benefit of its members, an equal opportunity for each member to determine how member contributions should be utilized to support fellow artists and arts institutions.
3. The duration of the corporation shall be perpetual.
4. The office of the corporation is to be located in the County of Kings, City of New York.
5. The names and post office addresses of the incorporators are as follows:

Name	Address
<i>Lydia Okrent</i>	██
<i>Emma Hedditch</i>	██
<i>Elsa Brown</i>	██
<i>Rachel Sara Cronin Peddersen</i>	██
<i>Colleen Michelle O'Connor</i>	██

6. The number of directors shall not be less than five.

7. The names and post office addresses of the directors of the corporation until the first annual meeting thereof are as follows:

Name	Address
<i>Lydia Okrent</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Emma Hedditch</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Elsa Brown</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Rachel Sara Cronin Peddersen</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Colleen Michelle O'Connor</i>	[REDACTED]

At least one of the above named directors is a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of New York.

8. The corporation is organized without capital stock.

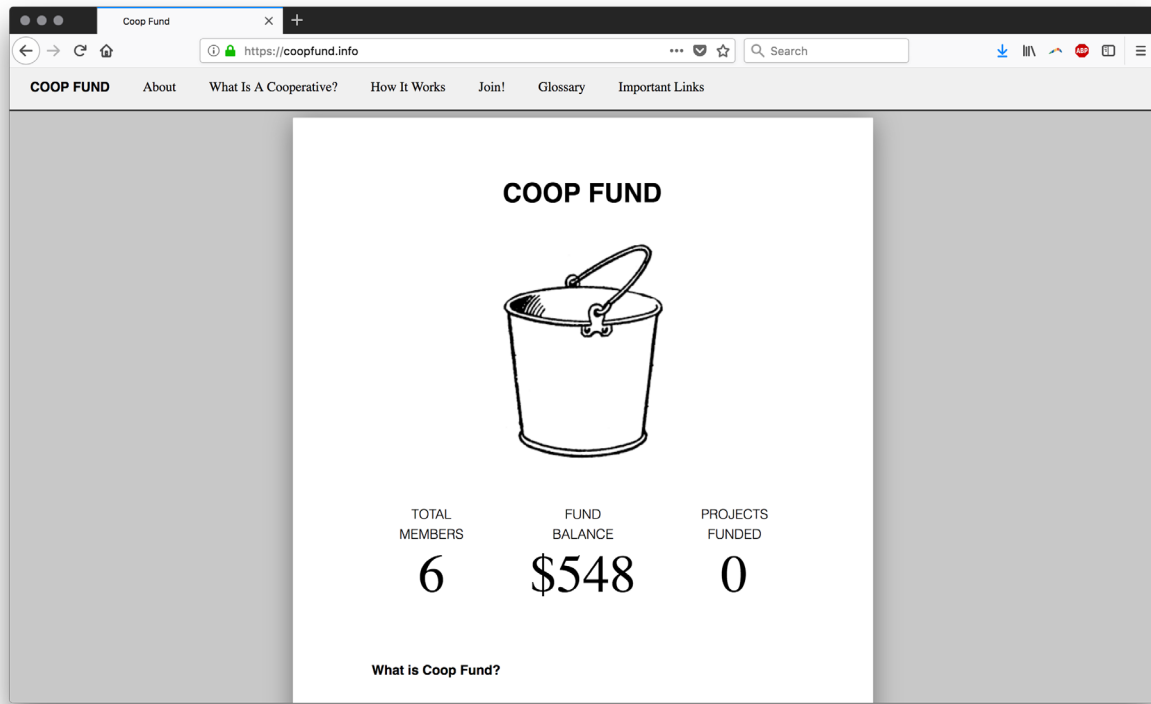
9. The Secretary of State of the State of New York is hereby designated the agent of this corporation upon whom process against this corporation may be served. The post office address to which the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against this corporation served upon her as agent of this corporation is c/o [REDACTED]

CERTIFICATION OF INCORPORATION  
OF  
COOP FUND, LTD.  
UNDER ARTICLE 2 OF THE COOPERATIVE CORPORATIONS LAW

Filed by:

Michael Haber  
Hofstra Law Clinic  
108 Hofstra University  
Hempstead, NY 11549





Screen capture of Coop Fund's website.  
Accessed February 9, 2018.











John Neff  
Stills from *Manhattan Project*, 2016–18  
Digital video, color, sound  
62 min  
Edited with Craig Neeson

2 PRODUCT COMPARISONS FOR LARC:

- 1) INTERIOR LATEX FLAT FINISH WALL PAINTS (WHITE)
- 2) GLASS CLEANERS (AEROSOL AND NON-AEROSOL)

The 30 3'10" x 10' burlap covered plywood panels comprising the gallery's north and west walls have been divided into ten groupings of three panels. A different brand of white interior latex flat finish wall paint has been applied to each grouping of three panels. Beginning in the northwest corner of the space and continuing left towards its southwest corner, the brands applied are:

- Distinctions, Pittsburgh Paints, \$22.98 gal.
- Dutch Boy Dirt Fighter, Dutch Boy Paints, \$9.65 gal.
- Easy Living, Sears & Roebuck Co., \$10.54 gal.
- Ed Dwigans Private Stock, United Coatings, \$9.98 gal.
- F & F Home Style, manufactured for Farm & Fleet, \$8.99 gal.
- Glidden Spread Satin, Glidden Paints, \$9.38 gal.
- Lucite, PPG Architectural Finishes, \$10.89 gal.
- Magicolor, Magicolor Paint, Inc., \$4.96 gal.
- Tru-Test EZ Kare, Tru-Test Manufacturing Co., \$14.99 gal.
- Tru-Test Value Interior, Tru-Test Manufacturing Co., \$8.99 gal.

The 22 3'9" x 7'5" x 1/2" glass panels comprising the gallery's south and west walls have been divided into two groupings of three panels (one consisting of the glass wall's first three panels, the other of its last three panels) and eight groupings of two panels. Beginning in the southeast corner of the space and continuing left towards its northwest corner, the brands applied are:

- Bon Ami, Faultless Starch, 20 fl. oz., \$2.09
- Cinch, Proctor & Gamble, 32 fl. oz., \$2.57
- Formula 409 Glass and Surface, Clorox, 32 fl. oz., \$2.39
- Glass Plus, Dow, 32 fl. oz., \$1.99
- Roundys Glass Cleaner with Ammonia, 22 fl. oz., \$1.29
- Spring Fresh, Sunshine Co., 17 fl. oz., \$.99
- Sparkle, A.J. Funk & Co., 32 fl. oz., \$1.19
- The Works Glass and Multi-Surface Cleanser, Lime-o-Sol Co., 32 fl. oz., \$1.79
- Windex Original, S.C. Johnson & Son, 22 fl. oz., \$2.69
- Windex No Drip, S.C. Johnson & Son, 22 fl. oz., \$1.74



# “Not This Featuring Betty Shelby, Brian Encinia, Jason Stockley, Jeronimo Yanez, and Peter Liang” Devin KKenney, Vyle

[Devin KKenney:]

Hold up, stop  
\*Scroll down\*

Another killer cop brought to justice  
This 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 ... times

Underqualified working overtime every single time, protected by the thin blue line. Body cams looking like the new lynch mob postcard cameras behind which they hide. It's an ornament on the crime. What a time to be alive!

If this the new genre depicting Black lives, it ain't right, I can't abide. Cuz when these fucks bring an innocent us to a cop car in cuffs, to the grave in a rush, and then there is just a slap on the wrist and the whispered sweet nothings of a blind justice misquoting hammer: "u can't touch this." Gavel slams

No courtroom sketches for grieving families, whose taxes paid for the casualty, but even if there was some watercolors to help reflect and breathe, there's still the deed, and paid killers roam free. can't they see? Cuz in my feed

It's all a blur they're like "Well it's a tough job.  
And they got a 7 figure settlement!"  
"You got paid days off!"  
"What more do you want?"  
"Not this!"



[Vyle:]

Community on outreach placards like there's no resolve/  
Spokesperson camera statement jaded, we know the botch/  
See detectives get in crevices? they know the blocks/  
Open street map hover over populous like it's overwatch

[Devin KKenney:]

It's all a blur they're like "Well it's a tough job.  
And they got a 7 figure settlement!"  
"You got paid days off!"  
"What more do you want?"  
"Not this!  
Not this!  
Not this!  
Not this!  
Not this!  
Not this!  
Not this!  
Not this!  
... no."

# Nothing, Something, Everything, Anything

## Amalle Dublon & Constantina Zavitsanos

To be pending, waiting, wading, held up, stuck, is to depend. From this comes our erotic capacity to droop heavy and seize up, to be let down or let go. From it also comes the other sense of dependency as causality and derivation.<sup>1</sup>

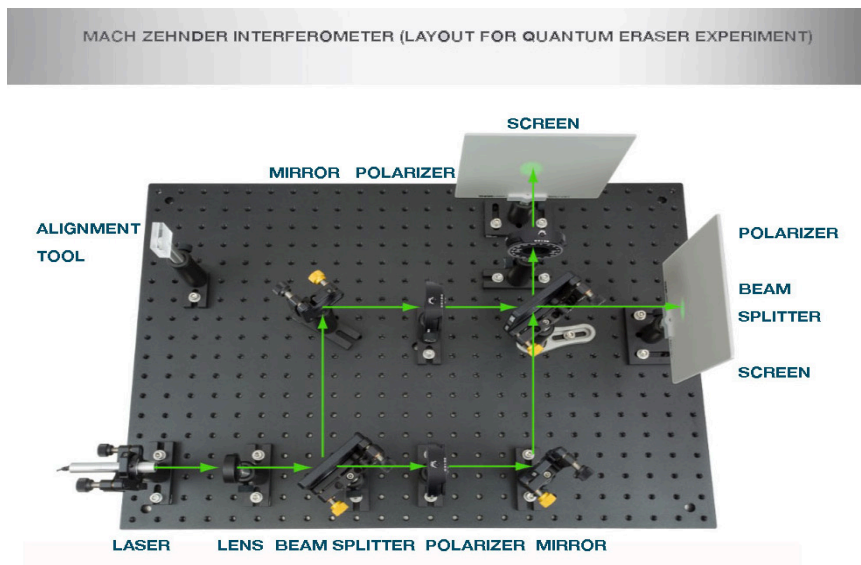
Quantum entanglement refers to pairs or groups of particles for which the properties of each cannot be described independently of the others. Even when they are really far away from one another, these particles must be apprehended as a system.

The Double Slit experiment of 1927 demonstrated wave-particle duality. Light, when beamed through two slits, formed a ripply interference pattern on the surface of a wall, acting as a wave. However, when scientists tried to detect which of the two slits the photons passed through, the wave function was “collapsed.” There was no interference pattern, and instead, the light formed two clumps on the wall. The double slit experiment seemed to show that when particles’ properties were observed (or measured), they were determinate. Yet when they were not observed they existed as a wave of probability, a phenomenon that could not be explained by classical physics. Until it is measured, the photon exists in multiple mutually exclusive states at once, a phenomenon known as superposition. It moves through both and neither of the slits at the same time.

The Quantum Eraser experiment of 1999 responded to this problem of observation by employing entangled pairs of particles. One photon in

1. Park McArthur and Constantina Zavitsanos, “The Guild of the Brave Poor Things,” in *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, ed. Johanna Burton, Reina Gossett, and Eric Stanley (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press and New Museum, 2017), 352.

the pair heads through the double slits and toward the screen as usual, arriving first. Its entangled partner, meanwhile, is diverted towards a detector, landing a few nanoseconds later. Scientists found that even though they were not directly measuring the photons that went through the slits, and even though the measurements took place after the event being measured, nonetheless their observation “collapsed” the wave function. The quantum eraser thus seems to suggest that measurements made in the present can affect events occurring in the past (although this implication is now disputed in various ways).



A Mach-Zehnder Interferometer arranged in a demonstration of the Quantum Eraser.

Consequently, certain questions have emerged regarding whether the act of measurement itself may also be entangled. Here the notion of the frame and an observer’s position (and superposition) within it is in play. Is a ruler not also described by that which it measures? Does measurement produce or reveal entanglement? Is measurement entanglement? Does entanglement measure the very notion of is?

Observation compresses and fixes the properties it touches. The position of a particle is only a probability until it is observed, and the readings of the detectors (the measurements by the observers) are themselves also only probabilities until they are observed. But it’s not that these particles

somehow refuse to be measured. Rather, it's their very susceptibility to observational capture, their responsiveness to it, that frustrates an idea of observation as separability. In its simultaneous susceptibility and resistance to regimes of evidence, this operation has a relation to cinema as well as diagnostic pathology and criminology. The mugshot and the medical photograph, whether by Galton or Charcot, were always literally or implicitly composite images, interfering with themselves and what they sought to measure, despite themselves. Developed alongside racial and diagnostic categories, they were intended to be used predictively, as (photographic) capture for (juridical and epistemological) capture. But the crowd or cloud (dis)appears in every photographic instance, in every categorical frame.

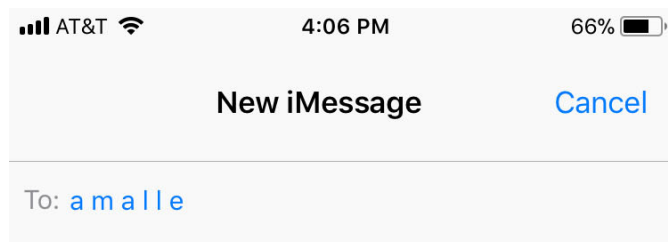
In 2014, physicists at the University of Vienna were able to take photographs of objects using light that had not touched or interacted with the objects, but which was entangled with other light that had. The physicists suggested that this new quantum imaging technique, which can be performed in low lighting, could be used for medical imaging.

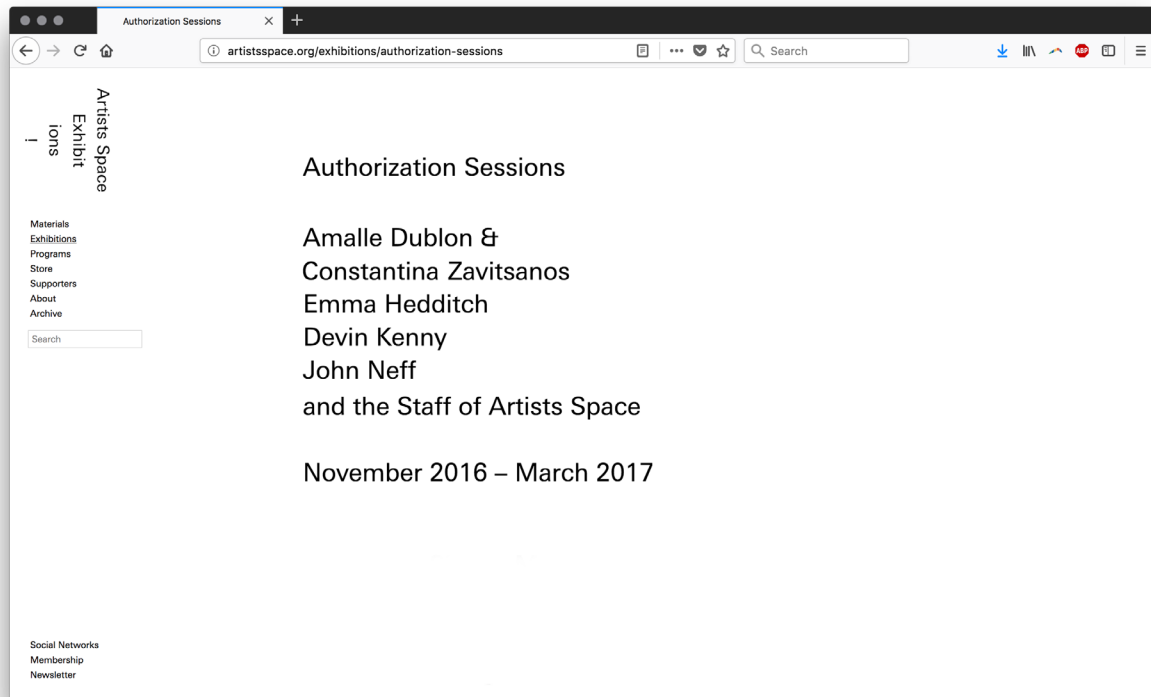
Apotropaic magic is also a practice that responds to observer-dependent phenomena -- the evil eye, which in apprehending something with jealousy or admiration, influences it. The diagnosis and removal of the evil eye is sometimes done with drops of oil moving atop water, like a large-scale analogy of de Broglie's pilot waves, which (roughly) resolved wave-particle duality by imagining particles riding on, and guided by, a field of waves.

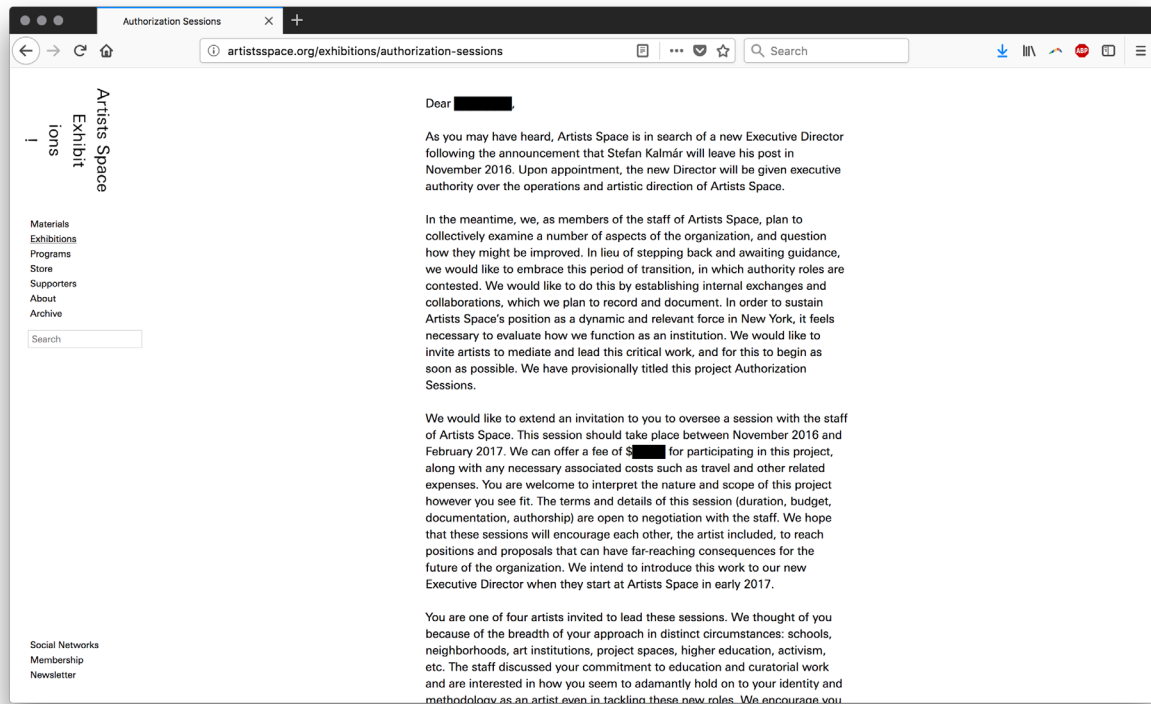
A frame consists of axes and clocks. More than space, it is time that is curved. To say this is to say that direction itself is irrelevant, that only the touch or feel of things among things can be said to travel, that time is an artifact of causality, that sequence as sequins shape our long distance limbing.

Another name for causality is dependency: to come from, or be given to, to wait for, or follow after, or be conditioned by. Dependency is embedded in the concept of entanglement as well: "In our condition we don't want to be alone."<sup>2</sup>

2 "In my condition, I don't want to be alone." SWV, "Weak," *It's About Time* (RCA, 1992)







Screen captures of exhibition webpage for *Authorization Sessions*. Accessed February 9, 2018.

# Roundtable (Excerpts)

Friday, March 10, 2017

...

– But that's not specific to Artists Space. That's like every kind of art thing that I know of. You get some weird email that's either like... you know what I mean? They're like, we're interested in you for this! And you're like, who are you?

– They're like, can we talk? And we're like, what are we agreeing to?

– Yeah, are we not talking right now?

– Not necessarily suspicious or something, but it's different from academia, where it's like, do you want to be a respondent to this thing?

– Yeah, there was no given form, which was cool. I had fun finding that form. I wasn't ever sure if I was supposed to do anything. But I never do anything (laughter).

– Did you feel like the form you ended up using was one that you were familiar with from previous projects?

– Yes and no. I was never really sure if I would think of it as an art project or something. But I decided to just, like, embrace it that way. But all I really wanted to do was like, kind of what you were saying, like with the efficiency question. I was like, what's your mission statement? What are you trying to be? What do you want to be? What do you think you are? What are your positions and roles? And then I did look at their chart, right. I did look at their chart and I talked on a very simplistic level about what's called the \_\_\_ axis, for them, which was Capricorn, Cancer... it doesn't



matter, but it was just about care and infrastructure. And I was like, listen, you know, those are the two things that are kind of in constant need of balance. Like the care for the space, the care for that you provide to the art community. I was just trying to open that up. So what Amalle and I decided to do, we just called it Available Space. We posted on Craigslist that we got 4,000 square feet of available space if anybody wants to use it. I could show you. I could read you the call or whatever. We were trying to think of something that's almost like, in the cut of curation, or the cutting out of curation. Like, not trying to think about what kind of projects could bring visibility to the space, but what kind of visibility the space could bring to other people.

...

– We were trying to do an inquiry cycle ... then, after the third Skype call, because I live in Chicago, they were like, "This is interesting but not that interesting. What are you gonna do?"

– Did you find that there was resistance to it because it may have required a degree of a certain kind of rigor on their part, which is close to things that they already do, but actually much deeper?

– Part of it, I think, was purely the practical—concerning time. Having time to do the work properly, just like psychoanalysis requires sustained, regular effort. But part of it is that there's... if you're running an inquiry cycle, the student has to be comfortable with uncertainty, because you're trying to figure out what your assignment is going to be rather than fulfilling a given assignment. There's an uncertainty in that process, and you have to be comfortable in that uncertainty. It's probably different from the kind of uncertainty of being a curator, where there's an end goal, or the interpretation is directed by a theory.

– It's interesting because it's so speculative. The initial call is so speculative.

– Exactly.

– But then there's a sense of, okay, at a certain point, you as the artist or the person in the position of artist have to take on that speculation and make it into a thing.

– Right. We have to commodify it or objectify it.

...

– It's cool to talk about this because I feel like, for me, I have a lot of anxiety about the future of the space. I've grown very attached to the space in a certain way ... I guess I tried to be thinking about, not just Artists Space, but also the kind of crisis of trying to be an artist and trying to support other artists' work in New York.

– Which you do.

– Yeah, so my interest is in the cooperative model, and how to think about Artists Space detaching from reliance on wealthy elites for its support and trying to think how to both democratize it financially and, in terms of all the things that you guys have talked about, in terms of how to sort of change the relationships of access and territory and that kind of programming. We held six or seven study groups that were every Monday, 5 - 7 p.m. All the staff from Artists Space attended, and a few others. The idea was just to really research and explore the history of cooperative movements. We used two main books. One was published by a cooperative in Pittsburgh called the East End Food Co-op ... They actually created a curriculum for studying cooperatives. Like a history and philosophy and the current... how cooperative movements are positioned currently within intentional communities. And then another book by Jessica Gordon, which is a history of African-American cooperatives. We used texts from both of those throughout the course. Then at a certain point it was clear that trying to apply those things to art institutions had its limits. Then we started to explore where attempts had been made to cooperatize art institutions, or the filmmaker's co-op, or Orchard Gallery. Everything was very light ... but for me, it's a pretty radical proposition. I felt it got more and more critical as... also as we were going through this period of time when they're in this kind of limbo, but also what's happening politically, like an overdependence on wealth was compromising too many people.

...

(crosstalk)

– This is the thing, when you talk about distribution and dependency... You're talking about getting away from the dependency on financial wealth from a bunch of people, but you're also talking about a new kind of dependency... It's not really about becoming independent, it's precisely about becoming more dependent, but asking what means...are we gonna be one anothers' means without end? When you ask a question of futurity, you're asking a question of telos. So, without end, I think would be what you're asking. How can we lean on one another, create systems like this, that might involve bureaucratic conditions without having to presuppose the ones on racial global capital that are already dictating how this goes? Like the Black Panthers did.

...

– I tried to just propose the wildest, best ideas I could think of that are related to things I thought were interesting. You were talking about *Decolonize This Place*. I thought the fact that they did that was really interesting and impactful. But I was also like, bummer that it could only exist for this period of time. It was a period of time that was super, super charged. I was like, what if you had a residency where activist groups could just be here and use it as meeting space? I was like, cool, y'all did available space. That makes perfect sense. There's a lot of space.

...

# Two Proposals for Artists Space

Devin Kenny

## 1. Unaffiliated Artists File Mesh Network

To structure my participation in *Authorization Sessions*, I first organized a meeting with the staff of Artists Space that reflected on and grappled with the premise of the project itself. In this we examined Andrea Fraser and Helmut Draxler's "How to Provide an Artistic Service: An Introduction" (1994) as a possible conceptual forerunner. We decided that it would be helpful for each member of the administrative team to delineate their individual responsibilities in the organization. These proved to be unique as well as overlapping.

Subsequently, several meetings were organized to discuss ways in which the institution as it currently stands could be made to operate better. One of these meetings took the form of an evening workshop led by RB, an artist and a member of NYC Mesh. NYC Mesh is a community-owned decentralized network with wifi router "nodes" spread throughout New York City, which cooperatively disperse data without relying upon a conventional internet service provider or central server. From this emerged the idea of updating Artists Space's Unaffiliated Artists File as a mesh network.

Artists Space was founded in 1972 to support artists living and working in New York. From its inception it privileged the exchange of artistic ideas and information outside of commercial formats. As well as participate in exhibitions and programs, from 1974 artists could submit work to the Unaffiliated Artists File, a file of artists in New York State who were not represented by commercial or cooperative galleries. The File informed the selection process of Artists Space exhibitions, and was utilized by dealers, curators and collectors. To be represented in the File, artists would submit

slides of their work, along with a resumé bearing a current New York State address and telephone number, and other descriptive materials. Each slide would be labeled with the artist's name, the work's title, the medium, the date, and an indication of top and front. Artists were reminded that: "it is a good idea to update the material in your file periodically."

As an art student in New York in the mid-2000s, I became aware of the Artists File. By the time I graduated it was no longer active. Following the migration of the Artists File to a digital apparatus, it exists in two ways: as an online artist registry at [local-artists.org](http://local-artists.org), and as a physical archive of thousands of folders, slides, and printed documents in storage at The Museum of Modern Art Archives.

As a way of renewing Artists Space's commitment to artists, in line with its stated mission, I propose that the Artists File be renewed in the form of a mesh network, accessible to those who visit the physical site of Artists Space. This structure would allow researchers, visitors, and employees alike to have access, without risk of overwhelming the network with high traffic. It would also have a social function in the space, adding an element of public engagement beyond those offered by the formats of exhibition and programming.

With the aide of a mesh network, the legacy of the archive room at Artists Space (a room housing computers, microfilm viewers, etc.) can be updated and, with a new web interface, many aspects of the institution's digital footprint can be integrated. Through a mesh network (which has the benefit of lessening on site dead zones, where the connection is weak, while providing faster connections with greater network traffic) the artist registry could be reborn. Additionally, it would encourage an open source approach within a non-hierarchical architecture, which is in dialogue with the lineage started by Trudie Grace and Irving Sandler in forming an institution that puts the work and concerns of artists at the forefront.

Alongside reconsidering the digital presentation of the archival Unaffiliated Artists File, Artists Space should institute a program that integrates the artist registry into curatorial plans. This could take the form of an annual or bi-annual exhibition that draws from the artist registry, selected by an outside or internal curator.



The Unaffiliated Artists File at Artists Space, c. 1986

Finally, Artists Space should make a concerted effort to digitize and organize the physical files of the artist registry for use by scholars, critics, curators, artists, and supporters of the arts—facilitating historical research into the work of underrepresented artists and providing a platform for new and emerging voices.

## 2. Art & Activism Residency Program

I propose that Artists Space further solidifies itself as an institution engaged with critically thinking cultural producers by creating a program that would function as a residency for artist/activist organizations in the New York City area.

The landscape of the city has changed drastically, both economically and physically, in the last decade, and staggeringly so by comparison to when Artists Space began. Artists have directly and indirectly contributed to these changes, sometimes to the rancor of long-established communities. In the 2016 exhibition *Decolonize This Place*, a wide array of performances, meetings, lectures, and other events turned 55 Walker Street into a hub for local grassroots organizers dealing with several urgent political issues, including Indigenous struggle, Black liberation and resistance to state-sponsored anti-Black violence, a free Palestine, de-gentrification, and the figure of the global wage worker. Following the large impact of this program in a short period of time, it behooves an organization such as Artists Space to continue to support this work—albeit in a more sustainable, long-term manner. This support could take the form of a residency program where an organization working at an intersection of art and activism would be able to launch a new project or obtain much-needed resources to continue a project already underway. Alternatively, it could involve providing available space and resources to several organizations to use as meeting space on a regular basis, as has been offered to groups such as Working Artists for the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.) in the past.

As state support for public programs continues to shrink, and federal impedance into the matters of “sanctuary cities” makes its impact, independent cultural organizations have a vital role to play in stepping in and providing space for grassroots and community-oriented productive work.



Coop Fund is an experimental funding platform that accumulates financial resources through member subscriptions and redistributes funds through a cooperative decision making process. Current members as of January 2018 are Elsa Brown, Emma Hedditch and Lydia Okrent.

Amalle Dublon received a PhD from Duke University's Program in Literature, with a Certificate in Feminist Studies. She teaches at the New School and NYU. An essay on Ultra-red and TLC's 1990s albums will appear in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, and one on gossip and girl talk in recent artwork is forthcoming from *TDR: The Drama Review*, both in 2018.

Devin Kenny is an interdisciplinary artist, writer, musician, and independent curator. He has collaborated with various art and music venues in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, and elsewhere, including Recess, Het Roode Bioscoop, REDCAT, MoMA PS1, Freak City, and Santos Party House. A graduate of Cooper Union, he received his MFA in 2013 from the New Genres department at UCLA and is an alum of the Whitney Independent Study Program.

John Neff makes artworks, organizes exhibitions, and works as a teaching artist. He serves as a curatorial board member at Chicago's Iceberg Projects, co-director of the Ravenswood Elementary School Curatorial Practice Program, and a faculty member at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Low-Residency MFA Program.

Constantina Zavitsanos works in sculpture, performance, text, and sound. Zavitsanos has exhibited at the New Museum and the Hessel Museum of Art in New York; Arika Episode 7 in Glasgow, Scotland; and Wysing Arts Centre in Cambridge, England. With Park McArthur, they co-authored the texts "Other Forms of Conviviality" in the journal *Women and Performance* (2013), and "The Guild of the Brave Poor Things" in *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility* (2017).



★ **4000ft<sup>2</sup> - AVAILABLE SPACE (TriBeCa)**

image 1 of 2

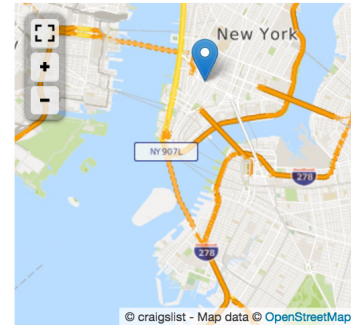


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No holes in walls. Cannot paint walls. Cannot touch projection wall with anything other than light. Cannot damage the space. Must remove all trash when you leave. No smoking inside; clean up cigarette butts outside. No illegal activity. Don't hurt nobody who doesn't specifically request and agree to it and even then don't hurt them much. Leave the space as you found it. Have fun.

FREE (no cost), but must sign up. First come, first serve. Contact Tina at [availablespacetribeca@gmail.com](mailto:availablespacetribeca@gmail.com)

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# Artists Space

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Amalle Dublon &  
Constantina Zavitsanos  
Devin Kenny  
John Neff

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2018

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## Programs

Monday, February 19, 7 p.m.  
Quantum Entanglement:  
Producing Entangled Photon Pairs  
Shanni Prutchi, Lindsey Andrews  
Talk

Wednesday, March 7, 7 p.m.  
Code is LAWL: Diversifying the  
Crypto Demographic  
Workshop

Friday, March 9, 7 p.m.  
Not This  
Devin Kenny  
Performance

Thursday, March 22, 7 p.m.  
What Are Our Questions?  
Justin Allen, Troizel Carr,  
Bleue Liverpool  
Performances

Thursday, March 29, 7 p.m.  
Fag, Stag, or Drag?  
John Neff, Frederick Weston  
Conversation

## Coop Fund Workshops

Wednesday, February 14, 7 p.m.  
Membership

Wednesday, February 28, 7 p.m.  
Governance

Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m.  
Proposals

Wednesday, March 28, 7 p.m.  
Future Plans

Each workshop will provide a basic introduction to Coop Fund. Capacity limited to twenty participants. RSVP to attend at [rsvp@artistsspace.org](mailto:rsvp@artistsspace.org).

## NYC Books Through Bars

Softcover, non spiral-bound books on drawing techniques, as well as art books with pictures of landscapes, portraits, and other kinds of African, Mayan, Aztec, Pre-Columbian, and Indigenous art, are being collected through the duration of this exhibition. These books will be given to NYC Books Through Bars to be sent to incarcerated people across the nation. Please talk to a member of staff to donate or for more information.