

Filming Capital: On Cinemarxism in the Twenty-first Century*

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In memory of Allan Sekula

If there is one element that can be found in all forms of Marxian aesthetics, it is—in Hans Magnus Enzensberger’s words—the promise of “an aesthetic which is not limited to the sphere of ‘the artistic.’”¹ In his mature work Marx reformulated essential questions from idealist aesthetics, revolving around the relation between form and content and between concretion and abstraction, in social and economical terms, or in terms of “real abstraction.” Brecht’s famous remark from the 1931 *Dreigroschenprozess*, that a photograph of the Krupp or AEG factories does not really say anything about their mode of functioning, picks up on the aesthetic dimension in Marx’s analysis of capital.² A few years earlier, in 1928, Sergei Eisenstein stated that the stock exchange should not be represented by an image of a stock exchange, as in Fritz Lang’s *Dr Mabuse, der Spieler*, but by a thousand little details, connected through a dialectical montage.³

Capitalism presents us with a constant aesthetic challenge; while the movements of finance capital seem to be beyond representation, labor could theoretically be represented, but often is not. The cinema, in particular, has occluded labor. If, as Harun Farocki has noted, the history of cinema starts with a “*sortie de l’usine*,” throughout its history film has not been “drawn to the factory and [but] even repelled by it. Films about work or workers have not become one of the main genres, and the space in front of the factory has remained on the sidelines.”⁴ What is true of the space in front of the factory is doubly so of its interior, which has largely remained hidden by Brecht’s inexpressive facades.

In the eternal debate about the exact nature of the relation between “early Marx” (still romantic and aesthetic) and “mature Marx” (hard-boiled, economic), Marcuse’s position is noteworthy: in arguing that “the writings of 1844–45 must be read as if they find their theoretical (and practical) place and function *after Capital*,” Marcuse emphasizes that “they would be an essential part of the projected transition from capitalism to socialism.”⁵ It is in these early texts that “Marx develops the notion of a non-alienated mode of production, of an ‘aesthetic’ construction of the object world, and of individual property

* A much shorter first version of this chapter appeared as “The Making of Labour: The Movie” in *Fillip* 18 (Spring 2013), 122–27, 144–45. Some passages on films and artworks have been adapted from my previous writings on the artists in question.

as contrasting with private property.⁶ Marcuse maintains that these notions were in no way obviated by the economic analysis of *Capital*; in fact, the latter was in the service of ultimately realizing the former, which “find their place, structurally, *after Capital*, not merely because they convey the image of socialist man, but also because they presuppose Marx’s full analysis of capitalist society.”⁷ There is, however, a very real sense in which *Capital* itself is not just a preparation for a future emancipation of the senses, but is itself an exercise in the aesthetics of political economy.⁸

In 1842, Marx studied Charles de Brosses’s classical treatise on African fetishism, a notion he also encountered in Hegel.⁹ Fetishism denoted a state of religion and of culture before the emergence of art properly speaking; a stage lower than idolatry, before humans formed matter, when they worshiped—according to De Brosses—random objects. For Hegel, consequently, fetishism had no place in the history of art, and a place in the *prehistory* of religion at best.¹⁰ However, the fetish’s place outside the domain of “art proper” points precisely to an aesthetic problem that Hegelian idealism could address only indirectly—the problem of objects that appear to follow an obscure logic, that stand out from the natural world but that do not exhibit the “*sinnliches Scheinen der Idee*” (the sensuous appearance of the Idea): they are not the spiritualized subject-objects or artistic symbols on which idealist aesthetics focused. When the “mature” Marx polemically applied the notion of fetishism to the commodity and its “theological whims” in *Capital*, he addressed an issue that is as aesthetic as it is political: while the value of commodities is determined by the labor invested in them, this labor does not “show up” in the object, whose price appears to be determined by its “social relationships” with other commodities.¹¹

It took the extended analysis of *Capital* to make legible the workings of capitalism, and to make them *visible* would obviously require a comparably extensive undertaking. The closest historical cognate to this project in the art of Marx’s own day was the realist novel, with its narrative panoramas of bourgeois society. The 1920s and 1930s would see the great debate between Lukács’s insistence on the continuing validity of realism for any socialist aesthetic, and the avant-garde’s critique of any belief in the representation of a predetermined reality through its development of new forms, media, and modes of production and distribution. In recent decades, Fredric Jameson has placed both realism and modernism in a historical sequence—in which modernism is in turn followed by post-modernism—that mirrors successive stages of capitalism and is marked by a progressive abstraction from the real. If, in the age of bourgeois realism, monetary equivalence had “announced and provoked a new interest in the properties of objects,” by the early twentieth century the rule of exchange value resulted “in a withdrawal from older notions of stable substances and their unifying identifications.”¹²

Finally, post-modernism stands for the triumph of a financialized capitalism and “a play of monetary entities that need neither production (as capital does) nor consumption (as money does),” suggesting:

[A] new cultural realm or dimension that is independent from the former real world, not because as in the modern (or even the romantic) period culture withdrew from the real world into an autonomous space of art, but rather because the real world has already been suffused with culture and colonized by it, so that it has no outside in terms of which it could be found lacking.¹³

However, it would be more in keeping with Jameson’s overall analysis to say not—in somewhat Baudrillardian terms—that the world “has been colonized” but that is subjected to ongoing processes of colonization, extraction, and accumulation, which produce uneven effects and social antinomies. When Jameson analyzes recent films in terms of what he terms “cognitive mapping”—a project recently taken up by Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle—he focuses precisely on film’s power to chart aspects of this conflictuous reality of uneven development, whether by “First World” or “Third World” filmmakers.¹⁴

My focus, too, is on film. In analyzing a number of more or less recent film and video art projects, I discuss their ways of representing or mapping aspects of a reality that melts into ever thinner air, but I also foreground the status of the films themselves as commodities, and the productive relations and modes of distribution that enable them, and that are in turn enabled by them.¹⁵ To the extent that they qualify as aesthetic practice, such cinematic essays do not trace lines only by showing (for instance) how goods are shipped across the world, but also through their own ways of coming into the world, and of moving through it.

I. The productive logic of montage

One of the most wide-ranging (and certainly the most monumental) of these works is Allan Sekula and Noël Burch’s 2010 feature-length film, *The Forgotten Space*, which is subtitled “a film essay” (see Figure 11.1). In the 1960s, co-director Noël Burch had helped to (re)introduce and develop the notion of the essay film, pitted against both the feature film (*Spielfilm*) and the conventional documentary. Burch states:

I set the essay film against ‘documentary’ in the classical sense, that supposedly objective rendering of reality, my bad objects were Flaherty, Grierson and the GPO. An essay film was about getting across ideas.¹⁶



Figure 11.1 Allan Sekula and Noël Burch, *The Forgotten Space*, 2010, still

In the case of *The Forgotten Space*, the ideas come largely from Sekula's work: the film in question is a continuation of *Fish Story* by other means. This also means that discussions of the film are often somewhat skewed when it comes to authorship: Sekula's contribution seems easier to pin down than Burch's.

Like Sekula's photo essay *Fish Story* (1989–1995), *The Forgotten Space* focuses on ocean transport and the labor conditions it entails. As a covert filmic interpretation of *Capital*, it is necessarily an essay on abstraction—on the reality of abstraction as embodied, in this instance, by the shipping container. *The Forgotten Space* is, as Sekula's voice-over puts it, “the unlikely story of a steel box.” The minimalist boxes are shown in various situations: on deck, on endless trains traversing the countryside, being carted around in a fully automated port. Accompanied by Riccardo Tesi's accordion on the soundtrack, the latter scene becomes a veritable *ballet mécanique*. Containerization, which had triumphed by the 1970s, meant that the physical labor needed for the loading and unloading of commodities was drastically reduced; harbors became mechanized and the ocean and its ports became a “forgotten space” while capitalism prided itself on its “dematerialized” reinvention in the age of information technology. *The Forgotten Space* takes a long hard look at the container as a physical agent of abstraction, obscuring use value and emphasizing exchange value by turning disparate qualities into measurable qualities—and transforming labor, life, and entire communities in the process.

The film originated after the turn of the century, when Sekula was asked by SKOR—a Dutch foundation for public art—to document the upheavals that accompanied the planning and construction of the Betuwelijn, a new train line connecting the all-important port of Rotterdam with the hinterland. The film's first part, “Phoenix and Mammoth,” reflects the film's origins in attempting to home in on the dubious nature of this project, for which alternatives (especially river barges) were readily available, and which never lived up to its alleged potential. As an autonomous reality—a line of flight isolated as much as possible from the surrounding countryside—the Betuwelijn stands for an increasing separation between lines of transport, on the one hand, and their context, on the other; they cut through spaces and communities without connecting to them or offering employment. From Holland, the film embarks on a global itinerary, with long segments focusing on California, Hong Kong, and Shenzhen in the Pearl River Delta, before returning to Europe for an acerbic exposé on Bilbao and its Guggenheim branch—that sublimated container for blue-chip art.

In between these segments, Sekula and Burch portray the Korean/Indonesian crew of a container ship, driving home the importance of another American innovation, the “flag of convenience,” which allows for the bypassing of Western labor law. The film's prologue and epilogue are odes to the Belgian village of Doel, slated for demolition because of the expansion of the port of Antwerp. While *The Forgotten Space* mourns the destruction of old forms of life and old communities, at times quite rhetorically, it should not be seen as an exercise in nostalgia. Instead, the film opens the effects of containerization on societies open to questioning by suggesting that the transformations we see are not natural processes but the result of political and processes; hence, processes that can be changed. The film is too complex to be brushed aside as a dated attempt to present contemporary society as representable, to naturalize the abstract and immaterial.¹⁷ Far from denying

that contemporary capitalism differs from that of Marx's day, the film focuses on the container as an abstract concretization of economic flows.

It is not particularly surprising that an unashamedly Marxian film starring metal boxes would have spent a long time in development hell, during which the directors and SKOR tried to find co-producers and secure funding. As a consequence of this, the film on the screen is not quite the one that was envisaged in early treatments and scripts. One element that disappeared was the *Leitmotif* of a Disney Winnie-the-Pooh doll that would appear in various contexts, from its consumption in Holland to its fabrication in China. The disneyfied bear would have given the containers' content an anthropomorphic face: the abstract box would have opened up and revealed just what kind of commodity it contains. In the finished film, the box remains a hermetic, modernist volume—though this nonhuman protagonist is joined by (and at times eclipsed by) a human supporting cast that ranges from Dutch farmers and technocrats to Indonesian sailors and young female workers in Shenzhen—migrants from the countryside who flocked to the expanding city.

In Peter Osborne's words, “the productive logic of film is the productive logic of the work of art in the twentieth century.”¹⁸ If, among the great Marxian aestheticians of Brecht's generation, Lukács always remained imprinted on the novel, both Adorno and Benjamin consequently charted the role of film in capitalist production and its deeply ambivalent emancipatory and revolutionary potential.¹⁹ However, what of the early twenty-first century, when celluloid has gone the way of the dodo and film financing, production, distribution, and consumption are all undergoing critical changes? In its form, *The Forgotten Space* seems to be defiantly classicist, a lumbering beast of a feature film—far less adapted to the survival of the fittest than the containers it follows. By contrast, Alexander Kluge's 2008 project, *Nachrichten aus der ideologischen Antike*, seems almost over-adapted to the productive logic of the present.

Kluge's *Nachrichten* revisits Eisenstein's aborted 1927–28 plan for a film version of Marx's *Capital* in the form of a DVD set containing a seemingly endless series of short segments, most of them conversations between Kluge and various representatives of German *Suhrkamp-kultur*, or comedian Helge Schneider in one historical disguise or other (see Figure 11.2). Its shamelessly sprawling and rambling nature may appear anachronistic, suggesting that for Kluge time is not an issue and in unlimited supply; on the other hand, the project is clearly of its time in its abandonment of Eisensteinian dialectical film montage in favor of a televisual enfilade of talking heads. *Nachrichten* reflects radical changes in medium and in production and distribution in its very structure. In so far as Kluge's sprawling assemblage of performers is dialectic, it is an open-ended dialectic of intermingling discourses that regularly collapse into virtuoso sophistry.

In his review of Kluge's opus, Jameson remarks that while Eisenstein had theorized a “discursive film” that would be non-anecdotal, filming *Capital* necessitates a dialectic of the discursive and the anecdotal; when trying to track abstraction in real and concrete situations, one can hardly avoid the telling—and thereby anecdotal—example.²⁰ However, with Kluge the discourse itself often tends to become an anecdotal kind of virtuoso performance, whereas with Sekula and Burch the filmic “anecdotes” are eventually reintegrated into a whole that is both musical and discursive, an ebbing and flowing, a veritable rhythmic montage.



Figure 11.2 Alexander Kluge, *News from Ideological Antiquity*, 2007, still

The Forgotten Space, that “story of a box,” is also much more than that. While the film focuses on the *distribution* rather than on the *production* of commodities, the work involved in this production process, and the labor conflicts it entails, plays an important role in the film—and there are also vignettes focusing on young Chinese female factory workers in the Special Economic Zone of Shenzhen, and on Filipino women working as nannies. In addition to shots showing people at work, or at leisure, there is no shortage of talking heads—discussing their work or lack thereof. A particularly poignant episode focuses on a tent camp for homeless in California patrolled by underpaid guards right next to the railway track on which the containers move. An African-American woman with a blonde wig—her own hair is falling out—clutching some dolls makes for a rather different talking head than those in Kluge’s DVD film.

The overarching structure of *The Forgotten Space* allows its makers to include little vignettes such as one that shows children on a “container port” playground, playfully preparing themselves for life in the containerized world. Helped by its geographic trajectory, which allows the directors to explore different facets and effects of containerization, the film is much more linear than Kluge’s *Nachrichten*. In fact, the lack of signature “essay film” elements such as a montage that uses “preexisting” footage might lead some to question its very status as an essay. Ultimately, its essayistic character can be identified in the interplay between a narration that refuses to be reduced to humanistic anecdote but instead alternates from socio-economic analysis on the one hand, and images, on the other, that may or may not propel the analysis forward in a linear fashion. Many scenes and sequences make for digressions that feed the analysis and also make for a “rather rambling structure,” as Burch puts it.²¹ If, towards the end,

there are a few too many false stops and restarts, a few too many rambles, this also prevents the film from becoming an illustrated lecture.

To varying degrees, the works that are under discussion here are indebted to the Soviet montage school and late-1960s “cinemarxism” (to use a Godardian term).²² However, dialectical montage and the productive logic of film are no longer quite what they used to be. Sekula and Burch come closest to a form of classicism, whereas Kluge embraces a televisual logic, allowing the viewer/listener to make his own zapping edit, to arrive at her own non-linear dialectic—which Jameson interprets as a Marxian form of Freudian free association.²³ Co-produced by television stations, *The Forgotten Space* is impacted by the productive logic of the post-cinematic era. *The Forgotten Space*, is a film in search of an audience; it is, perhaps thankfully so, unfinished business. Burch’s grim diagnosis that the kind of essay film he has advocated “is out of fashion, ratings are king, audiences are meant to be too dumb to follow anything the least bit complex” seemed to be borne out by the fact that during its release in Dutch arthouse cinemas, *The Forgotten Space* was seen by some 130 people; subsequent cinema releases seem to have been more successful than that.²⁴ Television screenings in Holland and Austria obviously had higher ratings, but Sekula and Burch were forced to make a shorter edit for TV purposes.

If one is to film capital(ism) today, one is obviously participating in the subject of one’s own film, as it is not possible to lay claim to a position that is already (however imperfectly) post-capitalist, as in the case of Eisenstein. How, then, to intervene in and foreground the irrational logic that one is operating within and against? *The Forgotten Space* traces the lines drawn by boxes shipped across the globe—but what of the distribution of the film itself? Since it will usually be screened in a digital format anyway, screenings for students and other groups in contexts not foreseen by regular film distribution, such as Alfredo Jaar’s *Marx Lounge* exhibition at SMBA in Amsterdam in 2011, may be a more interesting option—one that, however, inscribes the film in a regime of cultural labor in which the dividing lines between labor and leisure have all but ceased to exist (see Figure 11.3).

II. Representation and accumulation

Hito Steyerl’s film *In Free Fall* (2010) focuses on the “lives” of Boeing airplanes, leading from the Israeli army to an airplane junkyard in the Mojave desert (see Figure 11.4). Steyerl references Sergei Tretyakov’s 1929 *The Biography of the Object*, as well as the stock market crash of that same year. Steyerl’s film—which exists as a single-channel 30-minute short but also as a multi-channel installation version—combines shots from the airplane junkyard with shots of herself and a few others as well as appropriated clips including found footage from a documentary about airplanes being reused for aluminum; while the planes are at times used for filmic spectacles such as *Speed*, their aluminum is also recycled for DVD production. The year 1929 is not only the year of the stock market crash and Tretyakov’s text but also the year of the production of Howard Hughes’s *Hell’s Angels* (released 1930), during which Hughes crashed and was seriously injured. Later, Hughes bought TWA and the plane blown up for *Speed* is one

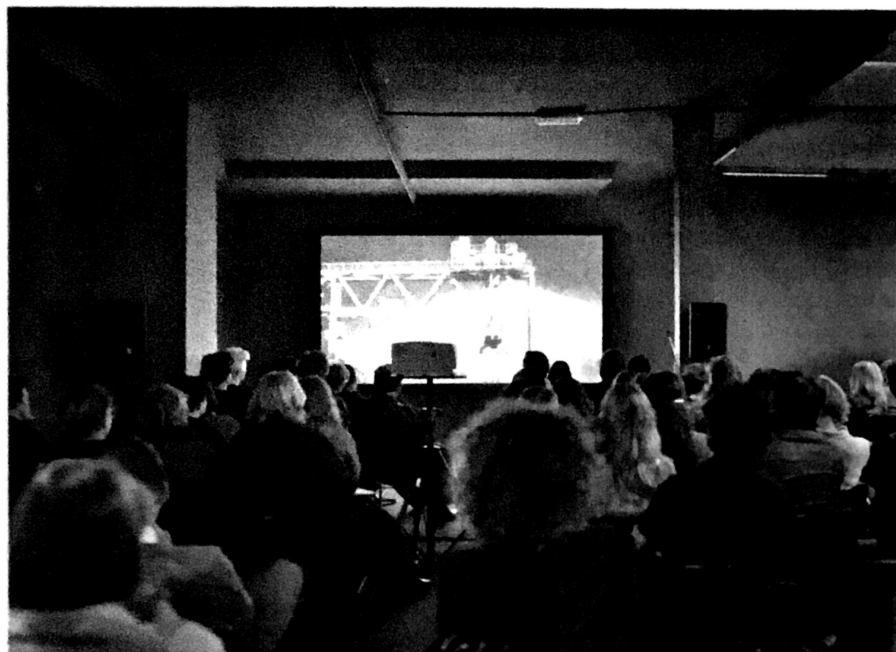


Figure 11.3 Screening of Sekula and Burch's *The Forgotten Space* at SMBA, Amsterdam, 2011



Figure 11.4 Hito Steyerl, *In Free Fall*, 2010, still

of TWA's old Boeings, which spent the latter part of its life in the Israeli airforce as 4X-JYI. Its sister plane, 4X-JYD, was present at the storming of the hijacked plane at Entebbe, and it now functions as a cinema in an Israeli army museum while 4X-JYI has been destroyed for *Speed*. As the salvage yard guard puts it in Steyerl's film: "Everything that was left was scrap, and that's when the Chinese were buying scrap."

Steyerl's entropic airfield dissolves in a post-cinematic montage indebted to the MTV aesthetic; new footage and appropriated footage generate a dizzying, fragmented map unfolding in a non-linear and multifaceted time. The editing—with plenty of catchy music—is seductive to the point of glossing over its own intricacies, making the film look more accessible than it may actually be. While it would indeed appear that, with *In Free Fall*, Steyerl "has turned from the essayistic subject to the essayistic object," it may be more precise to say that the film focuses on objects as having a certain derivative and secondary *agency* that affects lives.²⁵ Depending on market fluctuations, planes may be used for movie productions or be sold to China for their scrap metal. Both object and subject act and are acted on in a bewilderingly complex political economy, with Steyerl's cameraman losing his job in Hollywood partly because of the crash in the DVD market due to online streaming and filesharing.

In this respect resembling Steyerl and Kluge, but not Sekula and Burch, Steyerl exploits precisely those characteristics of the essay that Adorno defended in his mid-1950s essay "The Essay as Form": the essay claims the intellectual freedom to be speculative and to over-interpret.²⁶ Like Sekula and Burch, however, Steyerl focuses on material—metal—objects as pseudoconcrete symptoms. But what about financial capital itself, which moves around these metal containers? Technology allows for an ever faster and more massive circulation of capital, of capital-as-data. And in a number of video pieces, artist Zachary Formwalt has investigated the increasing resistance of capital(ism) to representation, going well beyond the obstacles encountered by Eisenstein or Brecht.

Formwalt makes conceptual jump cuts in time and between different technologies and economic mechanisms. In his video *Unsupported Transit* (2011), he combines footage of the construction site of the Koolhaas-designed Shenzhen Stock Exchange with a voice-over recounting Eadweard Muybridge's collaboration with the railroad tycoon Leland Stanford that showed there was a moment of "unsupported transit" in a horse's gallop (see Figure 11.5). Formwalt also recapitulates the later development of time-lapse photography by a former stockbroker; this technique can be used to show large buildings being constructed seemingly within minutes and without human agency. Formwalt deploys time-lapse photography to show work on the Shenzhen stock exchange—though the speed is not such that we see the building miraculously reach completion before our eyes. Rather, things glide somewhat aimlessly; we see some workers, but the actual work disappears in the intervals between the recorded moments.

In one of the artist's explicit invocations of Karl Marx, the voice-over discusses Marx's analysis of the abbreviated circuit of capital, with capital seemingly breeding capital without having to go to the commodity stage—in the form of interest-bearing capital deposited in a bank, or indeed as "fictive capital" on the stock market.²⁷ Capital circles the globe in ways that seem to escape representation. It has concrete effects, but the effects seem to spring from mysterious and overly complex causes. The time-lapse

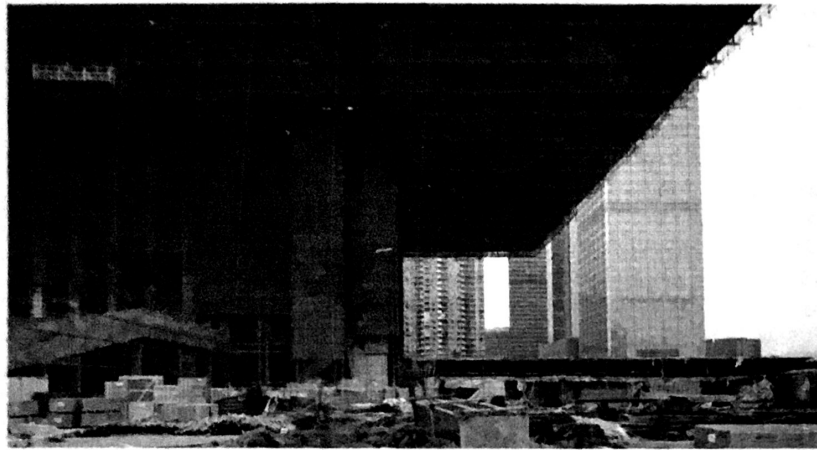


Figure 11.5 Zachary Formwalt, *Unsupported Transit*, 2011, still

footage of the Shenzhen stock exchange construction site enters into an ambiguous relationship with this disquisition on Marx and abbreviated capital. It is an essayistic speculation on financial speculation, and on the possibilities and limitations of media to represent that which melts into thin air.

In *Unsupported Transit*, Formwalt notes that as capital spends less time in production, as fixed capital, its moments of concretion become rare; it circulates in the form of money, which is to say: of data. Contemporary capital is marked by the integration of monetary “real abstraction” and by the operative abstractions of technoscience—of science made into a productive force. Marx already noted that the “growth of scientific power” and its transformation into fixed capital was both fuelling and ultimately undermining industrial capitalism.²⁸ Starting in the late 1960s, theorists such as Hans-Jürgen Krahl and the Italian autonomists revived this notion of the General Intellect, arguing that the “*wissenschaftliche Intelligenz*” was now integrated in the productive forces.²⁹ A simplistic base/superstructure model could not be maintained; in controlling production, the General Intellect traverses this divide. For the theorists of the General Intellect, post-Fordism and “immaterial labor,” the fact that intellectual labor is as stunted and specialized as manual labor came to be seen as part of the new preconditions for revolutionary action.

In contrast to the engineers who developed the hard- and software that he uses to make his work, an artist is not part of the General Intellect in the narrow—technological—sense used by Marx. However, from the late 1960s onwards theorists implicitly or explicitly widened the definition, as the development of the culture industry meant that previously “unproductive” artists were integrated in productive capitalist relations.³⁰ In this sense, an artist such as Formwalt is as much of a representative of the General Intellect as the nineteenth-century railway surveyors and engineers who designed the railway line in Ghana, under the aegis of the British colonial regime. This is the subject of Formwalt’s film *A Projective Geometry* (2012).

The railway line in question allowed for the transport of minerals extracted from the local mines to the port of Sekondi for transport to Britain, and for the import of goods produced in Britain back into the colony. Formwalt’s tool—a camera on a tripod—is eerily close to a surveyor’s equipment; both the surveyor and the filmmaker come to chart the African country and extract materials from it, abstracting the space in the process. Formwalt reflects on this by including conversations with people encountered during the filming on the soundtrack. Is Formwalt not, in fact, a postindustrial (colonial) prospector, extracting visual raw materials from Africa and transforming them into commodities? Formwalt’s film actively invites such a line of questioning, foregrounding its own status as a problematic commodity.

Projective Geometry contains a passage reflecting on Marx’s notion of primitive accumulation in the context of nineteenth-century colonialism. Today Africa is again subject to a renewed wave of primitive accumulation, thanks to no small extent to Chinese capital—just as in China itself, pre-capitalist or non-capitalist social bonds are destroyed as myriads of young workers flock to industrial zones such as Shenzhen (portrayed in a rather heartbreaking fashion in *The Forgotten Space*).

There is also another contemporary version of primitive accumulation. In 1981, Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge argued that the forceful integration of pre-capitalist subjects into the labor market could also take the form of a psychological and behavioral “retooling” of laborers who are already part of it, who have been born into it. The expropriated workers appropriate new skills and characteristics.³¹ New demands are made on workers, demands that come to be interiorized and reshape them as subjects. Kluge and Negt make this analysis in the form of a sprawling tome of more than 1,200 pages, whose montage aesthetic underlines the authors’ claim that this book does not demand to be read in a linear fashion. In this manner, in a refiguration of the excessive scope of Kluge’s *Nachrichten*, they create a dialectic of clashing temporalities. Too little time, and too much of it; the subject can no longer compartmentalize and the work of art, or the work of intellect, becomes boundless.

Hardt and Negri have likewise argued that primitive accumulation is ongoing and takes the post-modern form of *informational accumulation*: “As the new informational economy emerges, a certain accumulation of information is necessary before capitalist production can take place.”³² In today’s Western societies, the rise in “creative” and “affective” labor has placed new demands on workers who can either be part of a small well-paid elite or, in much greater numbers, of a growing precariat. Hardt and Negri note that as “informational accumulation (like the primitive accumulation Marx analyzed) destroys or at least deconstructs previously existing productive processes, but (differently than Marx’s primitive accumulation) it immediately integrates those productive processes in its own networks.”³³ Temporality becomes immediacy; one may think here of Facebook, where the transformation of previously “private” information into a (semi-)public commodity that produces value (for Facebook, first and foremost) is infra-quick and painless compared to older, violent forms of primitive accumulation. One difference with these older forms is of course that the integrated subjects do not become wage laborers, but a different kind of worker. Or compare the hundreds or probably thousands of intellectuals and artists (and others) that Kluge has interviewed for television over the decades: their work now includes talking about their work, for no

extra fee. The work of art thus foregrounds artistic labor (and immaterial or intellectual labor in general) as being central to the current regime of accumulation.

In *In Free Fall*, Steyerl's cameraman—who used to be a Hollywood specialist responsible for making television and other screens look “natural” in film scenes—appears onscreen as a performer. Steyerl herself, of course, also appears—at one point doing a kind of airline safety routine ballet with an Israeli military expert.³⁴ Furthermore, contemporary artists such as Steyerl will often present their work in the form of public talks accompanied by screenings. While their films can easily travel the globe, there is a demand for the filmmaker to be present and *perform* the work. The data needs to be embodied by the artistic worker. The issue of representing capital becomes partly one of performing labor, of enacting capitalism.

For a scattered audience largely consisting of artists and intellectuals of some description, viewing parts of *News from Ideological Antiquity* on a laptop that may be in London one day and Seoul the next becomes part of their daily performance—becomes a performance that mirrors those on screen. This project is ultimately an exercise in social montage that goes beyond using the social life of this or that object (pepper or a pair of silk stockings) in a cinematic sequence to represent capitalism. If any one object is privileged here it is the DVD set itself, which articulates the contradictions of contemporary cultural production and consumption as forms of performative labor (see Figure 11.6).

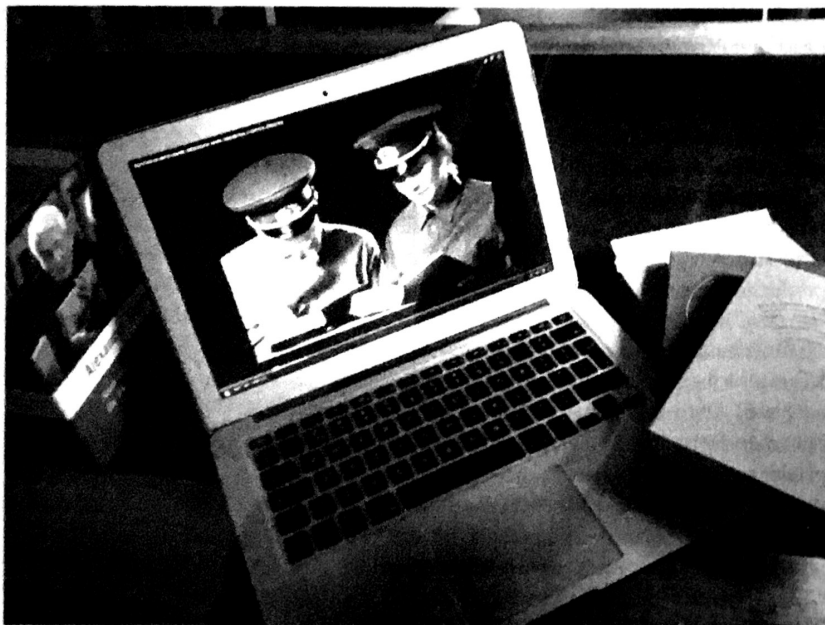


Figure 11.6 Alexander Kluge's *News from Ideological Antiquity* and other Kluge DVD sets (2010)

III. The making of *Labour: The Movie*

In the term “work of art,” “work” is used in a *verdinglichte* sense: with this notion we usually refer to an object as something that has been “worked,” that has been made, while at the same time, this quality of having been fashioned itself disappears within it. What, however, if we were to conceive of this work as activity rather than object, as *travail* rather than *oeuvre*? It is precisely this operation that is central to realizing the promise of “an aesthetic which is not limited to the sphere of ‘the artistic.’” Art work becomes aesthetic practice, or aesthetic *praxis*.

Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello have argued that there are two traditions in the critique of capitalism: a social critique focusing on inequality and poverty, and an artistic critique focusing on alienation and sensuous impoverishment.³⁵ However, these two strands have been interlinked practically from the beginning. Much early socialist thought as well as Marx's thinking can be seen as re-politicizing Schiller's *Aesthetic Education*, with the end of the division of labor making possible a more sensuously rich and diverse existence. When in *The German Ideology* Marx predicted (or demanded) that under communism there would no longer be specialized *painters*, who are exclusively that, but only *people who also paint*, he announced the transformation of work as the aesthetic project *par excellence*.³⁶ In a communist society, you would hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner. Marx was sarcastic about Fourier's notion that future work would be like play and disparaged Schiller's aesthetic idealism, yet this passage presents a provocative radicalization of such utopian notions.³⁷ In Marx's political aesthetics, work is not play in some hazy idealist way, but is a continuous challenge to different senses and capacities of the worker as sensuous being.

What, then, of aesthetic practice in today's regime of accumulation? The productive logic of today's “creative industries”—as the obnoxious phrase goes—differs both from that of classical film production and from that of modern visual art. The dominant form of film production in the twentieth century was modeled on (or part of) industrial capitalism, with specialists in various disciplines selling their labor-power to the studio. By contrast, the production of *art* was largely artisanal, with artists selling their works on the market. The latter case always seemed difficult to understand in terms of a Marxian labor theory of value predicated on a quantitative abstraction—labor-power as based on the idea of socially necessary labor-time. However, even the apparently more “normal” case of the culture industry in fact provided many anomalies, both in the fluctuating value attributed to individual stars and in the profit of films—which, all efforts by studio management to the contrary notwithstanding, continued to escape standardization. Increasingly, the exception has become the norm.³⁸ Today, in the networked Facebook economy, the process of value creation becomes so scattered and distributed that attempts at quantification seem increasingly hopeless. If, according to “Metcalfe's law,” the value of a communication network is proportional to the square (!) of the number of its users, then quantity itself is clearly full of theological whims.³⁹

For the Marx of the *Grundrisse*, the conclusion to be drawn from the growing role of technology in production could only be that the whole basis for capitalist production is undermined. “As soon as labour in the direct form has ceased to be the

great well-spring of wealth, labour time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence exchange value [must cease to be the measure] of use value.”⁴⁰ This means that:

[P]roduction based on exchange value breaks down, and the direct, material production process is stripped of the form of penury and antithesis. The free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour time so as to posit surplus labour, but rather the general reduction of the necessary labour of society to a minimum, which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them.⁴¹

Thus the contradictions of capitalism would have exploded, and wage labor would have been rendered obsolete.

In post-Fordist practice, however, these contradictions have been contained (albeit barely) in part because of the rise of new forms of labor and of value. Fixed capital (technology) unchains surplus-value production. The rise of “immaterial labor” served to destroy the status of abstract labor—of quantifiable, average labor-power as the measure and source of wealth, without destroying capitalism in the process. As Negri has argued since the 1970s, value is no longer anchored in labor time and labor value; it is up for grabs.⁴² This goes not just for iPhones or sneakers; the value of “immaterial labor” is similarly unmoored, resulting in a few big-name brands and a large precariat. It becomes impossible to assert the value of labor-power when, in conjunction with the absence of collective bargaining, under- and unpaid work proliferates.⁴³ One might argue that what is at play here is simply the familiar “transformation problem,” dialectic of value and price, with the latter becoming ever more autonomous from the former. This autonomy ultimately, however, undermines the status of labor as measure; as labor becomes unquantifiable and “timeless,” so to speak, value becomes indeterminate. If the value of Facebook or Apple depends on millions of users or customers, whose value-producing activities include clicks that take a fraction of a second but ultimately also encompass large portions of their lives, then commodity fetishism has stopped being an illusion and become a reality.

In this situation, any attempt to “film *Capital*” or to “film capitalism” must also foreground the production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of cultural commodities. Around the time of the release of his *Film Socialisme*, Jean-Luc Godard developed a curious fantasy that involved parachuting a young boy and girl into France and having them screen the film at cafés in order to investigate if and how it should be released “officially.”⁴⁴ Reflecting the crisis in cinema distribution for “difficult” films, this utopian scheme also foregrounds *Film Socialisme*’s status as a problematic commodity. While *The Forgotten Space* is a film that can easily be shown in art spaces, Steyerl’s *In Free Fall* was made expressly for the latter. Whether one calls these works “films” or “videos” now seems to depend mostly on the economy they’re in (that of the cinema or that of art); technically speaking, they were all produced in digital video, including *The Forgotten Space*.⁴⁵ As digital files, these works are potentially as mobile as financial capitals, but restrictions are imposed on their circulation. In keeping with the art world’s economy of exclusivity, Steyerl’s or Formwalt’s video essays cannot be viewed online in

their entirety—that is, unless you have a password because you are a curator, collector, or critic.⁴⁶ The “commoners” need to go to a museum or gallery to view the pieces.

Steyerl has argued that the museum is now part of the post-Fordist “social factory” that

exceeds traditional boundaries and spills over into almost everything else. It pervades bedrooms and dreams alike, as well as perception, affection, and attention. It transforms everything it touches into culture, if not art. It is an a-factory, which produces affect as effect.⁴⁷

An art space

is a factory, which is simultaneously a supermarket—a casino and a place of worship whose reproductive work is performed by cleaning ladies and cellphone-video bloggers alike. In this economy, even spectators are transformed into workers.⁴⁸

Steyerl’s lecture-performance *I Dreamed a Dream: Politics in the Age of Mass Art Production* (2013) is a live essay that has also been turned into a video (see Figure 11.7). Accompanied by a variety of projected images, Steyerl speculates on “mass art production” and on whether it could change the world as much as the mass production of arms. Steyerl begins by mentioning a “Comrade X,” a Kurdish fighter imprisoned in Turkey, who became fascinated with *Les Misérables* as a political work of art, to which he wanted to write a sequel. Steyerl dryly remarks that this should be sufficient proof that she didn’t make Comrade X up, as she clearly never would have chosen *Les Misérables*—that sentimental proto-telenovela with all its cliffhangers. In fact, in contrast to Comrade X, Steyerl focuses not so much on the work’s pseudo-revolutionary content but on its

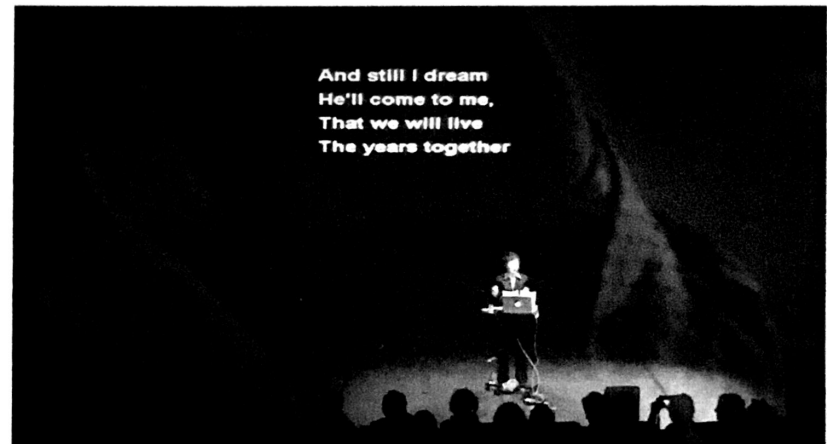


Figure 11.7 Hito Steyerl, *I Dreamed a Dream: Politics in the Age of Mass Art Production*, 2013, performance view

productive logic as manifested in its form—which was shaped by nineteenth-century newspaper serials and the modes of production and consumption they generated. This was precisely the early form of the culture industry noted (but not emphasized) by Marx. Steyerl here foregrounds the impact of this nascent culture industry in a manner that recalls Marx's statement that "Production thus produces not only the object but also the manner of consumption, not only objectively but also subjectively. Production thus creates the consumer."⁴⁹ What it also produces is the producer, but in contemporary immaterial labor the dividing line between production and consumption is of course tenuous at best—as the case of "ordinary people" who (in a kind of perversion of Benjamin's productivist aesthetic) audition to appear on "idols" shows.

Like the works of the feuilleton hacks with whom Hugo had to compete, Steyerl notes that *Les Misérables* reads a like a permanent public audition by the author. Completing the novel check by check, the serial writer "rambles on commission"—the pitch has become part of the drama. Steyerl leaps from this to Susan Boyle's performance of *I Dreamed a Dream* from the musical version of *Les Misérables* on a British talent show, and forges a *now-time* between the 1832 failed revolution portrayed by Hugo and the situation of the 2011 precariat. There is another species of misérables around—they are onstage, they are the losers mocked by posh juries. We live in a casting economy, in which we constantly pitch our projects; Steyerl shows artists in Berlin queuing up outside after a call for an "open" exhibition by the Deutsche Bank art space, and then goes on to imagine and perform a pitch for a project on the basis of Comrade X's dream, which she reads in front of Karaoke screen with lyrics to *I Dreamed a Dream* (with accompanying music). Her project involves a green-screen montage of people in nineteenth-century and contemporary museum architecture, with a "rabble" of post-Fordist extras who are about to be slaughtered on barricades. In this bizarre pitch situation, the audience of the performance becomes a quasi-jury, complicit in the culture of permanent auditioning.

Even those who really have nothing to gain from becoming integrated in "semicapitalism" de facto participate in this audition economy—like some of the subjects in *The Forgotten Space*. In making their suffering visible, in affording them the opportunity to speak out, the film also participates in contemporary accumulation—like a politicized counterpart to contemporary reality soaps and casting shows, in which the underclass is put on display for the embattled middle class to smirk at. In this respect, Christoph Schlingensief's 2000 piece *Bitte liebt Österreich* (a.k.a. *Ausländer Raus*) needs to be mentioned as a brilliant exercise in performative materialism: here, the container was not used for shipping goods but for housing asylum seekers allegedly about to be expelled from Austria. A video feed from the container was broadcast via Internet television, and by voting, Big Brother-style, viewers could send their least favorite "candidates" away (back to where they came from). The winner was to win a residency permit. By placing his containers in the middle of Vienna, Schlingensief created a volatile situation at the height of Jörg Haider's power; but the piece did not simply instrumentalize the then recent "Big Brother" format to make a political point. Rather, the film director turned "actionist" artist made a social montage that meshed different types of labor and forced non-labor, with asylum seekers usually being kept off the "official," "visible" labor market, and thus also from casting shows.

In effecting a montage between different forms of primitive accumulation and different forms of exploitation, the point can, of course, not be that "artists are the new asylum seekers," as one deluded Dutch novelist put it. Rather, in opposition to a certain post-Operaist tendency to focus exclusively on immaterial labor in the metropolitan Western context, one should precisely insist on discrepancies as well as similarities, and on solidarity on the basis of vast discrepancies in privileges among the underprivileged. Antje Ehmann and Harun Farocki's *Labour in a Single Shot*, on which they worked in the years before Farocki's death in July 2014, takes the form of a series of workshops in some fifteen cities on different continents, including Cairo and Rio de Janeiro.⁵⁰ The results have been presented online and in exhibitions such as that at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin in 2015 (see Figure 11.8).⁵¹

While the "primitivist" focus on short single-shot films à la Lumière suggests an abandonment of montage, the constellation of screens in the HKW show resulted in a parallel, spatial montage. The space becomes a zapping zone. This also means that the artistic labor of the workshop participants is largely subsumed under Ehmann and Farocki's double curatorship-as-authorship. Within the latter, Farocki is usually foregrounded since there are ample opportunities for comparisons with his filmic oeuvre. The present text obviously cannot escape these mechanisms, but they must at least be acknowledged and problematized. While the result is more than the sum of its parts, the legal status of the individual films and recompense (if any) of their makers remains unaddressed and, by consequence, extremely hazy. With its networked approach, the project is hyper-contemporary in a way that Ehmann and Farocki never fully acknowledge: here, the labor of authorship becomes such a scattered and aggregate condition that it is clouded and obscured. The classical Marxian reflex of "descending into the hidden abodes of production," which sustains a good part of Farocki's oeuvre, and *Labour in a Single Shot*, becomes questionable in the process.



Figure 11.8 Antje Ehmann and Harun Farocki, *Labour in a Single Shot*, HKW Berlin, 2015, installation view

Nonetheless: In a situation marked both by the precarization and simultaneous intensification and extensification of many types of work and by a potentialized productivity of technology that makes a mockery of the term “dead labor,” *Labour in a Single Shot* presents a montage that allows one to ask certain questions; it is questionable—*fragwürdig*—in good as well as bad ways. Particularly interesting films in this mix are Nicole Teeny’s *The Writer* (Boston, 2013), in which the camera pans across a messy apartment floor to show a young woman lying on bed with her MacBook, diligently typing into the tilted laptop, working in a place associated with escape from work (see Figure 11.9); or *Data Center* in Berlin (by Marjus Bauer, Susanne Dzeik and Rene Paulokat, 2012), which shows a maintenance worker doing his rounds inside the server center that keeps the cloud afloat. However, less “advanced” forms of work can hardly be said to be less contemporary; they function as part of the same global economy with all its inequities. It is contemporaneity itself that is asynchronous and fractured.

One film that manages to condense this into a single shot is Cristián Silva-Avária’s *The City, the Runners and the Fisherman* (Rio de Janeiro, 2012), which shows a solitary fisherman on a small boat casting his net in the background, slowly drifting on the bay, while the viewer glimpses mobile urban professionals racing by on colorful bikes in the foreground. Here, parallel montage has been incorporated into the “single shot” itself, and the result is at the very least compellingly suggestive. The same can be said of *Labour in a Single Shot* as a whole: placing precisely observed specifics in a fragile constellation rather than abstracting from them to grand overarching theories, the project poses an aesthetic and theoretical challenge that is not likely to go away anytime soon. Film has left the dream factory to enter a larger social factory that is virtually coterminous with the world.



Figure 11.9 Nicole Teeny, *The Writer*, 2013, still

Notes

- 1 Hans Magnus Enzensberger, “Constituents of a Theory of the Media,” *New Left Review* 64 (November/December 1970), 25.
- 2 Bertolt Brecht, “Der Dreigroschenprozess” (1931), in *Bertolt Brechts Dreigroschenbuch* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1960), 93.
- 3 Sergei Eisenstein, note dated January 2, 1928, in *Alexander Kluge, Nachrichten aus der ideologische Antike: Marx—Eisenstein—Das Kapital* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2008), booklet of DVD set, 18.
- 4 Harun Farocki, “Workers Leaving the Factory,” in *Nachdruck/Inprint: Texte/Writings*, eds Susanne Gaensheimer and Nicolaus Schafhausen (New York/Berlin: Lukas & Sternberg/Vorwerk 8, 2001), 232. Farocki produced both a single-channel video film and a gallery installation of *Workers Leaving the Factory*.
Against Farocki’s claim concerning the non-representation of labor, one could invoke Lang’s *Metropolis* and Chaplin’s *Modern Times*—films by auteurs who, at those respective moments, had a high degree of autonomy in their selection and treatment of subjects. Lang’s film in particular, however, is a strained and confused allegory on labor relations.
- 5 Herbert Marcuse, “Cultural revolution” (n.d., ca. 1970), in *Towards a Critical Theory of Society. Collected Papers, vol. 2*, ed. Douglas Kellner (London/New York: Routledge, 2001), 128.
- 6 Marcuse, “Cultural revolution,” 129.
- 7 Marcuse, “Cultural revolution,” 129.
- 8 As for the aesthetic dimension of the commodity form, see Chapter 3 by Sami Khatib in this volume.
- 9 Margaret A. Rose, *Marx’s Lost Aesthetic: Karl Marx and the Visual Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 62.
- 10 See G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte. Werke 12* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 284–85; *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion I. Werke 16* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 282–84, 295.
- 11 Karl Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, vol. 1* (London: Penguin, 1976), 163 ff.
- 12 Fredric Jameson, “Culture and Finance Capital,” *Critical Inquiry* 24 (Autumn 1997), 258.
- 13 Jameson, “Culture and Finance Capital,” 265.
- 14 Fredric Jameson, *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System* (Bloomington/London: Indiana University Press/BFI, 1992); Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute* (Winchester/Washington: Zero Books, 2015).
- 15 The selection of works lays no claim to being exhaustive; in particular, I have not included some high-profile but problematic and unproductive projects such as Isaac Julien’s; for a critique of his films *Kapital* and *Playtime*, see Toscano and Kinkle, 177–183. Julien has since staged a public reading of Marx’s *Capital* at the 2015 Venice Biennale: not a collective reading and discussion of the book, but a continuous reading-out loud of the text by performers.
- 16 Noël Burch, “Essay Film,” <http://www.theforgottenspace.net/static/notes.html> (last accessed on July 6, 2017). Burch does not acknowledge Hans Richter’s earlier use of the term; see Hans Richter, “Der Filmessay: Eine neue Form des Dokumentarfilms” (1940), in *Schreiben Bilder Sprechen: Texte zum essayistischen Film*, eds Christa

- Blümlinger and Constantin Wulff (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1992). Alexander Kluge dedicated his 2007 video installation at the Haus der Kunst in Munich to Richter.
- 17 While co-director Noël Burch has largely rescinded his 1960s modernism, and appears to embrace a neo-Lukácsian aesthetic, the result is fortunately not in keeping with some of Burch's stated intentions.
 - 18 "Peter Osborne in conversation with Paul Willemen," in *Working Together: Notes on British Film Collectives in the 1970s*, ed. Petra Bauer and Dan Kidner (Southend-on-Sea: Focal Point Gallery, 2013), 39.
 - 19 Adorno remarked on film in his early essay on Wagner, in the *Kulturindustrie* chapter of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, and more extensively in *Composing for the Films* (1947), which he co-authored with Hanns Eisler, and in the 1966 essay "Filmtransparente."
 - 20 Fredric Jameson, "Marx and Montage," *New Left Review* 58 (July/August 2009), 109–17.
 - 21 Burch, "Essay Film."
 - 22 The term cinemarxism is sprayed on a wall in *One Plus One* (1968). Kluge and Farocki, of course, actively participated in this aesthetic-political moment.
 - 23 Jameson, "Marx and Montage," 113.
 - 24 Burch, "Essay Film."
 - 25 Kerstin Stakemeier, "Plane Destructive: The Recent Films of Hito Steyerl," http://www.metamute.org/en/articles/plane_destructive_the_recent_films_of_hito_steyerl (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
 - 26 Theodor W. Adorno, "The Essay as Form," trans. Bon Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique* 32. (Spring–Summer, 1984), 151–71.
 - 27 See Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 3 (London: Penguin, 1991), 515.
 - 28 Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations for the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin, 1993), 750.
 - 29 See Krahl, "Thesen zum allgemeinen Verhältnis von wissenschaftlicher Intelligenz und proletarischem Klassenbewusstsein" (1969), in *Konstitution und Klassenkampf. Zur historischen Dialektik von bürgerlicher Emanzipation und proletarischer Revolution. Schriften, Reden und Entwürfe aus den Jahren 1966–1970* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Neue Kritik, 2007), 336–51. On Krahl as an early theorist of the "cognitariat" and the need for new organizational forms, see Franco "Bifo" Berardi, *The Soul at Work: From Alienation to Autonomy*, trans. Francesca Cadel and Guiseppina Mecchia (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009), 66. See also Nick Dyer-Witheford, *Cyber-Marx: Cycles and Circuits of Struggle in High-Technology Capitalism* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999); and Paolo Virno, "The General Intellect," <http://www.generation-online.org/p/fpvirno10.htm> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
 - 30 Marx already noted the integration of artistic labor in industrial capitalism in an abandoned chapter for *Capital* published by Engels in volume 3, in which he contrasts Milton with the writer who "turns out factory hack-work for the book-seller." See S. Praver's analysis of this important but underdeveloped passage, *Karl Marx and World Literature* (Oxford, New York, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1978), 308–12.
 - 31 Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Geschichte und Eigensinn* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1981), 28–38, 542–57, etc.
 - 32 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 2000), 258 (italics removed).
 - 33 Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 258 (italics removed). David Moore has rightfully criticized Negri and Hardt for privileging "informational" accumulation over other forms of contemporary primitive accumulation, which means that they effectively become

- complicit with the systemic obfuscation of these forms of labor: "Presto, we have globalized information workers. One wonders if the coltan diggers in the eastern Congo shovelling the essential mineral for cell-phones, Sony play-stations, and NASA space-stations under the guns of Rwandan-backed warlords, are 'conscious' of their new power, and whether their subjectivity was the force behind this constellation of extraction, production, and consumption." David Moore, "Hardt and Negri's Empire and Real Empire: The Terrors of 9–11 and After," <http://www.acme-journal.org/vol2/Moore.pdf> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
- 34 See David Riff, "'Is this for real?' A Close Reading of *In Free Fall* by Hito Steyerl," <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0311/riff/en> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
 - 35 Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2005), 38–39, 345–472.
 - 36 The *locus classicus* is of course the passage in *The German Ideology*. Late in his life, in *Anti-Dühring*, Engels used a related example to drive home the point, contra Eugen Dühring, that labor has no intrinsic value and that "production is most encouraged by a mode of distribution which allows all members of society to develop, maintain, and exercise their capacities with maximum universality. It is true that, to the mode of thought of the educated classes which Herr Dühring has inherited, it must seem monstrous that in time to come there will no longer be any professional porters or architects, and that the man who for half an hour gives instructions as an architect will also act as a porter for a period, until his activity as an architect is once again required. A fine sort of socialism that would be—perpetuating professional porters!" See Frederick Engels, *Anti-Duehring. Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, in *MECW: vol. 25 General Works 1844–1895* (New York: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975), 186.
 - 37 Praver, *Karl Marx and World Literature*, 80, 206 (Schiller), 290–91 (Fourier).
 - 38 See also Sven Lütticken, "The Coming Exception: Art and the Crisis of Value," *New Left Review* 99 (May–June 2016), 111–36.
 - 39 Jodi Dean discusses Metcalfe's Law in *The Communist Horizon* (London/New York: Verso, 2012), 129.
 - 40 Marx, *Grundrisse*, 705.
 - 41 Marx, *Grundrisse*, 705–706.
 - 42 For early comments by Negri on the rift between labor and value, in the context of a discussion of inflation, see "Crisis of the Planner-State: Communism and Revolutionary Organization" (1971), in *Books for Burning: Between Civil War and Democracy in 1970s Italy*, trans. Francesca Novella and Timothy S. Murphy (London/New York: Verso, 2005), 1–50. On labor time and the dissolution of the "discrete and manoeuvrable time" of classic industrial capitalism in "The Constitution of Time" (1981), in *Time for Revolution*, trans. Matteo Mandarini (New York: Continuum, 2003), 19–135.
 - 43 Diedrich Diederichsen has argued that the value of an artwork is created not simply by the artist, but also in part by other parties that invest their time—critics, collectors, all kinds of viewers. This is a fair point, one that can in fact be extended to all kinds of media products; it is a staple of post-Fordist theorizing that viewers or users now produce surplus value. Diedrich Diederichsen, *On (Surplus) Value in Art* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008); and Diedrich Diederichsen, "Time, Object, Commodity," *Texte zur Kunst*, 88 (December 2012), <http://www.textezurkunst.de/88/time-object-commodity/> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
 - 44 "Jean-Luc Godard speaks with Daniel Cohn-Bendit: A Smile that Dismisses the Universe," <http://cinemasparagus.blogspot.nl/2010/05/jean-luc-godard-speaks-with-daniel-cohn.html> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).

- 45 See the technical specs here: <http://www.theforgottenspace.net/static/info.html>.
- 46 The password-protected Vimeo link is today's equivalent of the physical DVD viewing copies that artists and galleries handed out in the previous decade. See my article "Viewing Copies: On the Mobility of Moving Images," *e-flux journal*, no. 8 (September 2009), <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/08/61380/viewing-copies-on-the-mobility-of-moving-images/> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
- 47 Hito Steyerl, "Is a Museum a Factory?," *e-flux journal*, no. 7 (June 2009): n.p., <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/71> (last accessed on July 6, 2017).
- 48 Steyerl, "Is a Museum a Factory?"
- 49 Marx, *Grundrisse*, 92.
- 50 These examples are taken from a number of films made during the Rio de Janeiro Labour in a Single Shot workshop.
- 51 <http://www.labour-in-a-single-shot.net>; http://www.hkw.de/en/programm/projekte/2015/eine_einstellung_zur_arbeit/eine_einstellung_zur_arbeit_start.php (last accessed on July 6, 2017). I reviewed the HKW show for Mute (<http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/taking-potshots-labour> [last accessed on July 6, 2017]), and parts of my texts have been repurposed here.