

## The Role of Art and Space in Conscientization

Is this the key topic of discussion? or are we wanting to create a reference point to how our work/art/research stands in relation to those things + outline political aspects/perspectives of our practice?

The first task of our critique of proletarian art is to establish its boundaries, to clearly define its framework so that it does not become diluted in the surrounding cultural environment—to be sure that it does not mix with the art of the old world. That task is not as simple as it might seem—mistakes and confusion of this type are still constantly observed. - Alexander Bogdanov, Art and the Working Class (1)

This article aims to question what the purpose of art practices are and what they can do in ways of supporting liberation, solidarity and emancipation. Whilst taking into account the context of mine and Ellie Towers' own practice, it will draw on quotes from various theoreticians and revolutionaries who themselves have pondered upon the actions required of us to supersede our historical and political conditions. It aims to interrogate space, how we inhabit and create it, as a tool by which to provoke thought and consciousness which threatens the legitimacy of established imperialist narratives in the hope that it generates new ways in which the working-class perceive the world we inhabit.

An artist's role is defined by their ability to conceive and create alternate realities that in some way reflect or comment on our current living. Whether this be through identifying with and embodying certain ideological threads that are prevalent in society, or through the act of fictioning, seeking to subvert these threads, these narratives, in such a way that battles against the alienation resulting from the neoliberal ideal of individuation. Situating itself in various environments and landscapes defined by the boundaries of open calls and exhibition space, mine and Ellie's practice wraps itself in the restrictions of place - taking and understanding the forms of the 'given' we then pack it with personal reflections, memories, beliefs; taking into account the condition of its political-historical-geographical context and regurgitating something which digests all of these elements into its own idiosyncratic form.

It is essential to reject, what Alexandre Kojève terms, the 'given' reality we find ourselves situated in, to do violence to passivity which accepts having to cope with oppressive conditions. To work with oneself and others consciousness to educate and preposit the conditions for revolutionary newness, to respond to concrete reality and limit-situations as challenges to make mistakes with, learn from and change thinking in its response structure. To reclaim ownership of personal and political histories, to dissect the best out of it as our heritage and repurpose it as a tool with which to build our own realities and cultures. But how can art help to achieve this? Or at least provide some notion of the direction in which to move forward?

In the creation of our exhibition, Floor Plan, at Birkenhead-based Convenience Gallery, me and Ellie wanted to address these questions. Looking at places we had inhabited through our lifetimes we began to piece together a kind-of photographic archive which pivoted around spaces that had somehow had influence on how we thought whilst growing up. Both of us spent our childhoods in small, local towns, these mementos reflected this - our initial drawings were occupied by windows from past relatives, flag poles stood outside colleges, corner shop shutters - places where often some sense of community was felt.

Expanded discussion on importance of community + how art can create those + discussion inside of them.

perhaps ought to be a discussion on the possibilities

Essay could act as an interrogation into how/if should 'Art' or specifically our work does this, or if it just stands in relation to us + our politics + if that is fulfilling a fulfiling a major role

Art on the what or our Art?

good out lining important & highlights art doesn't just have one role a.m.g area of discussion or ultimate selfish importance

grandiose? should an aim to achieve such importance of action  
highs or should be highlighted?

good opener

discr:ptor

re-phrase

If our art is aimed towards changing WC perception then does our work truly reach to do that? Art spaces + monetary contributions? Does digital presentation of art aid this?

I believe this ought to be an outline of our beliefs + how this relates to what we produce, not be about directly making world view changing claims.

At some point we could provide a version of our work in progress document written during Floor Plan which includes these things + could provide an insight into the wings + roots of imagery

Inspired by this I began narrating memories, attempting to map out locations and their connections to things that had happened, and how often they reflected an attitude or attribute that had built up in myself and was now a part of my personality. Taking apart my late great grandmother's furniture, breaking a biscuit jar and hiding it in next door's garden, afternoons spent in other peoples homes whilst my nan cleaned them. Ellie took these fragments and wove them into stories, stories which were then themselves embedded within the structure of the installation

This paragraph feels like a total tone shift from previous + needs to move onto discussions or relevant links next for it to make sense.

After a week of sifting, we gathered together these leftover dredges and conceived of a structure which could sit in physical space and contain them. We began to explore the connection between setting and action, dividing the floor into eight segments

At this point the project became centred around how different spaces dictated behaviour and activity

is what we are saying that our personal memories/experience is relevant to

The floor was populated with kitchen tiles and warped floorboards

dissecting + changing perspectives? or are they more parallels links + catalysts to raising discussion?

Floor Plan was an attempt to actualise a tangible visual representative of the way childhood memories and activities manifest themselves in the retrospective position of the present. Rooted in the idea of 'weekends' spent as a child, it grew into something which attempted to reclaim lost places and pivotal events by pushing them into a shape that subverted the absurd, the concrete material and the half-remembered into implicative-fiction and positive productivity. It was the environmental stand-in of the challenging and questioning of how we choose to perceive and recontextualise the things done to and through us, and what we have brought forward into our contemporary experience.

used this descriptor previously in our show  
needs reworking but a good descriptor

Active interactability and audience engagement - as opposed to art seen as precious object away from oneself, commodification

where are we having these discussions + building these communities?

is it at our shows inside our works during workshop, implied visually, with our peers with others, inside art institutions, on the streets, on instagram or in essays like this?