



Curatorial DREAMS

Critics

Imagine

Exhibitions

Edited by

SHELLEY RUTH BUTLER and ERICA LEHRER

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INTRODUCTION

Curatorial Dreaming

SHELLEY RUTH BUTLER and ERICA LEHRER

In contrast to the nocturnal dream, that of the daytime sketches freely chosen and repeatable figures in the air, it can rant and rave, but also brood and plan.

*Ernest Bloch*¹

This is a book about imagined exhibitions. These “curatorial dreams” were conceived by a diverse group of humanities and social science scholars whom we challenged with the task of drawing up blueprints for exhibitions that reflect their particular research and respond to their own critiques of exhibits or of broader social landscapes. This is an unusual approach; scholars are highly trained in analysis and critique, but are generally unpractised at offering constructive solutions to the problems they identify, let alone in the form of a public exhibition. The robustness of the field of critical museology is a testament to the ferment around museums and exhibitions as key sites of cultural politics, both as enacted by museum practitioners and as objects of academic study. Yet Shelley Ruth Butler’s 2001 conference panel in Montreal on “imaginary exhibitions,” which prefigured the present volume, highlighted the deep cognitive boundary between the two groups; an attempt to develop a conceptual meeting ground revealed the ingrained nature of arm’s length, rational critique among scholars.² Although invited to “dream,” the academic panelists at the conference described brave new museological experiments and critiqued status quo exhibitions, but did not propose creative responses of their own.

Public humanities theorist Julie Ellison asks whether scholars, in our “necessary skepticism,” have made analysis and hope, theory and action, “strangers to one another.”³ In response to Ellison’s profound question, and inspired by the laboratory, the design studio, and the architectural charrette⁴ – spaces and methods for thinking creatively, conceptually, collaboratively, and concretely – we propose curatorial dreaming as an innovative method of engaged cultural analysis and critique. Our idea is that working outside our comfort zones, in a constructive rather than deconstructive mode, can be a productive departure for scholars and academics, an important addition to our toolkits.⁵ Such dreaming asks us to diversify our methods, while offering an opportunity to engage with wider audiences in new ways. This volume is the fruit of our contributors’ efforts – as well as our own – to curate our arguments, shifting our scholarly subjectivities beyond the insular world of academic writing to the open civic space of the exhibition.

As editors we encouraged creativity and thinking “outside the box.” Yet we also gave our contributors exacting guidelines for what, in our view, constituted a fully developed curatorial dream. Beyond titles and venues, they outline their curatorial goals, discuss the theoretical, substantive, or museological issues that prompted their work, and offer evocative descriptions of key exhibitionary moments. And they describe and analyse specific curatorial strategies and processes of exhibition development. The combined result is that the broader practical and political contexts and negotiations of curatorial work – generally unseen in the final exhibitions that audiences encounter – are rendered visible and significant.

Complementing contemporary museological theory, which takes the possibilities and constraints of specific exhibition spaces into account, *Curatorial Dreams* proposes exhibitions in a wide variety of display environments, whether traditional or unconventional. These include city art galleries, colonial-era and “universal” museums, theatres, an architectural destination, and a memorial site, as well as vernacular spaces such as a library, a heritage festival, an airport lobby, an organization headquarters, a hospital, and a trailer stationed outside a county art gallery. The contributors come from a multitude of disciplines and interdisciplinary fields of inquiry – African American studies, anthropology, art history, Canadian studies, cultural studies, history, Latino studies, media studies, and museum studies, and their work is situated in Australia, Barbados,

Canada, Chile, the Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, and the United States. Despite their disciplinary and geographic diversity, however, the curatorial dreams presented here form a coherent set, in that they collectively experiment with inclusive, critical, democratic, participatory, reflexive, multi-vocal, and socially relevant exhibition design. The exhibits are shaped by theoretical concepts regarding – and debates surrounding – translation, identity formation, critical race theory, hybridity, cultural memory, affect, reflexivity, critical pedagogy, queer theory, and the conciliatory potential of heritage, among others. And, with each site being implicated in its own social constellation, the imagined exhibitions also work through ethno-cultural and class relations, aboriginal and diasporic communities, and transnational networks.

We are not blind to the potential pitfalls of critical or explicitly theoretical exhibitions. There is a growing literature that documents failed, flawed, and fraught attempts at critical and reflexive curatorship.⁶ *Into the Heart of Africa* at the Royal Ontario Museum, *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and *Imaginary Coordinates* at Chicago's Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies generated high-profile controversies and accusations of elitism and partisan political correctness.⁷ But we agree with Ruth Phillips, who notes that the controversies were valuable for unsettling modernist museums and for demonstrating that exhibitions are much more than sites of representation.⁸ Exhibitions, it is clear, are also scenes of social and political action and the performance of culture and community.⁹ This sense of the exhibition as a public site and an event, rather than a static text divorced from historical legacies and real world struggles, is implicit in many of the contributions to this volume.

As anthropologists specializing in museums and heritage who came of age professionally in a moment of disciplinary crisis amid calls for experimental ethnography, we are drawn to curatorial work as a valuable methodology that simultaneously embraces research, analysis, cultural representation, creative expression, social intervention, and dialogue with broad publics. We offer curatorial dreaming as an alternative mode of critical, intellectual practice – a form of “theorizing in the concrete.”¹⁰ In the spirit of civically engaged research, and in support of new kinds of knowledge production arising from the crossing of disciplinary and professional boundaries, we hope that *Curatorial Dreams* will speak not only

to critical museum scholars or to a broader field of humanities and social science researchers, but also to curators and other museum practitioners such as educators. Further, we hope that *Curatorial Dreams* will inspire these differently situated experts to speak to each other.¹¹

Dreaming as Method

As we tell our students, all exhibitions are arguments. They make assertions about history and aesthetics, about what counts as progress, and about the actual and appropriate relationships among people and between people and things. Exhibits naturalize particular ways of looking at the world. They can also clear paths for new ways of seeing. Critical humanities scholars know this only too well and have taken it as their task to illuminate, deconstruct, and demystify museum worlds.¹² But is this the only relationship scholars can have with exhibition arguments? By tapping into the power of aspirational imagination to propel cultural theory and museum practice forward and grapple creatively with pressing social, cultural, and political concerns, *Curatorial Dreams* proposes a new method of academic knowledge production. We go beyond the vagueness associated with much utopian thinking, and avoid the common pattern of enacting “good works” at disciplinary margins while leaving core modes of practice and inquiry unquestioned.¹³ Instead, we explore the concrete process of designing exhibitions as a mode of thinking, theorizing, researching, experimenting, and argumentation that reconsiders the forms these can – and perhaps should – take.¹⁴

We are influenced by scholars who, spurred by their dissatisfaction with current models and enticed by the possibilities suggested by new social and technological realities, have proposed visions of radically altered museums.¹⁵ Eilean Hooper-Greenhill imagines an emancipated, collaborative, spatially fluid “post-museum,” noting that, whereas the “modernist museum was (and is) imagined as a building, the museum in the future may be imagined as a process or an experience.”¹⁶ Elaine Heumann Gurian’s “Blue Ocean” museum responds to the cyber age with its vision of an open sea of knowledge in which visitors freely immerse themselves, and explores the administrative and curatorial changes that this concept of a museum would necessitate.¹⁷ Julian Spalding’s

communicative “poetic museum” envisions objects telling larger, interconnected stories, and evoking wonder in visitors by channelling the passion of the curators who chose to exhibit them.¹⁸ Such visionary theoretical literature reflects the urge to break free from established museological traditions and call out to the possible. And museums are indeed changing, in tandem with these writings and shifts in technology and public culture.¹⁹ Some are compelled to address inherited elitism and colonial collections, while others are emerging anew in fresh political and social contexts such as democratic post-apartheid South Africa, or newly prosperous China. Our curatorial dreams are informed by these developments, and inspired by them to envision new ways in which museums might position themselves in relation to their own collections, constituents, and histories.

Rather than theorize broad institutional shifts, *Curatorial Dreams* proposes specific new exhibitions. We are cognizant that our project enters terrain fraught with tensions that divide museological theorists and museum practitioners. Scholars claim that museums present simplistic versions of culture and history.²⁰ But they too often overlook the specialized knowledge that museum practitioners possess about the workings of their institutions and the way their visitors use them. Further, critical museum theorists rarely value or even acknowledge the optimism expressed by many museum professionals (and stated in their institutions’ mission statements), all of which are motivated by the potential for museums to contribute to an inclusive and enriching public sphere.²¹ Scholar-critics are also largely ignorant of the practical and political constraints that museum curators and educators face in their own attempts to innovate.²² Nor have critics been sensitive enough to the specificities of museum collections and institutional histories.²³ Museums and their exhibitions are often viewed as monolithic structures, removed from complex intra-institutional workings and the broader web of forces that shape their final forms. In response, *Curatorial Dreams* offers an “insider-outsider” perspective, with scholars imagining exhibits in relation to the problematics and possibilities of particular institutions, sites, communities, audiences, and social and political contexts. We begin not from abstract ideas, but by asking, “How can we communicate, using *these* materials, in *this* place?”

We are aware that our curatorial dreaming cannot truly bridge the theory-practice gap, since the process stops short of actual curating. Despite this limitation, a fundamental goal of our volume is to enrich dialogues between academics and museum practitioners, and to develop an understanding of the particular “interface” between specialized scholarly information and the diverse publics that exhibitions assemble. Curatorial dreaming is an important exercise for the museological imagination that, we argue, benefits both scholars and practitioners. It inhabits an in-between space, free from the constraints that real exhibitions regularly face on account of politics, hegemonic templates for presenting culture, available technologies, bureaucracy, and funding. ~~Volume contributor~~ Roger Simon reflects on the value of this approach: “For centuries, pure wishful images have discredited utopian dreams as mere fantasy, yet this cynicism misses core potentials in dreaming as a mode of generating possibility ... Such a mode can and does embody the seriousness of laying out the conditions for the possibly real. Daydreams imagine a praxis, a way of getting beyond existing norms and conventions to achieve something new.”²⁴

Some of our contributors reflect directly on specific challenges presented by their dreams. Manon Parry, for instance, discusses the political, legal, and ethical obstacles and objections that could be elicited by her imagined exhibition about the role of medicine in defining human normality, past and present. Yet, as Parry notes, such “speculative discussions of the problems of mounting such an exhibition may also allow for a more honest conversation about the political forces that frame museum work than accounts of real projects ever can.” Indeed, to the extent that they are impossible to implement, curatorial dreams function analytically, laying bare the constraints, embedded values, and conditions of possibility in particular museums and spaces of display. At the same time, while this volume presents the curatorial dreams of academics, we envision the dreaming process as an enriching, exploratory method for museum professionals to use as well, thanks to its emphasis on process, creativity, and “thinking outside the box” of pragmatic constraints.

What can curatorial dreams created by scholars offer museum practitioners? Our contributors have deep investments in their research sites; they have conducted fieldwork and archival research, and mined literature, performance, popular culture, and visual arts for resonant and

provocative materials. Consequently, their curatorial dreams can offer curators and other museum workers fresh resources for use in future exhibitions. Blending pedagogical and curatorial concerns is an approach much touted by museums, but less frequently realized in them. To our contributors, who are educators as well as researchers, that fusion is familiar. But in traditional, hierarchical museums, achieving an integration can be next to impossible. Moreover, many museum education programs are linked to narrow school curriculum goals. In the context of curatorial dreaming, however, the institutional struggle between curating and pedagogy can be sidestepped, enabling a freedom of expression that independent curators and artist-curators may be more able to enact. For curators in large establishment museums that must mount blockbuster exhibitions to balance the budget, temporary, independent exhibitions are the icing on the cake, the place where experimentation can more often take place.²⁵ The curatorial dreams presented here are precisely those kinds of projects, and it is no wonder that many of our contributors are inspired by previous experimental and theatrical exhibitions, not to mention interventions by artist-activist-curators such as Fred Wilson, Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas, Coco Fusco, and Guillermo Gómez-Peña.²⁶

For scholars, curatorial dreaming offers other benefits. The most basic is that exhibitions spur our thinking about local, place-based forms of research dissemination to wide audiences. Curating may provide the best approach to a given question or issue, a unique mode of address, a form of pedagogy, and a means of social intervention that has particular communicative, visceral, and affective qualities that are both meditative and informative, appealing both to our intellects and to our emotions. Further, curating is an opportunity to propose solutions to problems we identify through our own research – problems such as insular memory politics, rigid and essentialist categorizations of human communities, or patterned silences in the telling of history – and an occasion to intervene in public debates about them. Imagining an exhibition can be seen as a form of “constructive criticism” that affirms the underlying hopes, investments, and aspirations that may have drawn scholars into their fields in the first place. The process of curating offers respite from the often closed system – however valuable – of relentless academic critique, and satisfies the desires of many of us to use all our sensory faculties and creative impulses, and take advantage of a variety of public venues, to

communicate the fruits of our research and make a tangible difference in the world.

Curatorial dreaming also challenges scholars to consider a range of factors – including materiality, space, emotion, the senses, and sociality – as we translate our work into exhibition form. Anthropologist Mary Bouquet describes the second-order translation inherent in making exhibitions based on anthropological theory – the uniquely generative ways in which theory is manifested beyond text, in objects, images, space, and design. She terms “implicit theory” the serendipitous discovery of new concepts during the concrete, spatial, collaborative process of exhibition making – the recognitions and reactions that can come, for example, from placing two objects next to each other, or the way that the social space of an exhibit can prompt individuals to share private thoughts. While the majority of the curatorial dreams presented here are unrealized, they anticipate connections, collaboration, and conversations with different audiences, communities, and stakeholders. They can also be read as invitations to future collaboration with museums and communities.

When we began this project, we envisioned working with “pure” museology critics and academics who had no previous experience with curating. We wanted contributors to experience a fundamental paradigm shift; the academics would need to set aside their linear models of knowledge dissemination and insert themselves into the complex world of exhibition making, which involves the “bringing together of unlikely assemblages of people, things, ideas, texts, spaces, and different media.”²⁷ But we soon discovered that boundaries between academics and museum practitioners are already blurring, especially in relation to temporary exhibitions and the rise of the independent curator. Artists too are complicating the simple binary model that pits theory against practice, as they curate and create in response to critical theoretical discourse and to specific museum exhibitions and sites. As Irit Rogoff sees it, “the old boundaries between making and theorizing, historicizing and displaying, criticizing and affirming have long been eroded.”²⁸ Some of the contributors to this volume already straddle academic and curatorial positions, or are en route to doing so. As we write this introduction, two of the curatorial dreams presented here have already seen their first iter-

ations as concrete public exhibitions – in the World Trade Organization headquarters in Geneva (George Marcus), and in the Seweryn Udziela Ethnographic Museum in Kraków (Erica Lehrer).²⁹ While these developments may “contaminate” the purity of our model, they bode well for the productiveness of curatorial dreaming as a more far-reaching project that seeks new pathways for innovative, theoretically informed, and research-oriented exhibition creation.

While our contributors remain academics with primary professional identities as researchers, theorists, teachers, and authors, some of us, it turned out, already had secret lives as curatorial dreamers. While writing her ethnography of *Into the Heart of Africa*, a controversial exhibition about colonialism and collecting, Shelley Ruth Butler had assembled a collage that juxtaposed the imperial nostalgia found in the exhibit’s promotional materials with excerpts from *Looking for Livingstone: An Odyssey of Silence* by African Canadian author Marlene NourbeSe Philip. The collage was later published, to suggest how a visual, curatorial intervention might critique ingrained Eurocentric, exclusionary, and authoritative habits of establishment museums.³⁰ Erica Lehrer, as a student, had created and disseminated reworked tourist materials such as postcards and maps, made from excerpts from her research interviews and photographic data. Her goal was to engage tourists and local residents of her Polish fieldsite in thinking critically about historical memory, and to communicate in a sensory way the complexities of the site to North American colleagues.³¹

Contributor Matti Bunzl confessed a love affair with contemporary art that had led to fieldwork in Chicago’s Museum of Contemporary Art, where he curated an exhibit in his head as he “observed the MCA’s real curatorial staff conceiving, revising, abandoning, reconceiving, financing, and eventually installing their exhibits.”³² Bunzl’s “phantasmic show” is presented in this volume. Finally, we solicited Margaret Lindauer’s curatorial dream upon encountering her essay “Critical museum pedagogy and exhibition development: a conceptual first step,” in which she had created hypothetical, theoretically informed captions for photos included in *Inventing the Southwest: The Fred Harvey Company and Native American Art* at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona.³³ Our volume responds to what we identify as a broadly emerging zeitgeist

characterized by a sense of peering over ivory tower walls, and a longing to translate, explore, and enact theoretically informed research in public settings.

Curating as Public Scholarship: Collaboration, Research, Pedagogy

From some quarters of the academy a call has been emerging for “public scholarship,” or “scholarly or creative activity that joins serious intellectual endeavor with a commitment to public practice and public consequence.”³⁴ Spurred by demands for relevance in higher education – and reflecting the origins of many of the social sciences in practical social issues and reform movements³⁵ – civically engaged scholars increasingly share a desire to move beyond academic criticism. They want to “give back” – or speak back – to communities with whom they work; they are openly self-reflexive about their personal cultural and political investments not only as scholars but also as members of various communities and publics, which they themselves help constitute; and they see the humanities as encompassing “doing and making as well as thinking.”³⁶ Public scholarship is infused as well by an aspirational quality that is nonetheless critical and political. Accordingly, a notion of social justice informs many of the curatorial dreams in this volume, from Monica Patterson’s exhibition of children’s art and experience in a South African hospital, to Roger Simon’s comparison of geographically and temporally diverse cases of government abuse and neglect of citizens.

A core trend among the present generation of public scholars is to question the directionality of the traditional knowledge production economy. Many challenge the model whereby raw materials are extracted from communities and delivered to the academy to be refined into theory, debated and incorporated into professional discourse. Civically engaged scholars recognize non-academic publics as valuable sources of expertise and as partners in knowledge creation, rather than as passive recipients of expert academic scholarship. In public history programs, for instance, academics acknowledge the “shared authority” they must negotiate with their research subjects.³⁷ In such a climate, research, pedagogy, and public work are pursued in tandem, and the collaborative project is becoming a new key “unit of knowledge production” in the humanities.³⁸ Exhibitions

are fundamentally collaborative and sociable enterprises that offer excellent opportunities for the evolution of many tenets of public scholarship. Because of their arrangement as collectivities of people and objects, as social events, and as occasions for merging theory and concrete practice, Bouquet calls exhibitions “the form par excellence that can unite academy and museum.”³⁹ As a mode of mobilizing knowledge, exhibits based on scholarly research form visible, criticizable traces of research that may implicate diverse publics. This is the premise of Manon Parry’s imagined exhibition for the National Library of Medicine outside Washington, DC. While this gallery has moved beyond traditional celebratory exhibitions of medical accomplishments, it has never highlighted science itself as a contested, open-ended process with a spectrum of consequences, and this is precisely what Parry proposes, in order to empower audiences to evaluate science as a social process.

Museums are not, of course, unproblematic public spaces of knowledge production, given their legacies of elitism, paternalism, and social exclusion. Like the academy, museums are “going public” in new ways. With the advent of participatory and “new” museology, visitors are no longer considered passive audiences of didactic, authoritative presentations but are implicated in an ongoing process of knowledge production and debate, and increasingly seen as advisors, stakeholders, collaborators, and co-producers.⁴⁰ In this new model, collaboration involves negotiating power relations within and among institutions and communities. How to engage with publics as co-authors of exhibits remains an open and fraught question. Some of our contributors engage with this problematic, but have found it challenging to articulate a concrete curatorial dream for an exhibition envisioned as an ongoing collaborative co-production. Joshua Cohen notes that his proposed exhibition and multimedia performance on Guinean arts is provisional in nature, since “much of the specific archival, thematic, and traditional material to be incorporated into the production is to be determined via a collaborative process between artists, researchers, designers, and other participants ... a definitive description would undermine the project’s fundamentally collaborative intent.”

Our understanding of an exhibition as both product and process proved to be a conceptual challenge for us as editors too; we respected our contributors’ theoretical commitment to process, but pushed them

to provide specifics. Butler takes a different approach to the problem, anchoring her curatorial dream in a “curatorial collective” – a model she develops as an alternative to community consultation models that risk paternalism.⁴¹ She workshopped a draft of her curatorial dream with colleagues engaged with black history and culture in Canada, and invokes the dialogic nature of that encounter in her text. While it cannot substitute for the future work of a curatorial collective, Butler’s textual strategy both highlights and models her collaborative intention, as well as reflexively documenting the exhibition-making process, which will itself be incorporated into the (anticipated) future project.

The “in-betweenness” of scholars who participate in the production of public representations has been noted, and particularly the way they are pulled into unique, sometimes uneasy subject positions from their standpoint between analysis and creation.⁴² We see the exhibition as a communicative mode that can accommodate complex understandings of cultural difference and empathy. But public scholars have also learned that they cannot control the ways their exhibitions are received and used in real world cultural and political struggles. Their attempts at subtlety and multi-facetedness may be stymied by individuals or community groups who find more limited, hegemonically formatted representations of culture, history, or identity to be politically expedient.⁴³ Perhaps we would do well to think of the publicly engaged scholar as a “culture broker” who “enable[s] important transactions, interrelationships, and exchanges ... bring[ing] audiences and culture bearers together so that cultural meanings can be translated and even negotiated” in efforts at social transformation.⁴⁴ We believe scholars should work to make their voices heard alongside those of the community groups and corporate entities who currently dominate the field of public cultural representations. Real world politics notwithstanding, we suggest that exhibits can facilitate multifaceted, multi-perspectival communication across social boundaries, create connections among social groups, “seek out and cultivate ambiguity and complexity,” and highlight the contingent nature of all claims to authenticity.⁴⁵

If exhibits are, in practical terms, a form of public expression for scholars who hope to reach broad audiences, they can also be potential research tools that make use of auto-ethnographic, crowd-sourced, or other participatory forms of collaboration with their research subjects in the process of generating data. Exhibits are more than just sites to manifest

preconceived theory; they can also be arenas for collaborative exploration of new ideas in particular situations with invested publics, a practice that may generate new knowledge for both academic and public purposes. Calls to democratize power relations in practices of research and representation in humanities and social sciences have led some scholars to experiment with the tools of art (particularly new genre public art, installation, and performance) in order to forge new aesthetics of research and “scenarios of practice.”⁴⁶ Anthropologist George Marcus, for instance, describes how curated spaces might function as experimental research sites; his curatorial intervention at the World Trade Center headquarters, is designed to further his extensive ethnographic fieldwork on the subject of institutional and bureaucratic transparency. The in-situ public exhibition entices employees into exploring the “rules of the game” of diplomacy and trade negotiations. Such an approach rethinks the classic fieldwork “scene of encounter” and the “situated collaborative work” that takes place there.⁴⁷ Rather than replicate the standard, naturalistic “observer-observed” paradigm, these jointly created sites and spectacles provide provisional cultural configurations that can be conjured anywhere and subjected to mutual curiosity.⁴⁸

The ability to physically inhabit the kind of “curated arguments” that exhibitions represent allows audiences proximity to scholars’ primary objects of analysis, thereby offering the public an active role as co-investigators with multiple viewpoints. Lehrer’s exhibition in Kraków (and its virtual afterlife) is designed to bring together potentially conflicting views on the meaning of controversial Jewish figurines. Her research informs the exhibition, but research and exhibition are informed by visitor responses, as real and virtual publics engage with the anthropologist curator, with each other, and with the figurines and the various ways in which they have been framed in different historical periods and by different constituencies. Exhibitions such as this one, which contain built-in research and self-documentation components, also give museum scholars an opportunity to substantiate (or disconfirm) increasingly common claims that museums can help communities “confront and counter prejudices, engender support for human rights and promote respect between communities.”⁴⁹

The dreams presented in this volume express optimism about engaging audiences in critical and relational thinking about histories of exclusion and legacies of the past, and – going a step further – in

recruiting and engaging audiences as co-producers of knowledge for display. A number of our contributors develop curatorial strategies designed to move audiences to positions of empathy, historical or cultural interconnectedness, political critique, and concern about human rights abuses and colonial exploitation. Audiences are also given opportunities to publicly share their opinions and respond to specific questions that arise from an exhibition.

In our selection of projects, readers will recognize biases that reflect our sense of what counts as important, publicly engaged work. The collection also reveals our disciplinary orientations. All our contributors are engaged in interdisciplinary research that addresses contemporary cultural and political issues, and many are committed to explicit pedagogical concerns that are apparent in the exhibitions they envision. Our respective engagements with public history, “difficult knowledge,” and community work are also evident; the curatorial dreams here address legacies of AIDS (Hernández), dictatorships in Chile and Argentina (Olivares and Gomoll, Simon), colonial violence in North America (Lindauer, Simon), the Chernobyl nuclear explosion (Simon), and contemporary racisms, prejudices, and inequalities (Bhimull, Butler, Iervolino and Sandall, Lehrer, Lindauer, Patterson). While there is a heaviness to these materials, many of the imagined exhibits immerse visitors in stories of resilience and creativity in the face of hardship.

The curatorial decisions behind these dreamed exhibitions have been carefully designed to activate and inhabit history in ethical ways. In some instances those decisions involve addressing “archival silences”⁵⁰ and providing alternatives to narratives of progress that are the purview of traditional museums. But discourses and acts of resistance are subtle, specific, and sometimes contradictory. Lisette Olivares and Lucian Gomoll, for instance, in their curatorial dream of re-conjuring numerous ways that a folkloric dance has been activated as a tool for public mourning and resistance in Chile, demonstrate the importance of respecting various actors’ self-understandings, using juxtaposition to create a layered sense of the different agents, subjects, and meanings potentially involved.

Yet there is a countercurrent in the volume that resists the pedagogical impulse and disciplining effects of scholarship – these chapters propose exhibitions that valorize curiosity, wonder, and affect. While seeking to

present Guinean arts in a manner attentive to political and social history, Joshua Cohen strives to protect the Guinean arts he curates from being reduced to an emotionally flat “social sciences” project. Matti Bunzl refuses “normative” critical museology in another way. His deconstruction of how value is conferred on contemporary art stops short of didactically exposing and explaining these elitist framings for visitors. As editors we pushed for a clearer exposé of the economically self-interested system of the art world, asking for signposts that would lead visitors to understand how authenticity, quality, and fame are produced by and for a moneyed elite. Bunzl resisted our democratizing impulse, and his curatorial dream consequently has a trickster quality that sits somewhat askew of the implicit ethic of the larger volume. He valorizes open-ended visitor experiences of excitement, curiosity, and exploration, but his critique of the discourse of an insider art world is ironic in tone, rather than revelatory. Janice Baker’s exhibit also works against long-standing traditions of visitor edification. Her curatorial dream immerses museum-goers in a fantastical shadow-side of museums and the potential of hidden forces latent in their objects, envisioned here as running amok. Her dream is to create affecting encounters between visitors and artifacts in the gallery via the projection of films that themselves evoke transgressive scenes of chaos and carnival in museums. While the exhibition is accessible for a general audience who will be tickled by encounters with favourite movie moments, it simultaneously enacts a critique of the academy’s anthropocentric and rationalistic approach to the value of museums and collections.

Finally, we envision curatorial dreaming as a pedagogical strategy for the classroom. As teachers, we have both made use of the method in our courses, in the context of in-class exercises and exams, as well as having students develop curatorial dreams over the course of a semester. We take inspiration from literary scholar Michael Rothberg’s course assignment that provokes students to recognize the stakes of memory and cultural production by way of a Holocaust memorial design task that puts them in the position of “active participants in the construction of knowledge” rather than analysts of manifestations of it.⁵¹ Questions invariably arise regarding which groups to include among the victims, where to place the memorial, the extent to which genocide can be visually represented, and what meanings might be taken away.

The Exhibits

Our curatorial dreams are presented in four parts. We begin outside museum walls to signal our commitment to thinking about curating in the broadest terms. Part One of the book, “Curating in the Vernacular,” focuses on curatorial interventions that anthropologists have envisioned for their research sites. These projects question “the written word as the locus of anthropological knowledge,”⁵² and make use of everyday spaces, attentive to the resonance of local landscapes and the power of commonplace artifacts to transmit and reinforce cultural meanings. Inspired by the recent proliferation of analytical and creative engagements that examine and blur the boundaries of art and anthropology, our contributors to this section use curatorial techniques to intervene in the flow of local social life, reframe workaday settings, or connect museum galleries to broader spaces in the city.

Making Transparency Visible by George Marcus uses the sober headquarters of the World Trade Organization to display its own (partially screened) internal documents, with the goal of drawing employees into reflexive organizational analysis. In *Most Disturbing Souvenirs* Lehrer explores whether ethnonationalist legacies of a traditional nineteenth-century ethnographic museum may be destabilized by linking objects and narratives in and outside the museum, using curatorial practices like highlighting, framing, and juxtaposition to reconsider quotidian landscapes – like shops in Kraków that sell Jewish figurines – in new ways. These curatorial dreams re-imagine public institutions and urban sites as display spaces, transforming their everyday occupants into accidental audiences.

Public spaces such as airports and hospitals are powerful sites for exploring inequalities embedded in taken-for-granted middle class life experiences like travel and health care. *The Alchemy of Flight* by Chandra Bhimull is a multimedia, multi-sensory exhibition about airline travel in the African diaspora, whose power derives from its location in the Grantley Adams International Airport in Barbados. Not your typical promotional airport exhibit, this curatorial dream is a concrete, critical response to the celebratory “Barbados Concorde Experience” exhibition-cum-shrine housed in a hangar beside the airport. Inspired by literature and oral narratives, *The Alchemy of Flight* provokes in-situ re-

flection on race, history, mobility, and freedom. Monica Patterson's *By and For Children*, situated in a children's hospital museum in Durban, South Africa, explores interconnections between children's health and legacies of apartheid. Recognizing the value of varied expertise, the exhibit includes the participation of children and families, social scientists, and community health professionals. It traces a careful line between critical history and the imperative of healing for its primary audience of sick children.

Part Two proposes art installations that take us into specific cultural worlds. These include Chicano avant-garde art, contemporary Guinean art and performance, and the production, circulation, and reception of contemporary, global-elite conceptual art. We call this section "Breaking Frames"; while treating very different substantive topics, each curatorial dream is fuelled by a desire to push the limits of "the gallery." These chapters in turn: interrogate the selective way in which Chicano art has been canonized in recent years in the United States by excluding histories of AIDS; engage with the problematic history of categorizing African arts according to Western disciplinary boundaries that separate dance, music and fine art; and highlight the tacit rules and insider codes that govern the seemingly pluralistic, democratic field of relational aesthetics and contemporary conceptual art.

Frozen World/Mundo Congelado by Robb Hernández begins at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, or more precisely, in a trailer stationed outside the gallery. Influenced by postmodernism, Hernández's exhibition space "quotes" other examples of activist, mobile galleries created to promote cultural preservation and community-based protest. His curatorial dream is an intimate, restorative exhibition about Mundo Mezo, a gay Chicano avant-garde conceptual artist whose oeuvre was confiscated and possibly destroyed by his family following his death from AIDS. Against this destruction, Hernández affirms the etymological link between curating and "caring for," tracing Meza's life and art through photos, newspapers, paintings, ephemera, and oral histories. Informed by queer theory, the project explores archival practices that can illuminate alternative sexual identities and practices.

A similar institutional problem of selective inclusion shapes *The Play* by Joshua Cohen. His title cites a culturally specific Guinean practice of referring to dance and music performances as "play places." Cohen

combines the roles of curator and theatre director, twinning a gallery and a theatrical staging space to point toward the kind of multi-sensory, multimedia performative context that brings Guinean masks alive by their users in Guinea and in the diaspora. Familiar binary classifications such as indigenous versus international, and visual versus performing arts are destabilized.

Classification is also at stake in Matti Bunzl's playful exposé of art conventions. In *But Is It Art?: Not Really*, each display copies a piece or installation by a famous conceptual artist, including, among others, Andy Warhol and Rirkrit Tiravanija. We appreciate Bunzl's combination of passion for and puzzlement by conceptual art; perhaps his intervention will vindicate anyone who has felt alienated by its contemporary codes of appreciation.⁵³

Part Three, "Activating Art and History," explores how we might curate materials that participate – and implicate viewers – in painful histories of racism, government neglect of human rights, hatred, and genocide. The challenges of curating such "difficult knowledge" have in recent years been the subject of a growing field of scholarly interest that has addressed the subject on macro and micro levels, from memorial and human rights museums, exhibits about genocide, and the development of "sites of conscience" to the possibilities and challenges of looking at disturbing photographs or listening to troubling eye-witness testimonies.⁵⁴ Silke Arnold-de Simine notes that "museums – especially but not exclusively those that are privately funded – need their customers to approve of the exhibition rather than feel challenged beyond their comfort zone."⁵⁵ But as confidence in the transparency of memory and its promises as an ethical and political panacea have dwindled,⁵⁶ new curatorial strategies are being sought that might create sites of reconciliation, empathy, and a sense of implication or unsettledness, or inspire action.⁵⁷ It can be a tough balance, as museums that have opened the door to democratization must address multiple audiences with many different historical experiences at once. Discussing attempts to curate in critical, reflexive ways, Butler has emphasized that "the experience of viewing ... exhibitions should not be alienating for people who have personal and political ties with the histories of objectification and exclusion carried out by the very institutions we seek to transform."⁵⁸ Yet what may be most difficult about "difficult knowledge" is its uneven distribution: the

pain caused by history and its traces is not universally shared – either across group boundaries or uniformly within them, across time, as sentiments shift even within individuals.⁵⁹ Given the diversity of audiences, what risks should one take? How to curate “between hope and despair” or between “critical” and “optimistic” museology?⁶⁰ Contributors to this section engage contested historical records, memories, and artistic productions that respond to legacies of political repression in Chile and Argentina, colonialism in the United States and Canada, and government abuses in the aftermath of Chernobyl.

For *Intervention/Resurrection* Lisette Olivares and Lucian Gomoll curate multiple performances of *La Cueca*, a traditional folkloric partner dance used by Pinochet’s regime in Chile and re-appropriated by artists and activists as *La Cueca Solo*, a solitary version that involves mothers of the disappeared who transformed it into an act of public mourning. This curatorial dream traces culturally specific, intergenerational community and artistic responses to political crises, as well as intimate questions of identity. In *The Terrible Gift*, Roger Simon brings together archival materials and artistic productions pertaining to the Chernobyl nuclear explosion of 1986, the forced relocation of Inuit to the High Arctic in the 1950s, and political repression during the Argentine dictatorship between 1976 and 1983. His is a bold experiment in exploring how dispersed difficult histories might confront each other without misreading or reducing any of them. His comparative method avoids authoritative didacticism by using databases to enable visitors to explore deeply, cross-referencing and connecting divergent materials.

Recognizing the power of place, Margaret Lindauer situates *Reading the World* at the Fort Sumner Historic Monument in New Mexico, once a US military site where thousands of Navajo were imprisoned in the 1860s. Inspired by critical pedagogy, Lindauer juxtaposes archival images, artifacts, and film to investigate how Navajo and others make sense of a history of dispossession. Her exhibition explores the contradictions in the ways some Navajo have negotiated and even thrived in contemporary contexts of tourism and uranium mining. To create a dialogic atmosphere, Lindauer experiments with a curatorial strategy of posing questions, as opposed to using didactic exhibition panels.

In Part Four, “Establishments Revisioned,” authors’ imagined exhibitions infiltrate “the belly of the beast” in monumental, establishment

museums such as the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, the National Library of Medicine in Washington, and the Western Australian Museum in Perth. In the wake of three decades of critical museological theory, shifting demographics, and evolving social ideals, some establishment museums are striving to re-invent themselves as they compete with other educational and entertainment venues for limited resources and visitor attention. These curatorial dreams are thus articulated not so much in opposition to establishment museums as in conversation with their own efforts at democratization and reform. Serena Iervolino and Richard Sandell's *The World in One City* is staged in the famous Tropenmuseum, a colonial-era ethnographic museum of "the Tropics" that has itself undergone a decades-long process of reflexive transformation in light of the post-colonial critiques and demographic changes in Amsterdam due to historical and contemporary migration. Building on the museum's commitment to resisting established dichotomies of self and other, and in response to contemporary local Islamophobia, *The World in One City* is notable for its proposed use of diverse forms of expertise – a social worker, a filmmaker, an urban anthropologist, local artists, immigrants, and migrant workers – in order to evoke and enact aspects of everyday life in the city. The museum is to be transformed into an activist-oriented forum, a reflective dwelling space, and a dialogic salon. Butler's *Museum without Walls* takes a related approach in its examination of the Royal Ontario Museum. Both exhibitions take place in major urban centres with colonial pasts and post-colonial presents, and both rely on the power of personal encounters in museum spaces. *Museum without Walls* is a collaborative curatorial project that invokes the alienation that black Canadians experienced over two decades ago in response to the museum's famously controversial exhibition *Into the Heart of Africa*. But the project also responds to the contemporary marginalization experienced by black Canadians, and attempts to present the African gallery as part of contemporary Canadian culture. Guided by facilitators, youth participants inhabit the Canadian and African galleries in unconventional and creative ways, to generate ideas and images on the themes of belonging and exclusion.

The aim of the two final curatorial dreams in this section is to create engaging and affecting encounters in venerable nineteenth-century scientific institutions. In *abNormal: Bodies in Medicine and Culture*,

Manon Parry addresses the question: Who decides what is normal and what factors inform that decision? The exhibition explores scientific representations of gendered and racialized bodies, the medicalization of homosexuality, and the construction of disability, relating them all to social inequality. In a departure from display conventions of medical museums, audiences are given opportunities to respond personally to content, explore views of other visitors, comment on current trends, and use art and mass media materials to deconstruct and reconstitute popular and scientific images of bodies. Such individualized engagement is also the approach of Janice Baker's curatorial dream, *Reel Objects*, a cinematic installation staged in the monumental, dramatic Hackett Hall at the Western Australian Museum. *Reel Objects* immerses visitors in a non-linear, anarchic, and playful cinematic environment that reveals objects and things as being "out of place" in museum spaces. The intervention emphasizes affective, carnivalesque, macabre, and transgressive qualities of museums and their collections. The adoring responses to Christian Marclay's 2010 travelling cinematic art installation *The Clock* suggest there is a niche for exhibitions that immerse audiences in reverie, far removed from didactic categories or critical analysis.⁶¹ Museums, like history, can be inhabited and activated in unpredictable ways.

Curator and cultural critic Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett concurs. Her reflections, which close the volume, evoke the liberating possibilities of curatorial dreaming, as she remembers childhood reveries at the Royal Ontario Museum, and finds solace in imagination in her multiple perches in Polish public institutions, whether state-run hospital bed or state-of-the-art museum.

We have proposed an itinerary through *Curatorial Dreams* that is organized by sites – vernacular terrains, art galleries, commemorative spaces, and establishment museums. There are other ways to traverse this constellation of imaginary exhibitions. Close attention to participatory museology and audience engagement, for instance, could link contributions across these sections, as could themes such as critical race theory and inequality, intercultural dialogue, multi-vocal interpretation, healing, activism, and social critique. We leave this work of path finding and interpretation to you, the first audience for our gallery of curatorial dreams.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, 86. The quotation is taken from an early draft of Roger Simon's contribution to this volume.
- 2 Butler, "Imaginary Exhibitions."
- 3 Ellison, "Humanities and the Public Soul," 115.
- 4 See Hiatt, "We Need Humanities Labs"; Marcus and Murphy, "Ethnocharrette"; Marcus and Murphy, "Ethnography and Design," 251–68; Holmes and Marcus, "Collaboration Today," 81–101; Bendiner-Viani and Maltby, "Hybrid Ways of Doing."
- 5 Bruno Latour writes suggestively in relation to this urge, calling for a "suspension of the critical impulse" in favour of "composition" (see Latour, "Compositionist Manifesto," 475) and curated the exhibitions *Iconoclash* and *Making Things Public* as concrete expressions of it.
- 6 See, for example: Macdonald and Basu, *Exhibition Experiments*; Bonnell and Simon, "'Difficult' Exhibitions"; Butler, "Reflexive Museology"; Karp et al., *Museum Frictions*; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "The Museum as Catalyst"; Kratz, *The Ones That Are Wanted*; Lehrer et al., *Curating Difficult Knowledge*.
- 7 Brachear and Storch, "Controversy Closes Show at Museum."
- 8 Phillips, *Museum Pieces*, 302.
- 9 Ames, *Museums, The Public, and Anthropology*; Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures*; Karp et al., *Museums and Communities*; Macdonald and Basu, *Exhibition Experiments*, 13.
- 10 Simon, "Theorizing in the Concrete," 183–95. The notion of "theorizing-in-the-concrete" was offered to us by Roger Simon in personal communica-

- tion. He considered it in an early conference paper “Dramatic Portrayal as Theorizing in the Concrete.”
- 11 In this way it is of a piece with Dewdney, Dibosa, and Walsh’s notion of a “post-critical” approach, “intended not to find the museum wanting from the remote position of analytical critique,” but to join “academics, museum professionals and others in productive ways in order to open up new avenues of meaning and purpose through the agency of audience” (*Post-Critical Museology*, 2).
 - 12 See Butler, “Reflexive Museology.”
 - 13 Zussman and Misra, “Introduction,” 7.
 - 14 Artist Fernando Calzadilla and anthropologist George Marcus consider their experimental installation “a method of inquiry that opens conditions of possibility for the existence of experimental spaces within ossified disciplines” (Calzadilla and Marcus, “Artists in the Field,” 109).
 - 15 Also worth mentioning is Nobel Prize-winning author Orhan Pamuk’s “Museum of Innocence” in Istanbul, which is itself an experimental concretization of an imagined love story that began as a fictional text, as well as an argument for Pamuk’s belief that the role of museums should be to tell personal stories about our individual and collective humanity. Pamuk, “A Modest Manifesto for Museums.” See also: Pamuk, “Orhan Pamuk on His Museum of Innocence in Istanbul”; Silverman, ed., *Museum as Process*.
 - 16 Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, 152; Silverman, ed., *Museums as Process*.
 - 17 Gurian, “Blue Ocean Museum,” 3.
 - 18 Spalding, *Poetic Museum*. We are also mindful of the dangers of utopian thinking in relation to museums. Museums have been conceptualized as refuges for utopian thought, but critics such as Bernadette Lynch and Samuel Alberti warn of enduring patterns of coercion and paternalism. Lynch and Alberti, “Legacies of Prejudice,” 13–35.
 - 19 See Karp and Kratz, “The Interrogative Museum”; and Welsh, “Re-configuring Museums,” 103–30.
 - 20 Ames, *Cannibal Tours*.
 - 21 Butler, “Politics of Exhibiting Culture,” 74–92.
 - 22 We have not requested that our contributors address in detail practical issues related to budgets, design and presentation technologies, and mobilizing support, though some have done so (see below).
 - 23 Dewdney et al., *Post-Critical Museology*, 76. Ruth Phillips recommends a case study methodology for demonstrating to students of critical museology the “distinctive quality of the network of people, politics, and resources in which each institution is situated.” Phillips, *Museum Pieces*, 21.

- 24 Personal communication with the editors, inspired by Simon's reading of Bloch, *Principle of Hope*. "Dreaming" in various forms seems to be having a cultural moment in relation to museums. The program for a March 2012 conference at the University of Leicester School of Museum Studies entitled "Museum Utopias: Navigating the Imaginary, Ideal and Possible Museum," proposed dreaming as a way for museums to be leaders in envisioning change, rather than reacting when change comes. The visual art news digest *E-flux's* "Agency of Unrealized Projects" considers the value of "postponed, impossible, or rejected, unrealized projects [that] form a unique testament to the speculative power of non-action." And recognizing the creativity, adventure, and intimacy of dreaming, sleep-based theatre and musical performances, as well as museum sleepovers, are proliferating. The Rubin Museum of Art in Chelsea recently held its fourth annual "Dream-Over," where visitors sleep under an artwork chosen by a curator, followed by a morning activity of dream interpretation. Ryzik, "The Entire Audience Dozed Off? Perfect!"
- 25 Silvia Forni, personal communication, 2012.
- 26 On artist-curators and museums as sites of intervention and inspiration see, Putnam, *Art and Artifact*; McShine, *The Museum as Muse*; Macdonald and Basu, *Exhibition Experiments*; Karp et al., *Museum Frictions*; Levell, "Site-specificity and Dislocation"; Wilson, *Fred Wilson: A Critical Reader*; Taylor, "A Savage Performance"; Behar and Mannheim, "The Couple in the Cage." On related attempts by artists to liberate their work from the elite framework of the museum and gallery and use it as an instrument for new modes of social participation and community engagement, see Morris and O'Neill, "Introduction."
- 27 Macdonald and Basu, *Exhibition Experiments*, 9.
- 28 Rogoff, "What is a Theorist?"
- 29 *Trade Is Sublime* showed at the World Trade Organization headquarters in June 2013 and was curated by Luke Cantarella and Christine Hegel, in collaboration with anthropologists George Marcus and Jae Chung. The video installation draws on the same ethnographic research as Marcus's curatorial dream, *Making Transparency Visible*, but the projects have no formal relationship. Thus, Marcus considers his curatorial dream to be an evolving, active project. *Trade is Sublime* can be viewed at tradeissublime.org. Marcus's unpublished manuscript *A Chronicle of Art (and Anthropology) at the World Trade Organization ... In Five Not So Easy Pieces*, reflects on the use of art exhibitions to further social science research.

Lehrer's curatorial dream *Most Disturbing Souvenirs* was realized in the exhibition *Souvenir, Talisman, Toy*, which took place in the Seweryn Udziela

- Ethnographic Museum in Poland, in June–July 2013. A web version of the exhibition can be found at www.luckyjews.com. For a brief consideration of the exhibit's participatory collecting strategy, see Lehrer and Ramsay, "Collecting (as) Dialogue?" For additional information about the exhibit's logistics and challenges, see Lehrer, "Exhibit Case Study."
- 30 Butler, *Reflexive Museology*.
- 31 Lehrer, "Curating Jews," 32–3.
- 32 Bunzl's research is described in Bunzl, *In Search of a Lost Avant-Garde*.
- 33 Lindauer, "Critical Museum Pedagogy," 303–14.
- 34 Eatman, "Engaged Scholarship," 18, cited in Ellison, "The New Public Humanists," 289.
- 35 Calhoun, Foreword to *Engaging Contradictions*, xviii. A related call regards the need for "research-based understandings of culture" that might compete with artists, writers, community groups, and corporate entertainment entities who have outpaced scholars "in terms of representing their cultures and brokering those representations to larger publics" (Kurin, *Reflections of a Culture Broker*, 266).
- 36 Lupton, "Philadelphia Dreaming," 52.
- 37 Frisch, *A Shared Authority*; High, "Sharing Authority," 12–34.
- 38 Ellison, "Lyric Citizenship," 91–114. Ellison cites both deepening social inequality, and structural unemployment in the humanities, as other drivers of the shift in academia to such public, project-based culture work.
- 39 Bouquet, "Thinking and Doing Otherwise," 232. Delores Hayden similarly notes that "if people's attachments to places are material, social, and imaginative, then these are necessary dimensions of new projects to extend public history in the urban landscape." Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 43.
- 40 On the other side of the coin, we also see visitors increasingly conceptualized as consumers, especially given cutbacks in public funding for museums.
- 41 Lynch and Alberti. "Legacies of Prejudice," 13–35.
- 42 Kurin, *Reflections of a Culture Broker*, 14.
- 43 Anthropologist Andrew Shryock illustrates the challenges of doing public "culture work" with members of Detroit's Arab community in the wake of 9/11, concluding that only teaching and academic writing allow him the safe space to tell certain cultural truths. "In the Double Remoteness of Arab Detroit," 279–314.
- 44 Kurin, *Reflections of a Culture Broker*, 20–2.
- 45 Karp, "Public Scholarship as a Vocation," 286, 288, 298.
- 46 Schneider and Wright, *Anthropology and Art Practice*; Schneider and Wright, *Between Art and Anthropology*; Schneider and Wright, *Contem-*

- porary *Art and Anthropology*; Strohm, "When Anthropology Meets Contemporary Art," 98–124; the *Ethnographic Terminalia* curatorial collective (<http://ethnographicterminalia.org/the-collective>). George Marcus has most explicitly and extensively described this nascent "turn" in the discipline, as well as enacting it in his own experimental practice (Marcus, "Contemporary Fieldwork Aesthetics," 263–77). Anthropologist Nikolai Ssorin-Chiakov has also explored the research outputs of an art-infused experimental "ethnographic conceptualism," which "explicitly manufactures the social reality that it studies." Ssorin-Chiakov, "Ethnographic Conceptualism." Nirmal Puwar and Sanjay Sharma discuss curating as a way to "keep conceptual problems live." Puwar and Sharma, "Curating Sociology," 40–63. Macdonald and Basu's *Exhibition Experiments* also views exhibits as potential laboratories for the creation of new knowledge.
- 47 Marcus, "Contemporary Fieldwork Aesthetics," 263–77. See also Marcus, "The Uses of Complicity," 85–108.
- 48 One implication of this shift is that "the field" can now be created anywhere, in the form of a collaborative, participatory cultural spectacle. Marcus, "Contemporary Fieldwork Aesthetics," 41.
- 49 Sandell, *Museums, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference*, 10.
- 50 Hernandez, this volume.
- 51 Rothberg, "Pedagogy and the Politics of Memory," 466–76.
- 52 White, "From Experimental Moment to Legacy Moment," 65–97. See also Conquergood, "Performance Studies."
- 53 In this spirit, the National Art Gallery of Canada has printed a series of humorous postcards called "That's Art?!" for visitors to consult in their galleries. Each card includes a reproduction of a famous abstract painting, with short quotations from "the public," the artist, and experts, creating a dialogue about the nature of art.
- 54 See also Williams, *Memorial Museums*; Simon, "A Shock to Thought," 432–49; Bonnell and Simon, "'Difficult' Exhibitions," 65–85; Lehrer et al., *Curating Difficult Knowledge*; Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage*; Logan and Reeves, *Places of Pain and Shame*; Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*; Silvén, "Difficult Matters," 133–46; Sevchenko, "Activating the Past," 55–64; Sevchenko, "Sites of Conscience," 20–5; Sandell and Nightingale, *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*; Busby et al., *The Idea of a Human Rights Museum*; Carter and Orange, "Contentious Terrain," 111–27; Orange and Carter, "It's Time to Pause and Reflect," 259–66.
- 55 Arnold-de Simone, *Mediating Memory in the Museum*, 2.
- 56 For example: Huyssen, *Present Pasts*; Partridge, "Holocaust *Mahnmal*," 820–50; Rothberg, "Pedagogy and the Politics of Memory," 466–76.

- 57 Failler, Ives, and Milne, eds. "Caring for Difficult Knowledge: Prospects for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights." Special Issue, *Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies* 37, 2–3 (2015).
- 58 Butler, "The Politics of Exhibiting Culture," 89.
- 59 Lehrer and Milton, Introduction to *Curating Difficult Knowledge: Violent Pasts in Public Places*, 1–20.
- 60 Butler, "The Politics of Exhibiting Culture." See also Simon et al., *Between Hope and Despair*.
- 61 Created in 2010, Christian Marclay's art installation *The Clock* is a video montage of thousands of clips sampled from movies and television series, demarcating, minute by minute, a twenty-four-hour loop that audiences are invited to watch and listen to. The travelling exhibition continues to mesmerize audiences and critics.

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Foster, "The Artist as Ethnographer," 145–70.
- 2 Blustein, *Misadventures of the Most Favored Nations*.
- 3 Ten researchers were involved, including anthropologists and lawyers from France, Argentina, Korea, the United States, Italy, Cameroun, China, and Canada. Funding came from the French government. In late 2010 we met in Paris for a round of discussion and planning of a collaboratively written ethnography: Abèlès, *Des anthropologues à l'OMC*.
- 4 Deeb and Marcus, "In the Green Room," 51–76.
- 5 Its symbolic significance is also shared by showing this famous room to WTO visitors when it is not in use. Indeed, the meetings of our team with the director-general occurred in the Green Room.
- 6 Marcus, *Paranoia Within Reason*.
- 7 The topic of transparency was the special concern of one of our team, Lynda de Matteo, who has produced a detailed paper on its various meanings and manifestations. Her ethnographic vantage point on this topic was situated within the small department of media relations at the WTO.
- 8 Drafting this imagined exhibition gives me the welcome opportunity to work through a similar suggestion that I made twenty years ago in and about a different venue. After a year as a scholar at the Getty Institute in Los Angeles, I wrote a critical article on this very discrete public organization (with global pretensions) that concluded with a suggestion of an exhibition that looked inward to stimulate reflection and self-critique among its own personnel. See Marcus, "The Production of European High Culture in Los Angeles." The theme of that exhibit would have been "Faking."