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Book Part — Manuscript Version (Preprint)

The studio in the firm: a study of four artistic intervention residencies

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Suggested Citation: Berthoin Antal, Ariane (2015) : The studio in the firm: a study of four artistic intervention residencies, In: Farías, Ignacio Wilkie, Alex (Ed.): Studio studies: operations, topologies and displacements, ISBN 978-1-315-75652-3, Routledge, London and New York, NY, pp. 175-190

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/162174>

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The Studio in the Firm: A Study of Four Artistic Intervention Residencies

A somewhat shorter, revised version of this book chapter has been published in Fariás, I., & Wilkie, A. (Eds.), *Studio Studies: Operations, Sites, Displacements* in 2016, available online: <https://www.routledge.com/Studio-Studies-Operations-Topologies--Displacements/Farias-Wilkie/p/book/9781138798717>

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Seeking new spaces in which and with which to work, and new opportunities to influence society, some artists have been crossing the cultural divide between the world of the arts and the world of organizations by engaging in artistic interventions in companies. The first documented experiments of this kind started in the UK and the US in the 1970s and 1980s; they have multiplied since 2000, particularly in Europe (Stephens 2001; Berthoin Antal 2009). This phenomenon could be interpreted as yet another form of flight from the “private place, an ivory tower perhaps” of the studio (Buren 1979/2010: 156).

Many different kinds of organizations outside the artworld are bringing in artistic intervention residencies; in this chapter I draw on an example in a privately owned French company that I studied over a three year period. From January 2008 to July 2010 the company hosted four residencies, during which the artists (including one collective) spent five months working in the heart of the modern business district of Paris, La Défense. Each residency closed with an exhibition and a catalogue, respecting the codes of the artworld.¹ The example is particularly useful because it encompasses four different residencies. Therefore, it offers the possibility of discovering whether there is a single model or multiple ways of using the studio in the firm for research, production and exhibition. In addition the case provides a basis for learning from experience over time about how the actors from the world of the arts and the world of business identified curatorial needs and developed responses to them.

The chapter starts by introducing the context, then describes each of the four artistic intervention residencies I studied. This empirical section shows how the artists found their own way of creating in and with the organizational context, and made their own arrangements for engaging with employees in the various phases of the process. Each artistic intervention residency thereby redefined anew the space and practice of a studio in the firm. The chapter then turns to the tandem intermediary constellation that accompanied the artists in crossing the divide between the world of the arts and the world of the organization, thus offering a new conception of curation. It closes with a reflection on the possibilities of mutual learning processes.

¹ The catalogues documenting each residency as well as a fifth one reflecting back on the whole program can be downloaded from the website created for the residency program. Media clippings are also available there: <http://www.eurogroup.fr/-La-Residence-d-artistes->

Contextualizing artistic interventions in organizations

Artists' engagements in non-arts based organizations are taking many forms, lasting from a few hours to years, with all kinds of art, and different degrees of participation by members of the organization (Darsø 2004; Berthoin Antal 2009, 2014). A significant differentiator is whether the intention is to work with employees on issues in the organization by drawing on artistic sensibilities and practices or rather to create art *in situ* that is destined to be recognized by the art world. The former interaction may inspire an artistic product outside the organizational context, but the creation of art for the artworld is not the focus of the intervention. The latter, which I characterize as 'artistic intervention residencies' (Berthoin Antal 2012), essentially entail transposing the studio into the firm. Artists who undertake such residencies nourish their creativity by interacting with the space and the people who work there. They take the risk of exposing themselves and their processes to the gaze and questioning of employees, thereby offering people outside the artworld the unusual opportunity to discover artistic practices.

Artistic intervention residencies in organizations raise various questions about studio practice. How do artists go about developing and realizing their ideas in the studio in the firm? As the French artist Daniel Buren pointed out in his seminal essay problematizing the studio, "the studio is a place of multiple activities ... production, storage, and finally, if all goes well, distribution" (1979/2010:157). Other artists and curators add the preparatory phase before production, when the studio is "the place where lightning supposedly strikes" (Storr 2010:62), which may entail "puttering" (Smith 2010:28), reflection: "I reflect, make notes, begin to order my thoughts and in time bring things into shape" (Lawson 2010:121), or active research (Billier 2006; Farías in this volume). Grabner describes the post-modern studio as "ad hoc and fractured, no longer the sole site of artistic enterprise" (2010:4). To what extent does the studio in the firm replace or complement artists' use of other studio spaces for research, production and exhibition?

The movement of the studio into the firm affects not only the artists themselves, it also has implications for other actors and functions in the artworld. While the traditional studio is "a filter which allows the artist to select his work screened from public view, and curators and dealers to select in turn that work to be seen by others" (Buren 1979/2010: 157), the studio in the firm implies new curatorial roles. Building on Becker's (1982) discussion of the editing function in the artworld, Acord (2013) highlights the meaning-making role of curators for the preparation of an exhibition. However, if employees may gaze upon the artist at work before the art is exhibited, the meaning-making role of curation starts much earlier than the moment of installation. Given the current discussion about the changing nature of curation, in which "curating becomes a wide-reaching category for various organizational forms, co-operative models, and collaborative structures within contemporary cultural practice" (O'Neill 2010:8), the studio in the firm offers another context to explore. What kind of constellation of actors is emerging to fulfill the curatorial needs in this setting?

The literature on artistic interventions in organizations has addressed the phenomenon from many angles, but has not yet considered the company as a studio space in which artists engage in

research, production and exhibition under the gaze and questioning of employees. Scholars studying post-studio practices triggered by Buren's (1979/2010) challenge to the modern studio have explored many sites, but have not attended to the studio in the firm. Organizational scholars have identified the multiple roles that intermediaries play in connecting the world of the arts with the world of organizations (Berthoin Antal 2012; Grzelec and Prata 2013; Johansson Sköldbberg and Woodilla 2014). The analysis here takes a different perspective by relating to the artworld's discussion about the 'curatorial turn' (O'Neill 2007). This chapter therefore offers something new to both bodies of literature by examining four artistic intervention residencies in a company to see how artists create and use studio space there, and to discover new possibilities for curatorial constellations.

The case of the *Résidence d'artistes* program at Eurogroup Consulting

Eurogroup Consulting is a Paris-based strategic management consultancy. The company was established in 1982 by four business school graduates who had worked at the international consultancy Peat Marwick (before it became KPMG). Eurogroup Consulting grew rapidly to some hundred consultants in the mid-1990s and more than tripled in size within the following ten years. At the time under study company had thirty-five partners and some 500 consultants in France. They have particular expertise in financial services, manufacturing and utilities, and the public sector. From the outset the founders had a European vision, and in 2009 their company became a European Group with partner operations in 20 countries.

The idea of the *Résidence d'artistes* program at Eurogroup Consulting was sparked off by a conversation over dinner. In 2006 Julien Eyméri, a consultant, happened to be seated next to an artist during a dinner in Paris. Despite their initial assumptions that they shared nothing in common, over the course of the meal their discussion grew into curiosity about what might happen if members of their two very different worlds participated in a process of mutual discovery. Julien left the dinner inspired to propose the idea to his company. His later conversations with artists and with people who had worked with artists in organizations persuaded him that it was worth embarking on a process whereby artists and their practices might "hold up a mirror" to the company and enable the members to see themselves and their work in new ways. He also believed that interactions with the artists and their work might bring fresh perspectives on the societal context in which the company was operating and its employees were living and working.

Julien recommend to his board that the company commit itself to a residency program over a period of two years, with four residencies, each lasting about five months, which would create new situations and new works. Julien reasoned that exposure to different artists would be needed to keep disturbing and surprising the organisation. He intended to focus on visual art with conceptual artists, and he did not want Eurogroup Consulting employees to settle on one idea of what that means in terms of artistic process or product. By getting the commitment for a four-

part program from the outset, he also wanted to avoid the pressure on the first residency to prove it was worth having an artist in the organisation. The artists would work regularly in the company during their residency, with access throughout the organisation, and employees would be able to meet with them easily and see work-in-progress.

The first residency began in January 2008, shortly after the company had moved into new office quarters in the Tour Vista, one of the tall towers in La Défense. Evidence of the ability to work under the gaze of an organisation was one of the elements that played a role in the selection of all the artists for the residency program. Other criteria were that the artists must be exhibiting their work in the artworld, and that their motivation for the residency somehow connects with Eurogroup Consulting, by relating to or reflecting on the nature of consulting and/or to the space in which consultants work.

I started studying the project in the fall of 2008, just after the first residency had ended, and continued half a year after it was completed in order to understand the experience from the perspective of the different stakeholders involved in the project: employees, the participating artists, the project organizers, and advisors from the art world. My data collection included individual and group interviews, observations of interactions in context, a web-based survey of all employees after the program ended, and a review of documentation prepared by the company and articles by journalists in the business and art media. (Berthoin Antal 2011)

Four versions of the studio in the firm

The artist chosen to launch the program was Igor Antic (January-June 2008). The second was Renaud August-Dormeuil (October 2008-February 2009), followed by Barbara Noiret (April-October 2009). For the last residency in the program, Eurogroup invited three artists, the Collectif 1.0.3 (February-July 2010). Each artist decided how and where to create their studio in the firm for research', production, and exhibition.

Igor Antic: Please disturb the artist in his studio

Igor had already been an artist-in-residence in ten other organizations, but this was his first experience in a private company, “I believe that art is research. I came to Eurogroup knowing practically nothing.”² So he spent the first four months of his time as a “free electron”, walking around, talking with people throughout the organization, and attending meetings. “I decided to dive into the company, be with the consultants and with their clients to understand how they work.”

He noticed similarities. For example, “As an *in situ* artist, I study the situation and place, then I propose an artwork taking this into consideration. I come with nothing, and start from there. The

² Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations are from my interviews, and I have translated them from the original French.

consultants do almost the same. They start a mission and have to understand the problem in the context very quickly.” However, here similarity ended. He was struck by their use of language and materials, which he found very different from his own and he did not understand them. Igor realized that, “if I try to understand things the way they understand them, it will never work, it is too different, our training is too different.” He therefore decided, “to rely on my intuition, and I tried to understand how they use their intuition in their work.” The differences in sense-making processes and time-frames were particularly stark. “Imagine, sometimes they asked me to summarize what I had seen/understood in a meeting. That is impossible! We artists need time to reflect, to digest, then to transform that into a result with form, and *then* we have something to share with others.”

Among the questions that arose from his observations were: “How does a human being function, use his or her creativity in a different job?” “What do consultants talk about when they are not talking about work?” He wanted to reveal the human side of things in the organization, and the “collective subconscious of the company,” a term he discovered in a management text. One of his research methods was to write an email to all the employees inviting them to send him Powerpoint slides (a ubiquitous tool in consulting) about their life in Eurogroup Consulting. Another was to invite consultants for coffee to talk about their understanding of ‘vision’, a term he realized they used completely differently than he did as an artist. He also collected some of the drawings that consultants produced on flipcharts during meetings.

After the first four months of roaming around the organization, Igor turned one of the meeting rooms into his production studio to make four works of art. It was located on the 22nd floor of the Tour Vista, where there is also a coffee bar around which people congregate several times a day. Igor hung a sign on the door “*prière de déranger*” (please disturb), so the studio was accessible and employees could come and see the artist working on things with different materials, although they did not discover the final form until the works were unveiled at the *vernissage* (See the catalogue: http://www.eurogroup.fr/IMG/pdf/Catalogue_Igor_Antic.pdf). Each piece plays with the codes of the organization. As Igor explained to a journalist, ascribing the view that “an artist is by nature a bit subversive,” his intention is to “project a deforming mirror of what he captures” (*Capital Privé Magazine* 2008: 9, my translation).

Urgent et confidentiel: Five photographs of the coffee grounds left at the bottom of the cups used by consultants in a conversation with the artist about “vision,” subtitled with texts that were inspired by the interpretation of a clairvoyant the artist had invited to sit in the next room and read the coffee grounds.

- *Urgent et confidentiel*: Five photographs of the coffee grounds left at the bottom of the cups used by consultants in a conversation with the artist about ‘vision’, subtitled with texts that were inspired by the interpretation of a clairvoyant the artist had invited to sit in the next room and read the coffee grounds.
- *IA Value Network*: Installation of framed flipcharts drawn by consultants and subtitled by the artist.

- *Poka-Yoke*: Sixteen puzzle-like objects with the names of people in the company and consulting phrases, using the color scheme of the meeting space on the 22nd floor.
- *Orgasmigramme*: A 20-minute video montage of the responses from employees to the artist's invitation to submit Powerpoint slides about their view of life in the company.

In summary, the first artistic intervention residency in the consultancy began by transforming the whole organization into a studio – as a space of exploration and exchange. After four months Igor claimed one room as his production studio. There, he spent the last month of his residency creating works that reflect on the organization as a whole. Here, the studio, as a site of production, implies a boundary demarcation that needs to be counteracted with a sign inviting members the organization to be part of the studio in the firm. Igor's final exhibition space was the meeting area that employees use informally for coffee breaks and into which they also bring customers to work.

Renaud Auguste-Dormeuil: Temporary annex of the artworld

Renaud was the only artist who arrived with a specific idea for an artwork to be created during the residency. On arrival, he immediately converted the meeting room with the most spectacular view across Paris into his studio. He wanted to address the theme of disappearance by 'erasing' Paris by night. His approach combined research and production in his studio in the firm because he studied the glittering lights of Paris at night city lights each night and experimented with different ways of eliminating them from view, one by one. The first step of production was to transform the bright room into two small, dark spaces, leaving just a seat in the middle for a single viewer to look at the scenery, which the artist progressively blacked-out with two black dots (he discovered in his research that one dot did not suffice to dupe the two-eyed observer). His project required that he work primarily at night, but he invited employees to enter his studio at almost any time. Renaud was offering employees a constantly changing and ongoing experience of the artwork-in-progress, and, as such, the exhibition overlapped with his research and production.

One of the reasons that Renaud was particularly attracted to working in Eurogroup Consulting was that it offered him the opportunity to engage with people who know little about contemporary art. He had a political agenda of wanting to interest people in it. "Usually I wait in my atelier for things to come to me, then I produce my art and send it out to be exhibited out there. And usually people come to me and say 'I like your work and want to exhibit it.' Here, for the first time, I have the opportunity to show my art to people who are not won over already." He had no idea what would happen, and felt vulnerable exposing himself and work process for an ambitious project he was not sure he would succeed in creating. Renaud discovered that many conversations sparked by the experience of being in his studio in the company were meaningful. "They ask good questions, like the ones I am posing in making the project," and they talked about many themes, such as taste, mental images, and fear of failing. People wondered, "Why do you take the risk of doing something that might not work out?"

Renaud's choice of the meeting room was a conscious challenge to the organizational culture in several ways. He wanted "to impose the art object into the workplace and get people thereby to talk about the question, the sense of art", evoking Dirie's (2011, 34) characterization of the studio as "a space temporarily annexed to the artworld". In addition, he wanted people to enter into the space alone, because in the company the people tend to work in groups, enter the meeting room in groups, and share their ideas in groups. He challenged them to suspend this norm and build their own impressions individually first, then give words to them and speak about them, defend their own point of view rather than immediately have a collective experience. "When I suggest that they should enter the room alone, it is about breaking with the social model of collegiality in the company, and getting the individual point of view to come back. I am present to explain to people that what they are doing is significant." In response to my question about whether he felt that it was working, he responded "Yes! People are talking about the room, not about me. They are asking questions about the art object, not about my presence." Another challenge to the organizational culture was double-sided, combining a way of differentiating himself from the first artistic intervention residency with a mirroring to the consulting company about its own approach: "Yes, I did want to take power by taking that meeting room, acting differently from Igor. That is violent in their work and in the company: a way of establishing power. Consultants do that too, they go into other companies, take over space and tell people what to do."

The *finissage* date for Black Out was determined by the moon's cycle.³ Even though employees had seen the work emerging over the five months of the artistic intervention residency, the artist still felt it as "the moment of unveiling, when he accepts to be naked." The work-in-progress that the employees experienced in the meeting room that had been metamorphosed into a studio became an ephemeral artwork. What remains is a negative photograph of the scene, which the artist produced in an external studio after the residency. (See the catalogue: http://www.eurogroupeconsulting.fr/IMG/pdf/Catalogue_Renaud_Auguste_Dormeuil.pdf.)

- *I Was There, Power Black Out, January 30, 2009, Paris, 40°53'02.94" N_02°14'55.25"E*

The artist explained that by "destroying Black Out and leaving only a different imprint from what people had experienced, I am appealing to the story, the word, the intimate. To talk about Black Out, people will only be able to refer to their memories." (Dirie 2011:34; my translation).

In summary, Renaud had started his research before entering the organization. Then he immediately declared one room to be his studio for the entire period of his residency, and he used the space in parallel for research, production and exhibition. His choice was a conscious

³ From my notes about that night: The Tour Eiffel was still visible, only the top had been blacked out. He had left the Tour itself visible as an orientation. When I was in the room, I tried to figure out how I was supposed to sit in order not to see, which is an amusing exercise—where did the artist need me to sit in order not to see Paris/to see his achievement? The artist is not present but is making me shift from right to left, up and down, a bit like a puppeteer.

provocation to the organization and his studio practice was essentially a temporary annex of the artworld in the firm. Like Igor, he invited employees to cross the boundary he had erected by declaring the space to be his studio, but the invitation to individuals was a conscious contravention of the organization's norm for using the room for group meetings. The studio served as exhibition space for experiencing his ongoing process and as a catalyst for conversations beyond its boundary.

Barbara Noiret: Portable Studio

Barbara always works *in situ*. Before being chosen by Eurogroup she had focused on sites of memory, like historical sites and chateaux. She did not want to be labelled as someone who only works on the past, so the opportunity to work in a new very modern building, where people are trying to go further in their thinking and develop new ideas for the future is good for her. In addition, she was attracted to the Eurogroup Consulting residency program “because I am also interested in nomads, the idea of nomads, and the consultants move all the time. They have several projects at a time, and they work at the clients' offices, and when they come here they have their materials in lockers and when they come they can choose to work anywhere in the building.” She drew a parallel between their working mode and her own: “I am also a nomad, I have never had an atelier, I work in new places each time.”

Like Renaud, Barbara was aware of being compared with her predecessors in the program. “For them it is important to position me in relation to what they already know.” She pointed out similarities and differences from the outset. “In fact, I am a bit like Igor, starting without projects. The difference is that I will put in place ephemeral installations, like a projection and a performance (for example with musicians and dancers), and film them.”

During her artistic intervention residency in Eurogroup Consulting, Barbara did not ask for a specific space for her studio. She enacted the ‘nomadic’ by making the entire organization her studio. By entering spaces, she discovered the cultural codes relating to the use of space and language in the organization. For example, she learned how nomadic consultants establish their place because she “was about to sit down at an empty place at the table, but someone said that the place is occupied. Each one knows where they are going to sit. Their place.” In discovering the codes for herself, she revealed them to the members of the organization. She was struck at a meeting she attended by the visual vocabulary people were using. “I commented on that in the meeting, showing them how they had used different images when they had spoken. They were surprised because they had not been aware. They were really interested in my observations, so my presence was also revealing for them.” She sees herself “as an intermediary between the person and his or her environment, to create links and reveal things.”

In fact, meetings turned out to be one of her primary portable studio spaces for research. She made audio or visual recordings, focusing the camera on what others were not attending to. For example, instead of capturing people's faces she focused on the objects on the table and how the hands reached out to them. She challenged herself to work in a new way, putting herself in the same production mode and time frame as the consultants: after every meeting, she sent them an

email with a kind of "report," usually an image she created of an aspect of the situation that had struck her. For example, noticing how the consultants worked through their lunch breaks, she created a montage of a sushi-box inside the screen of a notebook computer. She found the different kinds of responses to these reports interesting. Some people said they remembered the lunch meeting, others said the image was a sad comment on the reality of their working life. And sometimes people saw something she had not seen herself. For example, someone said the picture reflects that they 'feed' their computers. After another meeting she spliced the recording of the conversation and surprised the participants by the formulations they had used. She was constantly collecting and producing impressions in the organization, exhibiting them on her screen and that of the employees. Much of this material went into her final exhibition in enlarged formats. All the research and production was done on-site, except for the montage of a film, when she worked with a colleague in his technically equipped studio. Barbara's closing exhibition was not limited to the meeting area on the 22nd floor where the first two had been held. Instead she spread it over two floors, because she wanted to exhibit in the space that people work, and in spaces that had inspired the works. (See the catalogue: http://www.eurogroupeconsulting.fr/IMG/pdf/Catalogue_Barbara_Noiret.pdf.) Among her many pieces were:

- *REX*, a photograph chosen from the series of "reports" she made after meetings. The name "REX" refers to the acronym the consultants use for sharing experience after a project, "*retour d'expérience*".
- *Vista In/Out*, and *Vista Out/In*: Photograph dyptichs contrasting scenes inside and outside the Tour Vista.
- *Dans l'art, on est plutôt dans l'être*: Photograph montage combining multiple perspectives on the 21st floor.
- *Partition pour une routine*: Composition using spliced recording of a meeting. At the *vernissage* this piece was integrated into a performance in which a violinist improvised a response to the recording.
- *Communautés*: Video installation of multiple sequences from a corporate seminar.

In summary, Barbara, like Igor, transformed the whole organization into a place of study, research, exploration and inspiration. Like Renaud, she combined research and production throughout the residency, but in a portable studio rather than a fixed location: her studio was wherever she took her laptop computer in the firm and sometimes in clients' offices. Unlike the two artists who had preceded her, she did not retreat to a fixed and bounded space to produce her works. Her portable studio in the organization served as a production site, with the same type of technology and communication infrastructures as the employees use for their work. She worked in external studios when she needed some specialist technical support (e.g. film production and large format printing). She exhibited her work throughout the duration of the residency, like Renaud. Unlike him, however, she showed the outcomes of her reflections rather than revealing the process, and she used the employees' computers rather than the organization' walls for these works by sending pieces to employees as attachments to emails. Barbara's final exhibition

covered more organizational space than the first two, spanning two floors and it added an aural dimension with a sound installation and performance.

Collectif 1.0.3: Multiple studios in the firm

Anne Couzon Cesca and the twin brothers, Arnaud and François Bernus, formed the *Collectif 1.0.3* straight after graduating from art school, eight years before starting their artistic intervention residency at Eurogroup Consulting. They were wondering “how to re-distinguish ourselves,” so one rationale for undertaking the program was the opportunity to explore novel ways of working as a collective: together and separately. At first all three came to the company daily, “Being together is also a way of protecting each other, being safe.” After a month they, “felt protected in Eurogroup” and took turns coming in one at a time. They conducted their research together, developed ideas together, and then decided who would realize an idea.

Every week the artists sent around email messages that hinted where the next ephemeral sculpture would pop up, perturbing the consultants who expect clear, concise messages. The artists contrasted their approach to that of their predecessors, which they heard about from people in the organization who had experienced the earlier residencies: “Igor and Barbara’s work was clear, simple, evident to understand, it was easy for people to project themselves into it. Ours is more complex, and we want to be enigmatic.” They enjoyed veiling some of their work. “We tell them without telling them that we are working on a cartography that will be a kind of portrait of them. We have shown fragments, which they do not understand. At the *vernissage* the curtain will be raised.”

Besides their studio on the 16th floor and the weekly new studio spaces they suddenly occupied throughout the company to create their ephemeral sculptures, the *Collectif 1.0.3* had additional external studio spaces during their artistic intervention residency. There were several reasons for working in other studios. One was that the three artists shared the residency stipend from Eurogroup Consulting and worked on other projects in parallel to supplement their income. Another reason, a member explained was that “I have to work at home first, I can’t start here straight away, have to warm up to it.” A third reason for working elsewhere part of the time is that the realization of some of their ideas required equipment that was not available onsite.

The employees engaged with the process and output of the *Collectif 1.0.3* in various ways. They often took pictures of the ephemeral white booklet sculptures with their mobile phones, sometimes then using the image on their computer. One day a kind of scarecrow sculpture appeared across the hall from the artists’ studio space, anonymously made by some employees. I discovered who they were and asked about it. They told me that they had envied the fun they saw the artists having working together, and decided to try to respond in kind. In another case, a consultant offered to advise them on how to improve their ability to “align their intention and their practice”, after watching the *Collectif 1.0.3* perform “*Conférence équitable*” halfway through their residency. The artists were delighted, because they had wanted to ask the consultants to consult for them, but did not want to ask outright! So they decided to film him advising them and they integrated the footage in the *vernissage*. Another kind of engagement

came from a receptionist who had has “a fantastic memory for faces and participated in the process as a game, looking for matches” when she learned about the project that involved changing faces on banknotes.

The topic of what work and identity looks and feels like in the consulting world and the artworld was in the air throughout the four-part artistic intervention residency program. By the time the Collectif 1.0.3 arrived, there were many points of comparison. These artists pointed out that “we have a certain definition of work. It is important for all artists to do it seriously. We used to try to prove that ‘this is art.’ But that has changed. Now we have to show that ‘this is work!’” Referring back to their predecessors, they observed “Barbara sent her emails to show to people that she was working, and how she was working. Renaud was not seen at work, because he worked mainly at night. Although his room was open. Actually, he was totally opposed to proving that he was working. We play with the idea of having to provide proof.” Several comparisons emerged in the conversations. The artists characterized their style of working as “not the direct kind of development along a line that they are used to, it is more ‘tentacle-like’. We irrigate ourselves from everything and we irrigate everywhere.” They explained that being an artist “is like sinking your hands into murky water, where you cannot see what is in there, and then little by little trying to create some sense from it,” adding that “our work translates the tensions and the challenges we feel people are experiencing here.” A key difference between the work of consultants and of artists raised by some employees related to the concept of vocation. “The consultants say that they do not have a vocation. They see us as courageous for having chosen to pursue our vocation.”

The *vernissage*, which was held in the meeting area on the 22nd floor, showed seven works, including photographs of two of the ephemeral white booklet sculptures. (The Collectif 1.0.3 was prolific and the catalogue contains many more works. <http://www.eurogroupconsulting.fr/IMG/pdf/collectif-1-0-3.pdf> .)

- *Planiscope Version Eurogroup Consulting*: A “portrait” of the organization using traces of knowledge management files on the company’s server.
- *Roll’ywood version Money Pics*: An installation of computer screens and banknotes from around the world, with the original faces and the similar faces of employees.
- *Monsieur Conscience* and *Monsieur Prudence*: Installations in two glass-walled meeting rooms, using the names of two Eurogroup consultants and safety nets in the ceiling, above the people rather than below them.
- *Cosa Machina 4* and *Cosa Machina 5*: Computer installations playing with the notion of time spent waiting while computers re-load.
- *Min. Spirit ou Opportunity*: A space-vessel-like machine that projects drawings of the ephemeral booklet sculptures at regular intervals.

In summary, the Collectif 1.0.3 enacted multiple studios in the firm and outside. They used a dedicated studio space in the firm as a base, but unlike the first two studios, this one was

boundaryless. In addition, their practice also entailed engaging in research, production, and exhibition all over the company and throughout their residency. They offered employees the opportunity to gaze on ephemeral performances of the risky process of creating ephemeral sculptures, claiming space on various floors for these exhibitions during the residency. Furthermore, they used external studio space for warming up and for some of their research and production.

Curating the artistic intervention residencies

Artists who dare to cross the boundary into the world of business by engaging in artistic intervention residencies take risks in both the world of the organization and the world of the arts. By working in the studio in the firm, they leave what Buren (1979/2010:157) characterized as the ‘private place’ over which they preside. While they make themselves vulnerable by exposing themselves and their creative process to the gaze and questioning of employees, they cannot count on being protected or understood in their own world. Artists and art critics express concern that artists who are paid for their work in a company are selling out to the corporate world. As one of the artists reported, “some artists say that artists who work with companies are corrupt.” When Julien negotiated with the board to launch the residency program, he was aware of this two-sided problem. He devised ways to address it that can be characterized in cultural and organizational theory terms as fulfilling the functions of an intermediary (Negus 2002; McGuire and Matthews 2012; Berthoin Antal 2012). Looking at what he did from the perspective of literature in the artworld the terminology shifts to curation. This case therefore offers the opportunity to study an experiment with a curatorial approach to the whole process of temporarily embedding the artists and their studios in the firm. It can be seen as an example of an emergent curation that “engenders new practices, new meanings, values and relations” (O’Neill 2010: 6). However, the actors in the organization are embarking on new territory alone. The literature on curation still focuses on what happens in the artworld and those writers do not envisage curation of relations between, artworks and spaces in the firm, let alone between artists and employees during the processes of research, production and exhibition (O’Neill 2010, Smith 2012, Acord 2013).

So what did Julien do? From the very beginning, he contacted people in the artworld to advise him and he negotiated with his board that he would work on the residency program in tandem with the art critic and curator, Clément Dirié. They put in place a framework to address the needs of the artists as members of the artworld. The budget not only covered an honorarium for the artists but provided for the production and the purchase of artworks made in each residency as well. Important ways of valorising the artists’ work in the code of the artworld were the commitment to organise an exhibition at the end of each residency, to which art critics and other artists were invited, and to publish a catalogue for each artist.

Another cornerstone to his approach was that he suspended the dominant logic of his world by rejecting an instrumental relationship with the arts in the residency program. An instrumental stance would have been normal in his company, and is indeed a constant (problematic) theme in

the discourse on artistic interventions in organizations (Berthoin Antal and Strauß 2013). Julien wanted employees to have the opportunity to see and talk with artists at work, offering a context in which the conceptions and practices from the two worlds would confront each other. He knew it was a risky venture, but he believed it would be and felt strongly that it was important to enter into the process in an open way. Therefore, he suspended the normal business approach in consulting in which the term ‘objectives’ is tied to definable results, and instead wrote contracts that gave the artists *carte blanche* to develop their ideas.

All the artists emphasized having experienced the freedom and support that this approach offered them in the heart of the business world. They felt that they were “taking a risk, and the organization too. Here at Eurogroup we sensed that they were willing to accept the possibility that things might not work, might fall flat.” An artist in the early residencies felt the additional burden of responsibility for the overall program at Eurogroup Consulting, fearing that if his project failed “it would put the whole project at stake, the whole project of the residency.” They appreciated the way time and value were framed around the residency in the company, in contrast to the way these aspects are often treated in society today: “It is vulgar, simply vulgar, to try to get value too quickly, with no courage. You have to let things grow and emerge with more distance.”

A third aspect of Julien and Clément’s curation of the artistic intervention residencies entailed meaning-making by helping employees understand and appreciate contemporary art. The residency program was accompanied by guided visits to exhibits in museums and art fairs, a series of invited lecturers from artworld actors, and a small collection of art books to borrow. The artists appreciated these intermediary activities of translation to help employees understand the artworld, as did many employees. A few employees resisted such pedagogy, saying “you are killing the mystery by explaining it.”

The curatorial approach that Julien put in place held moments of irritation for the two worlds. For example, the *vernissages* in the company brought together employees, corporate customers, gallery owners, and art critics. Transforming the 22nd floor into a gallery disturbed the space the employees knew as their work space, while it brought members of the artworld into the heart of business space. The situation turned everyone there into insiders of one world and yet also outsiders of the other world.

The artists moved on to new projects after their time in Eurogroup Consulting, having added to their repertoire of methods and to their portfolios. Julien and the board decided to stick to the original plan of four residencies and did not extend the program. But the artistic intervention residencies left traces of their presence in the company in the memory of employees and in the form of artworks that continue to spark questions and feed conversations (Bessière 2013).

Concluding reflections

Artist's residencies in non-artistic organisations offer artists the opportunity to make new choices about their studio practice. The four examples in this case confirm that there is a "considerable extension of the definition of the artist's studio" (Billier 2006: 28), which "can be dematerialized or relocated" (Billier 2006:22). They show how each artist defined and opened the boundaries for their studios in the firm differently, as well as how differently they distributed or combined their processes of research, production and exhibition in their various studios inside and outside the firm over the course of their residencies. One artist conducted his research throughout the firm before confining his production to a dedicated space for production in the firm; another worked throughout the residency in one space, which he reformatted completely to enable his research and production as well as the viewing of his artwork. The third artist had a portable studio which she took wherever she was in the firm, in the form of a notebook computer, which she used for the research, production and distribution of her artwork. The artists' collective had multiple temporary studios distributed throughout the firm, many of which they used to research, produce and display ephemeral works. Two of the artists combined their studios in the firm with external studio spaces, partially in order to use special technical equipment, partially in order to retain their "safe" art space. These cases therefore also illustrate the emerging phenomenon of artists working in larger studio networks. If so much variety is possible within a single firm, how many more possibilities must there be still to be tried (and studied) in an era that has been characterized as "the fall of the studio" (Davidts and Paice 2009).

These cases are interesting because they are not just about new places to observe artists at work; but rather they are about the interactions between members of two worlds at work (Billier 2006). Artistic intervention residencies stretch the concept of artists-in-residence because they entail engaging with the employees in their context, trying to understand their codes and playing with them. The process is as important as the outcome, and both kinds of stakeholders take risks in revealing themselves personally and professionally to each other. When artists leave their private studio and work in the studio in the firm under the gaze and questioning of employees, they cannot "disguise themselves and conceal their process" (Storr 2010: 62). Similarly, employees experience the vulnerability that comes with having their organizational practices challenged, taboos revealed, codes broken, and professional masks removed. It is this special kind of mutual risk-taking that lays the groundwork for learning with and from each other across the cultural divide in an artistic intervention residency.

Afterwards, the artists return to their own world, while the employees remain in their work space with the traces of the experience to remind them of the questioning that underpinned the creating of which they were a part. The traces the artists leave behind can take various forms: the studio space; the visible artworks, and the stories they engender. After the departure of the artists, the rooms revert to their former use, but the spirit of the studio space can stay alive, "the not knowing part and always being surprised" as Bruce Nauman describes it (2010: 66; see also Berthoin Antal 2013). The experience of engaging with the artists can continue to reverberate in conversations in the organization among those who experienced the artistic intervention

residency--and beyond. When newcomers come with questions about the objects, employees may find themselves becoming storytellers, with the curiosity-laden and provocative voices of the artists ringing in their ears, thereby renewing the learning process.

These cases also suggest that the studio-in-the-firm requires more curatorial attention than the installation of the artworks at the end of the residency. The approach taken in this artistic intervention residency develops the current discourse around the curatorial turn in two ways: it extends the process and the agents. First, rather than focusing primarily on the closing exhibition, curation started at the beginning of the process that brought the world of the arts into the world of the organization, accompanying the artists and the employees along their new journey. Second, the process entailed sharing the curatorial role between members of both worlds, rather than entrusting it entirely to the art expert. The knowledge and sensibilities of the representative of the world of the organization were as significant those of his partner from the world of the arts. Might such process orientation and partnerships enrich curation in art organizations as well as in the corporate setting? The past decade has brought much pressure on art organizations to learn from business, with the problematic expectation that imposing the norms and practices from business will improve arts management (Chong 2010). The experience in this project suggests that shared learning journeys are likely to generate more valuable insights and energy for change than the current preaching down one-way streets.

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