

## The Project at Work

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In this text I would like to reflect on the difference between how *the project actually enters into the work of art work in art* and *the project as the prevailing mode of production of artistic work*. The project enters art as a naming for open, processual and interdisciplinary artistic practices that are supposed to focus on the material processes of the present – on the inherent temporality of the duration of life that is disappearing from today's project work. Project work is therefore a means through which art is supposed to come close to life and open itself to the heterogeneous processes of life, which are in turn open towards the future that is yet to come. Simon Bayly's excellent essay *The End of the Project* follows the genealogy of the appearance of the word 'project' in art; one of the most interesting works presented is the study by Johnnie Gratton and Mark Sheringham on French contemporary art.<sup>1</sup> The two authors mention the work 'project' as a paradigm of visual culture from the beginnings of modernism, with the word especially referring to methods of working in interdisciplinary artistic practices. The use of this word can be found in performative, situational, sustainable and processual works – those foregrounding the experimental and open orientation of artistic work. The word 'project' should therefore primarily describe a processual, contingent and open practice, which cannot be planned or controlled and also entails the possibility of ending in a disaster, without a result or in something completely different and unexpected.<sup>2</sup> The term 'project' began to be used in the arts as a description of highly heterogeneous practices that entail collaboration with other authors, the blurring of the boundaries between art and life, and a dehierarchisation of ways of working. It has been part of artistic production from at least the 1960s onwards. Projects seemingly establish a new relationship with the present because their relationship with the present is explorational, experimental and considerably more playful; despite all these new forms of project-based work, however, projects do share a certain new attitude towards time. According to Gratton and Sheringham, the attitude to time is "rooted in the

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<sup>1</sup> Simon Bayly, "The End of the Project: Futurity in the Culture of Catastrophe", *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 2, 18, (2013).

<sup>2</sup> This unfinished nature is present in the project in a very interesting way. Bayly gives the example of a contemporary scientist working in the field of nanotechnology, robotics or artificial intelligence. The essential part of his work is that the project should not end in accordance with the predictions in the project proposal: the success of the project is measured in terms of whether the results actually exceed the expectations; artificial intelligence must therefore do precisely what we do not expect it to.

etymological and indelible make-up of the term 'project' ... temporal projection into an as yet unrealized and open future is an indispensable characteristic of anything regarded or designated as a 'project'... An 'art' of the project might suggest engagement in a process that not only takes time but offers creative ways of using, experiencing, structuring and reappropriating time, and of exploring the effects of time as change and *durée* [duration]."<sup>3</sup>

The present is open in terms of its relationship with what is still to come, which makes the project a contradictory temporal constellation. The project opens up the present in terms of experimentation with the present in terms of change and duration; simultaneously however, this openness into the present is limited by the future – by what is not yet realised and still lies ahead. According to Bayly, the project always contains a proposition of the future, which is inseparable from the present. In my opinion, this is also where we need to search for the core of modernist approaches, despite their obsession with the present and the reduction of historical avantgardistic utopias to the material procedures of the production of artistic work itself, this modernist approach is still inspired by the historical avant-gardes and the central utopian project of the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century: the need to change the present. In this sense, the genealogy presented by Gratton and Sheringham is somewhat off as the project began to become art through historical avant-gardes, with the basic objective of changing the present in the name of the future. As we know, the aim of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was to profoundly change the world; it was forever striving for a special temporality – that of the horizon, which can never actually be reached.<sup>4</sup>

There is then something else paradoxical in nature and interesting for our analysis that takes place in this way of working; it is closely linked to temporal proposals and the projection of the future still to come. In the present, *we actually run out of time*, we do not have any. It is no coincidence that our daily 'I do not have time' paradigm is so connected with the organisation of time, time management and work in the future. Projective temporality strengthens work in the future still to come while taking time away from the

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<sup>3</sup> Johnnie Gratton, Michael Sheringham (Eds.), *The Art of the Project*, Oxford: Berg Hahn Books, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> This is why the politics of time can be one of essential resistance dimensions of art; its resistance to the growing number of projects shows a completely different understanding of production and consumption. A considerable number of artistic works employing a different time politics has also been created in Slovenia; they make strong references to the avant-garde utopias of the future. One of these works is definitely *Noordung* by the director Dragan Živadinov, characterized by a different project logic with a sustainable attitude towards time. *Noordung* does not take place as the transformation of one work into another, but as a holistic concept of the future, which cannot be implemented in any other way than by means of a radical re-valuation of the duration of artistic work. Paradoxically, this duration restores artistic work to the present, leaving material traces on the work itself. There is another thing in this project that separates it from projective temporality: this project is not marked by catastrophe but predominantly by a utopian affirmation of the future, in which the deadline is not only a work amendment, but a vision of life.

present – time which Henri Bergson describes as duration. The more possibilities the project opens for the future, the more time gets sucked out of the present. The present just does not seem to last. The more it is possible to project, the less time we have available for duration and persistence, for establishing, enabling and building social, political and communal relationships (which are not just spatial but chiefly temporal relationships). This intriguing relationship the project has with time has several consequences for understanding our subjectivity. As the basic production model, the project is interesting because it provides an insight into the fact that, today, the way of working includes all the areas of our lives; the project no longer knows a border between professional and personal investment – in other words, between life and work. The project not only entails work, but also self-realisation, on the level of one's life and sometimes deeply personal. The nature of this self-realisation is contradictory, however. We work so much that we never again have time for ourselves and others; due to the amount of work and the intensity of our self-realisation, we can actually burn out in life.

It is therefore essential to make a theoretical distinction between work and the project. This distinction should be understood as one of the contemporary forms of the division of labour. Today, the project is the prevailing form we work in; however, it expels any present-oriented form of work. Work and the project can be differentiated through an understanding of temporality: no matter how much they may experiment with the present, all projects are projections and steps into the future, entailing a promise of the future and the possibility of what is still to come.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, we can understand work primarily as the preservation and maintenance of the present or a life balance that is preserved through a continuous consumption of human powers. Such understanding closely connects work with the practice of life and its consumption. It contains no other promise but that of having to maintain and preserve life. Life namely tends towards entropy, contingency and decomposure; this makes work a self-preserving aimless activity; work is the temporal activity of duration. This duration is only possible because work is the way of the community; its collective and community-based character has already been discussed by Marx.<sup>6</sup> Work is not just an inevitable human relationship with nature or a passively shared state; it places us into a relationship with other people: "to work is to work in relation to others."<sup>7</sup> Common work, however, is also a paradoxical work without properties, which

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<sup>5</sup> The word 'project' comes from the Latin word 'proiectum', which means 'before an action'.

<sup>6</sup> This is discussed by Marx in *Capital* in connection with the 'species-essence' (Gattungswesen) of the human being; work is connected with the collective condition of existence.

<sup>7</sup> Jason Read, "The Production of Subjectivity: From Transindividuality to the Commons", *New Formations*:

makes it similar to autonomous work, discussed by André Gorz. Gorz places work without properties in opposition with productive work; common work is not 'collective work' or operative work with a common goal, but something that places us into a relationship because it does not have any aims or properties – its essence is that of preserving life in an anarchic manner.<sup>8</sup> In a short essay, Boyan Manchev elaborates on Gorz's understanding of life without properties, linking it with a special kind of temporality – that of time of performance which is in contrast with performance time. In doing so, Manchev wishes to demonstrate a bizarre shift in the understanding of contemporary work, which springs from "the perverse understanding of artistic work as a sort of a leisure experience, with no sign of constraint, exploitation, physical effort, sensible experience of matter."<sup>9</sup> The future-related promises constantly deceive us that everything we do in a project is a leisurely experience in which we experiment with our lives and sociality for a promise in the future. The project therefore belongs to the exploitation of common work, to the commodification of the common, where sociability itself is in the core of exploitation.

For this reason, many experimental and performative artistic practices of the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Allan Kaprow, the Slovenian group OHO, the time paintings by Roman Opalka, avant-garde theatres) explored the current production procedures and opened up artistic work to work procedures. This was a kind of rebellion against the future dimension; at the same time however, these practices have an interesting relationship to the future – they entail a constant emancipatory moment that commits art to what is still to come and again opens art to the project. The reflection on artistic work and the ways in which production procedures enter and become visible within artistic work, however, can also clearly reveal the true nature of capitalised work, which becomes increasingly similar to artistic work in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We can even claim that, through its rebellion against capitalisation (of time, energies, language, forms), art radically attempts to commit to the present procedures of production and consumption while creative, cognitive and post-Fordist work takes over the utopian, future-oriented and speculative nature of art. The aforementioned type of work is committed to the creation of the future, to changes and to the revolutionisation of ways of working, and to the furthering of creativity. Such capitalised projects are bound to actualise their speculative excess, including at the expense of killing the present. In this sense, many artworks of the 1960s place the visibility of work at the

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*A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics*, 70, (2010).

<sup>8</sup> André Gorz, *Critique of Economic Reason*, London: Verso, 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Boyan Manchev, "Performance time or time of performance? The struggle for duration as struggle for the event", *Maska: Projective Temporality*, 149-150, XXVII (2012), pp. 118-121.

forefront; in the attempt to somehow distance themselves from the exploitation of human abilities, they focus upon production (of the body, materials, temporality, space). This exploitation, however, is also deeply ingrained in the production of art, especially through the investment of phantasms into the artist's life, as discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>10</sup>

Numerous artistic practices generated as unpredictable sums of coincidences, maintained material identities, duration etc. can be read from the perspective of insistence on the preservation of the presence of work. We could even say that contemporary production can be considerably better analysed not so much in terms of the division between material and non-material work (lately, this division has even been criticised by its advocates)<sup>11</sup>, but in terms of the temporality of work and the differences that this temporality establishes between work and the project. With the aid of Henri Lefebvre, Simon Bayly deals with the difference between continuous everyday work and project work, the aim of which is always to change the existing state of things: "what might be a project for, say, the new museum's architect, is merely a temporary work place for the electrician wiring the fire alarm system."<sup>12</sup> According to Bayly, this difference helps us understand that 'life in a project' is actually a subjective and existential state, but that it is today becoming a problematic prevailing and universal tendency in the understanding of contemporary work and production. This 'life in a project' also helps us understand the speculative investment of contemporary capital into the life of the artist, where the artist's work is viewed as an incessant changing of the present, a progressive actualisation of life potentialities and a glance into the future that takes place through numerous self-evaluations and proposals yet to come. However, this speculative life is far from the preservation and daily material process of life balance; it is also radically divorced from embodied differences and space singularities, which is why numerous projects often seem the same.

The acceleration of projects and the activities of their new beginning and implementation thus make it possible for change to occur only at the moment of crisis, exhaustion or

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<sup>10</sup> The rebellion of the art of the 1960s against the capitalisation of human abilities is also discussed by Pamela M. Lee in her research on the temporality of 1960s art. The author focusses on the obsession with time in the art of the 1960s in order to shed light on various temporal politics of art and stresses the need to a different understanding of the present. Cf. Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia, On Time in the Art of the 1960s*, Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> The problems of this difference are also discussed by Maurizio Lazzarato himself, who actually launched the notion of non-material work in the 1990s. Cf. Maurizio Lazzarato, "Conversation with Maurizio Lazzarato, Exhausting Immaterial Labour in Performance", *Le Journal des Laboratoires and TKH*, 17, (October 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Simon Bayly, "The End of the Project: Futurity in the Culture of Catastrophe", *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 18, 2, (2013).

retreat. This kind of movement towards the completion and consummation of the proposal is problematic because we do not actually talk about chronological temporality (where one thing follows another), about the narrative (utopian, dystopian etc.) or of progress, but rather of the balance between the future and the present that projects what is still to come: the project is therefore closer to messianic temporality. This kind of balance, which actually 'freezes' time into a multitude of amendments, has destructive consequences for subjectivity and the communities within which artistic proposals are created. The artist is increasingly distant from work contexts, which do not seem not to have any major differences between their particular articulations. Differences between creative communities become invisible, disabling their political power, which is always based on the particularity of the artistic gesture. The project therefore becomes the ultimate horizon of experience and it is not unusual that another frequently used word in cultural and creative production also refers to the dynamic of this temporality: the word I have in mind, of course, is *deadline*. At the end of the project, there is this 'line of death'; it is a moment of pure fulfilment, the final consumption of creative life without an experience that would follow it. To put it another way: the project is a promise in the future, but it can only be realised as a catastrophe; one namely needs to cross the line of death in order to be able to implement the project. This tension, however, is somewhat alleviated by the fact that life goes on regardless of that line because so many other projects remain to be finished; in this way, the horizon only moves away a little when we wish to touch it. In this way, the future is radically closed in its endless possibilities, and the possibility of experimenting with the present is disabled. In project temporality, the possibility of the future is actually in balance with the current power relations. These current power relations give us the illusion that it is possible to predict the unpredictable; the future therefore seems increasingly calculated. In this sense, project temporality is not directly connected to the time structure of debt. The time structure of debt is also discussed by Lazzarato; he states that it is no coincidence that debt has traditionally been considered as stealing time. The system of debt must neutralise time; it is necessary to prevent any kind of potentially deviant behaviour on the part of the debtor. The economy of debt is therefore the economy of time and subjectivization in a very special way; the balance with the future can only be achieved in balance with what already exists.<sup>13</sup>

The temporality of the project is therefore contradictory. The project works as a fatal openness, full of libidinal possibilities of what is still to come but, at the same time,

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<sup>13</sup> Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man*, New York: Semiotext(e), 2012.

including the line of death. The project can therefore be analysed as *eros* and *thanatos* together. It is this catastrophic dimension, the incessant exhaustion of life forces and the closeness of death, however, that also mark today's affective feeling of work which consequently arises from the exploiting of the human powers and potentials.<sup>14</sup> In project work, the future dimension of work is catastrophic; every attempt to change the present in relation to the future brings calamity and disaster and is inevitably connected to failure. The projective attitude to the present is marked by risk and uncertainty; this argument is quite in line with Lefebvre's thinking about work (which was very close to the critique of project work as early as the 1960s): "No matter how close it gets to success, every endeavour is destined to fail in the end... Every totalisation which aspires to achieve totality collapses, but only after it has been explicit about what it considers its inherent virtualities to be. When it makes the illusory, outrageous, and self-totalizing claim that it is a world on the human (and thus finite) scale, the negative (limitation, finiteness) this 'world' has always borne within itself begins eating it away, refuting it, dismantling it, and finally brings it tumbling down. Only when a totality has been achieved does it become apparent that it is not a totality at all."<sup>15</sup> Today, we work incessantly in order to open up the future through work; we experiment with our own lives and the lives of others. The more we work, however, the stronger our feeling that we do not control work but that work controls us. Project work is therefore connected to a constant catastrophic feeling that, as a totality with which we are supposed to redo our lives (and our present), work is on the verge of collapse. Interestingly, this prevailing way of working gives a feeling (even in the case of the smallest of projects) that it transforms the whole world or at least life in general; in this manner, it even more radically influences the acceleration of duration and present time, establishing a specifically 'economizing' attitude toward life – we work responsibly for the future while the present slips through our fingers.

However, as Boris Groys points out in his essay *The Loneliness of the Project*, the project is always committed to parallel temporality or the temporal exclusion from the daily flow of life. The project is actually a temporary and sometimes also a permanent retreat from life (characteristic e.g. of religious communities as well as some artistic projects). The project

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<sup>14</sup> This new feeling also gives rise to new symptoms: burn-out, chronic fatigue syndrome and depression. For this reason, e.g. Mark Fischer places mental problems and illnesses connected with the feeling of the appropriation of any kind of authenticity, the inability to do something new and constant flexibility, at the very centre of the new style of late capitalism, which he terms capitalist realism. According to Fischer, capitalist realism demands that we yield to reality, which is plastic and capable of reconfiguration at any given moment. Cf. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, London: Zero Books, Verso, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Critique of Everyday Life, Foundations for the Sociology of Everyday*, New York – London: Verso, 2002, 183.

is therefore marked by desynchronised time; when working on a project, we are actually separated from the time as experienced by society and the community. "But somewhere beyond this general flow of time, someone has begun working on a project—writing a book, preparing an exhibition, or plotting a spectacular assassination—in the hopes that the completed project will alter the general run of things and all mankind will be bequeathed a different future: the very future, in fact, anticipated and aspired to in this project."<sup>16</sup> Groys characterizes the creation of the project as "socially sanctioned loneliness"<sup>17</sup>, desynchronised with the flow of time but required to offer something in return when it comes to an end. The loneliness discussed by Groys brings up a paradoxical image of the modern solipsist artist, a loner, potentially an "idiot",<sup>18</sup> who temporarily leaves society due to the need for a change in the life he or she is a part of. The project is capable of taking itself out of the flow of life because it is based on the hope that it will again be able to harmonise with social reality at a later point. However, this temporal harmonisation is contradictory in character because it is possible due to the change that the project is supposed to bring. For this reason, this harmonisation is always a harmonisation of something different, of something that has already taken itself out of society (regardless of whether the project is successful or not). Many loners can be found e.g. in the experiments in the second half of the 1960s – in performance art pieces and experimental events involving the audience, in which art came close to life by actually stepping out of it: it created special conditions of experience (hence the emphasis on rules, scores, scripts, etc.) which could induce change in the method of perception and the creation of aesthetic forms.<sup>19</sup> Loners, however, can also be found earlier, e.g. in the projects of the historical avant-garde – the first 'projects in art' proper, committed to a universal change of human life if not that of the universe. Groys points out the problematic character of such historical avant-garde endeavours committed to utopian universal projects with the aim of shaping a new future for everyone, but by means of hermetic language and forms that could only be communicated in self-isolation. This also makes the project a modern phenomenon whose implementation is based on exclusion and exclusivity, which gives a highly contradictory status to modernity and its yearning for

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<sup>16</sup> Boris Groys, "The Loneliness of the Project", *Going Public*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2010, 75.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, 72.

<sup>18</sup> The solipsism in choreographic practices and the role of the idiot is discussed by André Lepecki in his analysis by ASGAMA, a performance by Juan Dominguez and early performances by Bruce Nauman. Cf. André Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance, Performance and the Politics of Movement*, New York: Routledge, Champan and Hall, 2006.

<sup>19</sup> For this reason, a lot of 1960s and 1970s performance art pieces were like tests – of endurance, recognition, code cracking etc. Early happenings were based on meticulous scripts of actions. It was these meticulous protocols, however, that opened art to the project.

progress. As Groys states, the problem is that the resynchronisation with society – the aim of every successful or unsuccessful project – entails a feeling of sickness: what gets lost is the feeling of being suspended in parallel time, of belonging to excluded life "beyond the general run of things".<sup>20</sup> Today, however, this kind of socially sanctioned loneliness characterises work of any kind whatsoever. We frequently work as loners, preparing one project after another while being solipsistically isolated from the communal practice of daily life. The basic symptom of this isolation, however, is the sense of a general lack of time. This state could also be described as a contradiction of modern existence. Read terms modern existence social isolation, springing from the contemporary simultaneous exploitation of human communicative and social potentiality, the contemporary alienation of our sociality, in which social bonds become subject to private choice and market offer while our common essence is at the core of exploitation.<sup>21</sup>

Let me refer to another artistic work at this point. It can tell us a lot about the interesting symptoms of this difficult illness, the resynchronisation with life that is required in numerous contemporary artistic projects. At the beginning of his documentary video *Documentation of Selected Works 1971 – 1975*, the artist Chris Burden spends about ten minutes talking about the works that we are about to see in the film. A considerable part of this introduction (in which Burden talks in close-up, so that we are only able to see his face), focuses on how we are to watch the footage, during which we need be aware throughout that these were true events, but that what we are about to see is far from what actually happened: "I want you to ... try to remain aware that you're not seeing the actual experience."<sup>22</sup> If read in the light of our reflection on the project, Burden's address is not only interesting as a defence of the 'authentic feeling' of the live event, which cannot be captured on film, but also as a argument for this special and temporally unique social situation of the artist and the participants in the event desynchronised with reality. It is a defence of this special illness of exclusion from the order of things, which is discussed by Groys and necessarily remains after the end of the project, a defence of the idiotic loneliness that comes to a definite end when the event becomes part of social reality. Burden's address is especially interesting because this is an early documentation of artistic

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<sup>20</sup> Boris Groys, "The Loneliness of the Project", *Going Public*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2010, 75.

<sup>21</sup> Jason Read: "The Production of Subjectivity: From Transindividuality to the Commons", *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics*, 70, (July 7, 2010), 125. We could say that we actually spend our social powers as loners. This is also why it is possible to work with contemporary means of communication in utter loneliness; today, this kind of isolation is actually the most sociable.

<sup>22</sup> Chris Burden, *Documentation of Selected Works 1971–1975*, film, 35 min. Accessible at: <http://www.ubu.com/film/burden.html> (accessed January 9, 2014).

works in the field of performance art and the happening, where the division between work and documentation is still naively obvious as far as their status and understanding of reality are concerned. Burden strictly differentiates between the event and its documentation; the project is therefore still on the side of the event. As stated by Groys, however, documentation in contemporary art should be considered in close connection with the project (and, may I add, ultimately makes even the most idiotic attempts not seem idiotic). Today, the document is the basic witness to the artistic project, to the successful or unsuccessful synchronisation with reality. The artistic project cannot be evaluated as a result – in other words, we can never say with certainty whether the aim has been met or not (i.e. whether the project has achieved what it was supposed to). "Our attention is thereby shifted away from the production of a work (including a work of art) onto life in the art project—a life that is not primarily a productive process, that is not tailored to developing a product, that is not "result-oriented." Under these terms, art is no longer understood as the production of works of art but as documentation of life-in-the-project—regardless of the outcome. This clearly has an effect on the way art is now defined, as art no longer manifests as another, new object for contemplation produced by the artist, but as another, heterogeneous timeframe of the art project, which is documented as such."<sup>23</sup> In contemporary artistic institutions, we actually do not witness artistic works, but the production and documentation of life as a pure activity by means of art. According to Groys, art has become biopolitical in this sense; we are again confronted with the relationship between art and life, but in a totally different constellation. This relationship is "characterized by the paradox of art in the guise of the art project, now also wanting to become life, instead of, say, simply reproducing life or furnishing it with art objects."<sup>24</sup>

On the one hand, project work, prevalent in contemporary culture, actually exhausts the present because this kind of work entails life itself. On the other hand, work as a material process (practice itself) remains without value because such work cannot be isolated and included in the conception of the future. It is always subject to the flow of unforeseeable

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<sup>23</sup> Boris Groys, "The Loneliness of the Project", *Going Public*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2010, 78.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, 79. Let me add that, paradoxically, this documentation also points to the fascination and phantasms of contemporary biopower. In his latest novel, *The Map and the Territory* (2010), Michel Houellebecq describes Jed Martin, an artist whose artistic projects offer different perspectives on work. In his young years, Martin focusses on industrial work and, as an established artist, he primarily studies the division of labour in contemporary capitalism. In the novel, Jed approaches Houellebecq himself so that the latter can write a review on yet another in Jed's series of extremely economically successful works. Houellebecq, however, describes Martin as an ethnographer rather than a political commentator. This ethnographical role of the artist (also dealt with by Hal Foster in his famous essay *The Artist as an Ethnographer*) points out the biopolitical status of contemporary art and its documentation of life. The fact that art wants to be life gives art a speculative value.

time and common relationships as well as to the entropy of work's further attempts and repetitions. Groys uses the project to talk about the change in the understanding of art. However, we could also connect the project with wider changes in the field of the exploitation of human powers and creativity; human powers and creativity need to be constantly arranged and evaluated like many other projects. An interesting part of this exploitation is the fact that the project actually delegates the singular gesture of the one who works, that it actually shifts the authorship and creative gesture of the artist elsewhere. When making projects, we no longer work as authors, but delegate our authorship to a multitude of evaluative, managerial and organisational processes that projective temporality needs to be constantly subordinated to. Furthermore, we can no longer talk about the function of the author because the commonality of creativity and the discursive network of various proposals are at the centre of production. The project should be research-oriented, should contain an individual investment, and should subordinate life to itself for the duration of its implementation. However, it ultimately turns out that its authorisation no longer depends on our or common creative gesture and investment. The following questions, also faced by many project proposers, is therefore extremely interesting: who authorizes the project, i.e. how do you establish whether the project has been successful or not, and how do you approve the financing of a project and according to what criteria? The exhaustion arising from project work springs from the fact that the legitimacy of the project is not in its actual implementation and the implementer, but belongs to a higher anonymous bureaucratic and managerial authority, the structural power. Those investing themselves entirely into the project, actually delegate their life powers to another authority. Such is also the functioning of today's biopolitical power, which can fully reject life regardless of its implementation. Project work accelerates time and intensifies exhaustion because nobody is the author of their project anymore despite their considerable investment into it. As Simon Bayly states, those working on a project are only project agents. In their project proposal and implementation, they need to constantly reply to and correspond with the systems of power, evaluations and intermediation of the intermediators responsible for the evaluation and speculative comparison of value. <sup>25</sup> According to this scenario whose agents we have become, it is also constantly expected that we especially perform our own selves, i.e. that we ceaselessly perform ourselves as working subjects and creative beings of the contemporary world. This brings us back to art and Groys's thesis on the documentation of art that has become life. Maybe this is why art

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<sup>25</sup> Simon Bayly, "The End of the Project: Futurity in the Culture of Catastrophe", *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 18, 2, (2013).

has the power to open up the aesthetic dimension of the process of life, work and activity as such. The power of art ultimately does not arise from the management systems, but from the temporal contingency and entropy of its material practice. So if it wishes to survive at work, art needs to rebel against the project and demand the temporality of work as duration.

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