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The Artist-in-Residence as Cultural Mediator

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Abstract

The number of temporary live-work spaces in the world called "artist residencies" (including some "colonies" and other designations) has grown phenomenally over the last two decades. In 2013 alone, residencies hosted tens of thousands of artists. These places provide temporary space for artists to live and work away from home, usually through a selective process. As well as being sources for inspiration, this global web of residencies can have a wide-ranging ethical and mediating effect through contact between visiting artists and their host cultures.

In this paper, a philosophy of *translation* illuminates how the artist-in-residence—in the singular capacity of being an *artist*—might help dismantle paradigms of exclusion while establishing a pluralistic consciousness. This investigation primarily utilizes theories of Homi Bhabha and Richard Kearney to showcase how the artist-in-residence has potential as a unique catalyst of positive global change, participating in the constitution of inter-cultural subject formation. Then Paul Ricoeur's concepts of *translation* capture the deeper process that integrates the artist's ethical encounter with the "other" by modeling a comprehensive, hermeneutic understanding of inter-subjectivity.

Key Words: artist-in-residence, culture, mediation, translation, subjectivity

Introduction

Rural artists' colonies that blossomed in the late 19th century probably inspired the newer model of artist residencies, both of which serve as retreats or refuges for solitude.[1] By the 1970s, however, some residencies explicitly were designed "to spark collaborations that . . . foster community building, and provide a catalyst for social change" (Wahnon 2012, 5). The residency of today provides space to live and work away from home for weeks to months, sometimes without requiring an end-product. Almost all overseeing organizations maintain a selective application process; most offer a discount opportunity and sometimes funding support. The factors of prestige and budget travel probably have contributed to the phenomenal growth in the number of international residencies, "from 60 known residencies in 1990 to . . . over 1,500 worldwide in 2012," according to Carla V. Wahnon (2012, 6) of the Alliance of Artists Communities. A recent survey indicated that in 2013 alone, more than 20,000 artists attended a residency.[2] However, according to foundation director Aaron Cezar (2012), "the rise in residencies has not been matched with an equal increase in research and discourse around them as a practice and as a format." Similarly, curator Aneta Szyłak (2012, 1) observes that "[i]f we wish to remain relevant we need more understanding of how residencies can fulfill a new and much broader cultural and political role that is in [the] hands of the artists." This need for more deliberate scholarly consideration concerns both sociological and philosophical issues surrounding the residency experience.

What makes the mobile artist different from any other cultural tourist? What is seminal about the artist in the cultural situation of a residency? How might the artist-in-residence especially be suited to redress fragmentation and strife associated with globalization? In this paper, a philosophy of translation illuminates how the artist-in-residence—in the singular capacity of being an *artist*—might help dismantle paradigms of exclusion while establishing a pluralistic consciousness by paying heed to the other. Yet not every artist-in-residence adopts this role: Mahmoud Khaled (2009, 4), for example, states, "I don't want to be pushed into this frame-work of intercultural dialog. I'm an artist, not a cultural ambassador."

Why would an artist uproot practice and studio, endure the discomfort and scrutiny involved with international travel, and set up shop only temporarily in an artist's residency? According to artist and educator Yeb Wiersma (2011, 94), "[d]isplacing yourself, from time to time, from your comfort zone — by going somewhere else, changing your scenery and your set of working and living conditions — often functions like an eye wash; it triggers your imagination and lust for life." Both the artist's subjective identity and practice benefit from this focused form of travel. But artists residing temporarily in a foreign land can enact a far wider effect, as Turkish artist and university educator Ilgim Veryeri Alaca (2012, 2627) explains, "[t]he increase in the number of artist residencies . . . potentially creates a butterfly effect, connecting an unforeseeable amount of points on the global cultural map, perhaps even creating a wave of empathy, ethical reasoning and creative thinking . . . ."

Our investigation follows several lines. First, Friedrich Nietzsche and Georg Hegel provide reasons to travel, while Henri Bergson shows that the artist has a capital claim on *perceptive imagination*. Second, Homi Bhabha emphasizes that to quell the uncertain identity prevalent in our era, one must seek intersections or crossroads of difference to admit marginalized voices. Third, maintaining that artists engage in the recovery from postmodern eclecticism, Richard Kearney identifies how an ethical consideration for the other must be conjoined with the aesthetic dimension of the poetic. This framework helps establish the artist-in-residence as a potential catalyst of positive global change, uniquely participating in the constitution of inter-cultural subject formation. In concert with place (the artist residency) and person (the artist-in-residence), our fourth focus establishes how Paul Ricoeur's work on *translation* captures the deeper process which integrates the artist's ethical encounter with the other. Translation, then, models a comprehensive, hermeneutic understanding of inter-subjectivity, which we apply to the inherent experience of the artist-in-residence. Finally, we present a work of Anna Glynn as exemplary of the ethico-poetic imagination.

The Perceptive Artist-in-Residence

The inveterate wanderer Nietzsche (2001, 244) underscores the value of travel to "see our European morality for once as it looks from a distance, and to measure it up against other past or future moralities . . . ." Similarly, Hegel (1975, 283) urges that "the artist must . . . have looked around at much in the world and made himself acquainted with its outer and inner manifestations . . . before he can develop the true depths of life into concrete manifestations." To *look* around in the world implies that the artist *move* around in the world. But it is the artist's capacity for perception sets him or her apart, per Bergson (1992, 135): "there have been men whose function has been precisely to see and to make us see what we do not normally perceive. They are the artists." Artists, he believes, utilize their perception to enlarge the field from which they receive input (which they then put into their works), while necessarily being less concerned with reacting to the busy-ness of real life. "[T]hey are born detached," accounting for the artist being "absent-minded," because "he is less preoccupied than ourselves with the positive and material side of life" (Bergson 1992, 138). Where non-artists *tacitly* classify and categorize objects and sensations, and *actively* apply thought to the myriad preoccupying matters in life, artists take in and comprehend more thoroughly what is presented to the senses. As Bergson (1992, 138) posits humorously, "[i]t is because the artist is less intent on utilizing his perception that he perceives a greater number of things."

Freud upholds these notions of productive and prescient disengagement, but as *inward* manifestations. He characterizes the artist's fanciful imagination as similar to that of a neurotic, but with the caveat that an artist is able to return to reality. This restitution then allows the artist "mould his phantasies into truths of a new kind, which are valued by men as precious reflections of reality" (Gay 1989, 305). Although these insights of Bergson and Freud are limited, they orient the understanding of today's resident artist. Not only is the artist distinguished from other cultural travelers, the artist is more perceptive and attentive to surrounding people and things. This intensity of perception, we argue, gives the artist the potential to be involved in meaningful dialog with the foreign other. First, however, we consider the unique situation of the residency.

How are international artist residencies and their artists particularly situated to help broker resolutions to the struggles for identity amidst the fragmentation and strife that accompany globalization? Bhabha (1994, 1111) emphasizes that "our existence today is marked by a tenebrous sense of survival . . . ," and that even the designation *post*–modern reflects "the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion." For him, the problems of identity are situated in "conditions of cultural displacement and social discrimination . . ." (Bhabha 1994, 1115), and solutions require "the enlargement of the multiculturalist cause . . ." (Bhabha 1994, 1112). Since we know that identity forms when two or more perspectives collide—a time when a stand is taken, when a difference is articulated—we should seek the formation of our future within these intersections. We should "focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences" (Bhabha 1994, 1111). In this fertile age of global awareness, we should concentrate on deciphering the presence in crossings and convergences of subjectivities, for "these 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (Bhabha 1994, 1111).

International artist residencies, with their dual nature of being fairly permanent locations housing continuously variable cultural populations, are rich crossroads for fostering the "overlap and displacement of domains of difference" (Bhabha 1994, 1111) that can figures as the medium or grounds for healing exchanges. Journalist Dina K. Hussein strengthens this position, as follows:

> [E]ven if the conditions and possibilities of art production, including residency programmes, are controlled by a hegemonic world system, the art world is likely the most capable of revisiting the concept of cultural exchange . . . through its understanding of residency. In other words, acknowledging the conditions of production and the associated dystopia . . . should not undermine the aspirations for change and renewed understanding, which results from artistic exchange. (Hussein 2009, 14)

Here, the accent is on *residency*—a place to abide for a period of time—for "terms of cultural engagement . . . are produced performatively, and the representation of difference must not be hastily read . . ." (Bhabha 1994, 1111). New and hybrid cultural values are ascertained through inter-subjective negotiations *over time*: they are productions, not snapshots. The duration of an artist's residency provides the time necessary to challenge one's pre-established ascriptions and old habits of classification as well as to pursue a sustained inter-cultural mediation. The artist-in-residence can capitalize on this plastic time to engage in dialogic interactions that cross-pollinate experiences and uproot stagnant representations. The temporarily peregrine artist, out of his or her comfort zone and living on the threshold of an other's culture, cannot help but undergo a frisson of questioning socio-political allegiances. The cultural journey pushes the artist's thinking outside of the "self" to revisit once authoritative notions, then thinking returns to construct for the artist a new social narrative identity. To partake in the cultural convergence provided by an artist's residency is by definition to inhabit a place of intervention, and to subsist in this inter-position is to both think beyond, to "*touch the future on its hither side,*" and to emerge changed so as to "redescribe our cultural contemporaneity" (Bhabha 1994, 1114). The boundary or border that signifies a *beyond* is embedded in the

experiential zone of the artist's residency. Artists who attend a residency occupy such a liminal field, not only as cultural producers, but also possibly as attestors to transition.

The Ethico-Aesthetic Artist-in-Residence

Bhabha's attention to the potential inscribed in sites of socio-cultural crossings together with the emphasis on artistic mobility and perception yield a compelling case for situating artist residencies as distinct yet timely contenders in the quest for cultural healing. What specifically must characterize the artist-in-residence to enable his or her agency in surmounting the failings of modern society? For Kearney, the fundamental problem of post-modernism (thus the specific milieu in which our artists stand) is rooted in the egoistic, humanist view of the *imagination* as an *individual* product: the Cartesian "I am" as a *solo* experience of being. However, Kearney (1998a, 186) submits that imagination always should be recognized as a unifying "process which relates to something or somebody *other* than itself." Given this intrinsic involvement of the other, Kearney (1998b, 361) feels it imperative that "[w]e reach a point in the endless spiral of undecidability where each one of us is obliged to make an ethical decision, to say: *here I stand.*" We are always in a relationship to others and their situations. This "standing" interrupts the perpetually undecidable while simultaneously acknowledging what Bhabha (1994, 1111) calls the "idea of society itself," breaking away from cycles of imitation (or going along with the crowd), and affirming a parallel humanness of the other. Thus Kearney (1998a, 189) calls for a "critical hermeneutics of the imaginary" to include the ethical dimension of the other, an imagination that is emancipatory in disrupting patterns of habituation which neglect dialogical response and responsibility. Itself an enterprise of the embodied imagination, the artist residency provides a fertile cultural context for the execution of such an imagination, one able to reinstate "the social imaginary" required by Bhabha (1994, 1114). Next we show that it is the artist in particular who is called upon to carry this ethical imagination.

Kearney (1998b, 371) advances that a *non-critical* ethical imagination would be a hollow "ought" with little practicability: to be facile, the ethical imagination must also be *creative* and exploratory "to begin to *imagine* that the world as it is could be *otherwise*." He therefore declares that the *ethical* imagination must be balanced with a *poetic* inclination "in the broad sense of 'inventive' making and creating carried by the word *poiesis*" (Kearney 1998b, 366) —calling for the artist to be the carrier of the ethical imagination. The poetic / artistic facet of imagination imparts an immediate and unbounded sense of possibility, while the ethical aspect mediates that possibility in an empathic cognizance of the other. Empathy, of course, interrupts narcissism. Furthermore, when Kearney (1998b, 371) maintains that "art can remain the most persuasive harbinger of a *poetics of the possible*," he nods to Heidegger's postulate that the fine arts may be the agents of "poetic revealing" which "foster the growth of the saving power" (Heidegger 1993, 340). Art, then, is not the sole healing agent; it must work in tandem with ethical thought. Thus, to be an effective cultural mediator, the artist-in-residence must be willing to engage with the foreign other.

What is exchanged between the ethical artist-in-residence and the foreign other? Kearney (1998b, 393) shares with Bhabha the conviction that the ethico-poetic imagination must not neglect past histories even as it refuses the grand narratives of exclusive authority and the engineered narratives of ideologies: "[a]n ethically responsible imagination . . . resists the authoritarian idea of a Narrative of narratives which totalizes historical experience." To discover and integrate the repressed other not only requires the critical imagination to enlist the other's subjugated narratives, but for Kearney (1998b, 393), it "*presupposes* the 'critical distance' afforded by the remembrance of past narratives." This ethically accountable post-modern imagination extends a network of narratives by connecting everyone's *stories*. Kearney (1998b, 369) emphasizes that "[t]he poetical imagination equally empowers us to identify with the forgotten or discarded persons of history. It invites excluded middles back into the fold . . . ." These actions of telling and listening incorporate into social identity what Bhabha (1994, 1111) calls the forgotten remainders of "shared history" along with the underrepresented or invisible voices of "the minority perspective" of the present. And with particular relevance to our theme of the mobile artist, Kearney (1998b, 395) notes that a recovery of *self*-identity also opens, for to be ethical implies "a certain *narrative identity*: a self which remembers its commitments to the other." These narratives are the conversations one has with oneself in the unremitting task of *becoming* in the face of change. The dialogic, inter-subjective nature of narrative alters the self as the self incorporates the other, or as Kearney (1998b, 395) explains, "the self and the collective mutually constitute each other's identity."

In sum, how do these insights into the ethico-aesthetic nature of imagination contribute to our interest in understanding the resident artist as a pivotal agent of cross-cultural understanding and social change? The mobile artist-in-residence, uniquely capable in his or her keen perception while positioned in a foreign place, can operate through interactions with the host culture as an ethico-aesthetic practitioner—one who focuses the perceptive imagination on all that is alien and opens dialog with the other to broaden understanding of the issues at stake. Yet although the potential for significant cultural interaction is ripe at an artist residency, not every artist is ideally suited to this role, as Adam Short (2012, 5), project manager for the Alliance for Artist Communities, notes, "[t]he openness of the residency experience requires a certain type of artist, one who is comfortable engaging with the public." But for those who develop such empathetic habits, the rewards are great: as artist-theorist Warren Neidich (2012, 6) points out, "[i]n our moment of a network [sic] transnational society, other cultures with other languages and other ideas become essential to the production of a complex point-of-view that has the potential to produce complex brains," which he later explains are necessary for the "mindsets to compete in this forthcoming world situation effectively: a . . . situation with maximum variability and heterogeneity" (Neidich 2012, 27). This productive complexity, as we have seen, owes its origins to concrete experience and deeper phenomenological constitution alike. And we have

begun to affirm how the inter-subjective constitution of identity has a lasting benefit to the thinking imagination and understanding of all parties. Still, how does the artist-in-residence transform his or her own thinking while engaged with a foreign culture and its stories? To comprehend the complexities of the process, we turn to Ricoeur's philosophical examination of translation as a mediating power.

The Perceptive and Ethico-Aesthetic Artist as Inter-Cultural Mediator

Translation is more than mere linguistic mapping—it is the essence of communication, a co-incidence of understanding and surprise, of elements-in-common plus untranslatable remainders. Linguistic translation pertains to the structure of language, and ontological translation bears on the deeper level of "being"—the meaning of existence. A study of translation thus extends far beyond an empirical view of language and into what is meant by being itself. Ricoeur's project of translation has its roots in the philosophy of language, but its course applies twofold to our question: the subjective activity of the artist which brings an increase in his or her own being through the fertilization of the imagination while absorbing foreign sights and sounds, and the inter-subjective action between the artist-in-residence and strangers through an intelligent and neighborly exploration of cultural differences.

The "borderline engagements of cultural difference" called for by Bhabha (1994, 1111) describe the intellectual site of the work of Ricoeur, whose goal is to expose possibilities for liaisons between conflicting sets of philosophies. Kearney (2008, ix) remarks that Ricoeur espouses the idea that life unfolds in the ever-changing mediation of interpretations within and among the in-betweens, the neglected remainders, "those border exchanges where meaning traverses the various signs and disciplines in which being is interpreted by human understanding." Ricoeur's philosophical interest in translation comes as no surprise, for between us and any other lies a gap where communication consists in infinite interpretations of meaning, and the potentials for misunderstanding cry out for mediation. In this sense, phenomenological experiences which spark the imagination are processed through translation.

Ricoeur (2008, 31) acknowledges both narrow and broad definitions of "translation," because "texts in turn are part of cultural groups through which different visions of the world are expressed." This set-superset structure represents the extensive spectrum of communication ripe for interpretation as well as the relationship between language and understanding in general. With respect to the artist living in a foreign culture, we can also think in terms of translating direct and indirect information, words and images, body language, and "reading between the lines," and how interpretation of external phenomena affects the sense of a cultural and personal self. A study of translation extends far beyond an empirical view of language and into what is meant by existence itself—for as Kearney (2008, ix) notes, "the meaning of Being is always mediated through an endless process of interpretations."

Anticipating this more hermeneutic orientation, translation applies to the artist-in-residence who arrives to spend time in a new culture. For the duration of the residence, the artist dwells in his or her intense labor of perception, rendering meaningful all that is new and different (with some threads of significance remaining throughout life). Translation begins the moment one recognizes the foreign or strange, activating a desire to interpret its otherness, to ferret out its secrets. While translation incorporates the other, it also invites and involves the other to participate. According to Kearney (2008, xvi), "[t]he work of translation might thus be said to carry a double duty: to expropriate oneself as one appropriates the other. We are called to make our language put on the stranger's clothes at the same time as we invite the stranger to step into the fabric of our own speech." To highlight this intersubjective incorporation of the other through the action of translation, Szyłak conceived a long-term project that included multiple artist residencies connecting Iraqi Kurdistan with parts of Europe, specifically so that the "strange and the unfamiliar become the vehicle of possibility and an expression of longing for something we have once lost. Through the Estrangement project, we have learned how our different competencies support one another" (Szyłak 2012, 1). This project demonstrates the ethical-poetic imagination in action, utilizing artist residencies to set up and reinforce *over time* a particular crossing of cultures, translating shared narratives, and contributing to a mediating process.

Difference, alterity, and strangeness engender a desire and drive to interpret, and the activity of translation inherently is a dialogic enterprise. Ricoeur (2008, 25) emphasizes this multiplicity by noting, "[i]t is as several people that we define, that we reformulate, that we explain, that we try to say *the same thing in another way*." Any translation is a multiple-voiced discourse—an acceptance of the gift of address from the other, a filtering through one's own context and culture, and an offering of that transformation to yet others. It is in this vein that Ricoeur (2008, 23) holds, "translation sets us not only intellectual work . . . but also an ethical problem." By virtue of its requisite involvement with alterity, translation is an ethical endeavor, part of the balance of conduct among humans. Yet, as Kearney (1998b, 362) reminds us, to be effective, "[e]thical action does not mean uncritical action. On the contrary, it demands constant discernment." In its act as mediation, translation is a critical and ongoing process, one that can find a middle ground among conflicting narratives. Art historian and curator Kaja Pawełek (2011, 75) explains that an artist residency provides the time needed for truly critical translation and the sharing of narratives, where one can "listen to the polyphony of local, sometimes contradictory, voices and versions of history and everyday life."

That the ethical characteristic of the artist-in-residence must also be a critical one becomes even more evident when considering the many factors preventing a perfectly accurate and thoroughly encompassing translation. Borrowing the term from psychoanalysis, Ricoeur (2008, 5) highlights how the translation is fraught with many types of "resistance," all of which affect the experience of the artist-in-residence with respect to the culture of his or her host. Any drive for perfection seems inconceivable from the outset: to absorb all possible meaning and re-scribe the

same meaning without any loss and without any remainder. Although language and culture are universal facilities of humans, languages and cultures themselves are numerous and particular—diversity guarantees untranslatability, and neither philology nor science has produced an intermediary language to facilitate predictable and uniform translation. Inequalities of context and syntax further amplify resistance to translation, with subtleties of historical influences and word order, symbolic codes and idiomatic expressions, and the implied significations of rhythm and tonality. Ricoeur (2008, 24-25) summarizes this ostensibly overwhelming resistance by allowing that translation "is really about approaching the mysteries of a language that is *full of life*, and at the same time, giving an account of the phenomenon of misunderstanding, of misinterpretation." Language and all cultural dimensions live and change with time, and it is from within this *living* culture that the artist-in-residence absorbs and embodies new meanings, albeit with some remainders of untranslatability. The length of the artist residency is an important factor in empowering the artist to accomplish a *critical* understanding of the host's culture: as journalist Lina Attalah (2009, 18) points out, "[t]he consistent presence and research within this extended period is instrumental in breaking constructed stereotypes." Critical translation, therefore, can be expressed as the need and desire for *re-translation*, for re-evaluating and modifying an interpretation—translation conceived as a living action applied to a living culture, for "it is in retranslation that we most clearly observe the urge to translate" Ricoeur (2008, 7). This critical and ethical activity emphasizes the characterization of translation as an act of mediation.

It might seem that such resistance would dissuade the artist from attending a residency, insofar as an intense expenditure of mental energy is compounded with the physical exertion of sleeping in a new bed, eating unfamiliar food, and rising at a different hour. Are we not doubling the burden of the artist by asking for engagement in an "in-between" experience that holds both practical and deeply hermeneutic significance? Yet who better than the artist to negotiate the borderline between thought and language, between thought and image, since *this is the site of artistic practice*: "[v]isual art is a language loaded with overt and covert meanings" (Assegued 2009, 44). The benefits of attending an artist residency far outweigh the disadvantages: one discovers more of one's own identity in the process of translating the foreign other: as Kearney (2008, x) explains, "the self returns to itself after numerous hermeneutic detours through the language of others, to find itself enlarged and enriched by the odyssey." This study of translation suggests that artist residencies are productive grounds for the ethico-poetic imagination because of the *prolonged* contact with the foreign other, granting the artist an intensified understanding of the other as well as an increase of the artist's own being through subtle but persistent *re-translation* of the host culture in its living state. Bhabha (1994, 1112) also captures the journey into the self that the artist-in-residence experiences, "[s]ocial differences are . . . the signs of the emergence of community envisaged as a project . . . that takes you 'beyond' yourself in order to return, in a spirit of revision and reconstruction." Wiersma (2011, 48) puts the matter very succinctly, "[o]ne way of traveling—inwards as well as outwards—is to sign up for a residency programme."

Translation, thus understood, is our action to fulfill the desire to discover that which comprises difference; translating, as participating in understanding, generates the pleasure that we feel when any desire is fulfilled. Thus the other and its strange language, for Ricoeur (2008, 10), provide "linguistic hospitality . . . the pleasure of dwelling in another's language . . . balanced by the pleasure of receiving the foreign word at home." A foreign culture offers itself for translation while upholding its irreducibility to a complete equivalence, keeping the desire for the dialogic experience alive (Ricoeur 2008, 10). When the stranger levies a requirement of translation, it is an invitation for "*the thing to be done* so that human action can simply continue" (Ricoeur 2008, 19). Therefore, translation is a critical yet quotidian process. Apropos to the experience of the artist-in-residence through translation, broadening one's own horizons inevitably broadens those of the social community. Kearney extrapolates the project of translation to its rightful place as a natural source of mediation which might allay some of the problems inherent in global strife:

> Ricoeur goes so far as to suggest that the future of European politics, and eventually of world politics, should be based upon an exchange of memories and narratives between different nations, for it is only when we translate our own wounds into the language of strangers and retranslate the wounds of strangers into our own language that healing and reconciliation can take place. (Kearney 2008, xx)

In summary, Ricoeur shows us that translation can recognize and mediate diversity while feeding dialogic understanding. Translation is the ethical *in action*, fulfilling the requirement of the ethico-poetic artist-philosopher as humanity's vital resource to nurture inter-cultural, dialogic healing. The artist residency provides an ideal site for critical translation to unfold through offering a formative duration to a continual flow of multi-cultural participants; in this way it matches Bhabha's quest for the "space of intervention emerging in the cultural interstices that introduces creative invention into existence" (Bhabha 1994, 1115). Neidich (2012, 55) echoes and reaffirms the crucial importance of our inquiry when he observes how "a reappraisal of the residency as a crucible and a conduit for information exchange is vital for any sovereign looking to be relevant in the future."

Anna Glynn, Artist-in-Residence

Although not all artists produce a finalized project during their residencies, it is worth noting one case in which the experience of ethical interaction at a residency manifests both subtly and overtly. Anna Glynn (22 March 2014, e-mail message to author), a full-time artist for over thirty years, writes that "[r]esidencies now form a key part of my mode of work—opportunities to see nature in other countries as well as the interaction with people." In "the MEOAW Project" ("My Extraordinary Onomatopoeic Animal World"), Glynn explores the differences in how

cultures *name* animal sounds, how they verbally *imitate* the sound, and how the word is spelled to denote the imitation itself. The results are enlightening, in both the external and internal dimensions of translation: "The MEOAW Project . . . can inspire people to question what they take for granted—our assumptions about the way things are represented" (Anna Glynn, 22 March 2014, e-mail message to author). Glynn's project takes advantage of her participation in the cultural crossroads that residencies provide, not just the languages of her host cultures, but also that of co-residents and her growing international network of friends.

To collect the information, Glynn provides participants a two-page survey with simple icons representing animals next to a place to write, and she carries a digital recorder to gather spoken samples. The simplicity of the project garners easy cooperation, but the surprise comes when people try to differentiate between up to three different forms of the animal noise-words—the ease evaporates and people begin laughing at themselves and with others, not remembering what some word "should" be. In this way, the project exposes how even people who grew up in the same country can have radically different conceptions of what the "official" animal sounds might be (and whether official forms exist at all)—the participants learn something of their own narratives while sharing with Glynn. "These differences are wonderful and people are quite often surprised and amazed that there could be another interpretation apart from the ones they know—they then start to think of what else might be different" (Anna Glynn, 22 March 2014, e-mail message to author). An outcome of the project is a video composed of short shots of participants imitating an animal sound, and the inter-textual clips extend the sense of joy—the hospitality—that can be discovered through difference. Glynn shares and adds to this video on her continuing travels (as well as on her website), globally extending what Alaca termed the "butterfly effect" of empathy as mentioned above, while emphasizing that translation (here concretely performed) is not meant to reduce diversity, but to acknowledge and even celebrate differences through visions of a shared future while preserving important and seminal aspects of cultural identity. And the personal, face-to-face interactions brought forth at an artist's residency can have long-lasting, positive, and culturally unique residual effects, as Alaca (2012, 21) further points out: "art and culture penetrate society in an osmotic manner, affecting politics, as well as everyday life." The artist-in-residence, participating in the life of a community, often takes home a sense of ownership in the locale that housed his or her temporary abode, helping conceive of the other as *ally*.

Limits and Challenges

The intentionally limited and narrow slice of artistic practice as investigated here nonetheless holds widespread implications under the more general umbrella of artist mobility. Szyłak (2012, 2) reinforces that "artists serve as agents of cultural translatability . . . and perhaps even smooth cultural repercussions of wars and conflicts. Residencies . . . engage in the real world and operate as transitional tools, absorbing new phenomena by being grounded and adding into local vernaculars." Along with conferences in Europe and the U.S. regarding the practical aspects and self-critical experiences of artist residencies, promising research has been commissioned in Europe on the social, political, and economic implications of artist mobility trends, where, for example, "[t]he mobility of cultural professionals figures as a strategic objective of the European Agenda for Culture (2007) and in the EU Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010" (ERICarts 2008, 1). However, philosophical and theoretical research lags far behind, as Anna Ptak (2011, 10) mentions, "[r]esidencies provide opportunities for artistic and social practices to intertwine; however, the concept behind them has rarely been the subject of critical investigation."

The notion of *translation* evinces a number of relations to other philosophical discourses. Artist residencies exist as locales and provide space for production, but they also function as replacements and effect a displacement—or, as curator Sofia Hernández Chong Cuy (2011, 124) observes, "residencies constitute a 'third space,'" one that "could have the same relation to artistic manifestations that hybrid cultural space has to knowledge." The phenomenon of *duration* is implicated through differences in perceived and actual cultural rhythms, and travel has the curious effect of compressing as well as expanding time in the mind of the traveler. In the midst of this temporal alteration, residencies might be considered as psychogeography on a global scale. Additional social considerations include the artist as collaborator, the residency as asylum, and the vulnerability of depositing oneself on foreign soil and trusting in hospitality. Characterizing the mobile artist as diplomat, invader, or even spy[3] raises ethico-political correlations. And the proliferation of artist residencies enacts a global economic impact, one that invites discussion concerning the practice in terms of late capitalism.

In contrast to the positive and hopeful comments that support this research, several difficult criticisms have been levied against the efficacy of artist residencies as premier sites to proffer and sustain positive cultural exchange. For example, writer Mai Elwakil (2009, 25) points out that some "critics argue that the cultural diplomacy residency model is irrelevant to artistic practice and rather more effective at raising the profile of an artist or host community." Although most of the evidence we have presented has been gathered at conferences and through voluntary reports, we also rely on recent evidence based on commissioned, professional research such as underlies the *Mobility Matters* report, which cites that "[m]any of the bilateral and multilateral agreements concluded between EU member countries underline the importance of cultural mobility and exchange in the contexts of cultural diplomacy . . . the development of socio-cultural relationships" (ERICarts 2008, 10). This report, therefore, also might discredit the charge that "the small group of individuals involved in residencies may not offer a realistic representation of the communities to which they belong," also put forward by Elwakil (2009, 25).

Summary

Through examining the artist-in-residence, we have touched on a range of implications from the broad and international to the very personal encounters one has with the other and the self. The mediating and natural act of translation is a powerful tool that particularly empowers the critical and ethical artist-in-residence to participate in global healing. We have shown that artists—singular in their deployment of outer and inner modes of perception as defined by Freud and Bergson—should travel, per Nietzsche and Hegel. Kearney affirms that if artists—exemplary practitioners of critical imagination—are capable of leading humanity past its present addictive and undecidable condition, these artists also must be ethical such that all might voice their stories. In dialogue with Bhabha, we have identified artist residencies as distinguished locations of cultural crossings, places where artists and the other might "deploy the cultural hybridity of their borderline conditions to 'translate', and therefore reinscribe, the social imaginary . . ." (Bhabha 1994, 1114). And it is this essential notion of *translation* of difference that, following Ricoeur, enables us to understand and envision the process that a critical, ethical artist-in-residence undertakes to help dismantle paradigms of exclusion and establish a pluralistic consciousness.

No wonder the number of artist residencies has ballooned worldwide over the last few decades, for there is a growing acknowledgement that "artists are seen as cultural interpreters and mediators who can have positive multiplier effects in overcoming misconceptions . . . through intercultural residencies" (Elwakil 2009, 24). Edward Said affirms the overall value of the type of engaged travel undertaken by the artist-in-residence by stating:

> The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment and generosity necessary for true vision. The more easily, too, does one assess oneself and alien cultures with the same combination of intimacy and distance. (Said 1994, 259)

Artist residencies can serve as distinct border-crossings by virtue of hosting international artists while encouraging community contact. Through the special presence of ethico-poetic artist-philosophers, these residencies foster the power to change inter-cultural barriers into multi-dimensional thresholds of hospitality.

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About the Author

Deborah Bouchette is an artist and writer who aspires to be an ethico-poetic artist-philosopher every day, everywhere. Her dissertation asks the question "ever since Plato disavowed the poets from his ideal city, where is the place for the artist?" For the first part of her life, Deborah managed high-tech development and localization projects across multi-national companies. She is happy now to be in her "right mind."

1Notes

In this paper, an artist residency is managed by an organization or person(s) *other than* the artist-participants themselves, following the usage of umbrella organizations.

2 The Res Artis network conducted a poll of its 470 members between December 2013 and January 2014, and 155 members reported hosting a total of 4,262 artists during 2013 for an average duration of 50 days (Res Artis 12 March 2014, e-mail message to author). An algebraic extrapolation over the 1,500 residencies yields 40,500 artists-in-residence during 2013. Allowing for selection bias and other factors, it is reasonable to project that residencies hosted 20,000 or more artists during 2013. Furthermore, as of 2014, the number of known residencies is closer to 2,000.

3 Any characterization of the foreign includes within it a notion of the secret, promulgating suspicion: Anna Glynn reports that "[w]hen I was in Northern China living with my Chinese artist friend we had the police come to her door a number of times to check on us and view our passports. Other local residents were suspicious of us as foreigners and had reported *this activity*" (Anna Glynn, 29 April 2014, e-mail message to author, emphasis mine).