

'Add+PF+?'

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I was invited as a resident artist to the 'Pedagogical Factory' programme of events [1], at Hyde Park Art Centre (HPAC) in Chicago, July-September 2007, with the anticipation of the organisers Jim Duignan and Daniel Tucker that I would "develop a site specific work involving the collecting of oral history and map making".

I also was the only international (and non-Chicago resident) artist who was present during the whole 2 month event process, so I was also invited to take the role of 'external observer', giving feedback and outside points of view. I was hosted by 6 different local individual artists, activists in their own home, or several small institutions, in 6 different neighbourhoods of the city. Although demanding, though this method I gained a multi-faceted, multi-ethnic/cultural perspective of the city which is still severely segregated on class and racial terms.

After some deliberation on my multi-sited experience of Chicago, I decided that my site-specific, community-specific project would aim to engage with the community of 'Pedagogical Factory' itself – the community of people I was exposed to via the exhibition, events and email communications. I also felt that I wished to respond to the highly-organised and commendable series of events (the 'factory') and the rhetoric of openness, process, and inclusion, which clearly accompanied the exhibition. I recall that I felt there to be little open space for events to unfold, and I wished to extend the structure of inclusive learning to those not yet involved. Hence, I proposed to make addition slot(s) in the schedule each week, as part of the publically-announced Pedagogical Factory (PF) summer schedule. I called it 'Add+PF+?'.

This meant that I solicited local artists/guides/teachers/presenters/performers who felt like they have something to share, teach, show and tell others, not yet covered in the PF programme of events. Through my action, I intended to suggest the question of 'Who decides what and how we learn?' So I put this question to the Pedagogical Factory 'community', to organisers, activists, artists and/or educators: "Do you have a hobby, craft, skill, profession, inspiring person, history that you think others can learn from? Do you recommend someone who has something to teach but hasn't had the chance?".

I was offering to make extra promotion of the additional event to the 'Pedagogical Factory' community and email list which I gathered, and that I would document their event, by taking photographs and audio recordings, or a reflective interview-conversation. Afterwards, unfortunately sometimes with delay, I shared the files with the organiser for them to use as they wished, copyleft. It was my intention to accept every suggestion. In other words, I did not wish to be selective or curatorial. Although, this ambition was partially compromised by my 'boot-strapping' the process. This term, with its coinage in computing and finance, has

been applied recently to social or community-based online networking platforms, where the people/events/content has to be seeded or initiated by developers themselves.. 'Pulling oneself up by one's own bootstraps' [2]. In the case of 'Add+PF+?', I created 1 new event myself and promoted 3 activities of others which were already planned.

Over the period of 7 weeks, I received 5 responses from very different margins of cultural, specialist and non-professional realms, but it was only towards the end of the period that completely new events were made as a an outcome of the opportunity. At the end of the 2 month period, I created 1 further event which aimed at bringing a group of persons together under a common theme. To make an equation from this scenario: 7 weeks = (5+4+1) x 'Add+PF+?' events (see below for a listing).

For some people who responded to this offer of event organising/promotion, the extra exposure of their event/activity was important, for some it was just fun to invite stranger(s) not yet known, for others the documentation was useful. Pedagogical Factory exhibition and events programme itself, was a well-respected, well-publicised, and critically well-received project. For those involved in the same scene, it was a good association to have; for those not in the same scene, it offered the potential to bring a new awareness/audience to more marginal scenes.

In exchange, I was meeting people and learning from a local active enthusiast, about their interests and context of making or doing, in a particular neighbourhood of the city. I certainly traversed the different boundaries of the city, and through my activity as an outsider, informally networking myself and others also between each other. At the time, and afterwards, I reflected upon this activity as 'parasite organising', positive attention, and I was interested in exploring Peter Kropotkin's notion of mutual aid, where "the economic concept of voluntary reciprocal exchange of resources and services for mutual benefit" [3].

However, my 'Add+PF+?' events were only successful on a couple occasions in enticing additional people to participate, who were not already. There is much to be said about the human, cultural and institutional capital behind event organising and collaborative projects, and the related 'pulling power' of each. I did not have the longer-term reputation of a local organiser or producer. I was (argued by myself) 'parasiting' upon the reputation of the PF organisers Jim Duignan and Daniel Tucker. The community I was soliciting was based on theirs.. I was building and developing from it. I treated email contacts/lists as 'open source' materials to work with. Furthermore, the 'pedagogical factory' was not the Hyde Park Art Centre site of Pedagogical Factory, but where-ever the respondent wished it to be.

From my perspective, it seemed to promote a form of 'open-source organising'. I am still trying to figure out: what that might mean? What are the source materials for doing

community or socially-engaged arts, activism, or cultural production and organising? What types, and how much capital (social, cultural, intellectual, institutional, human, financial) are necessary? There are for sure definite thresholds and limits of exchange and goodwill which can be explored and reached. However, to summarise, I found this a good way to begin; to be involved in the city and other projects.

If I speak about how I benefited from the 'mutual aid' I attempted.. The twice-a-week presentation events and the network of people which attended the Hyde Park Art Centre for 'Pedagogical Factory' were a remarkable and inspirational opportunity. I learned much from the scheduled events, and also the 'added' events which I variably helped to facilitate into existence/attend or promote to a slightly wider audience. It was an intensive period of my life and immensely interesting and rewarding. The best that I can hope for from that time, is that for the people I met - more or less, regularly or very briefly - they can say a little of the same.

References

[1] <http://www.stockyardinstitute.org/PedagogicalFactory.html>

[2] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bootstrapping_\(business\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bootstrapping_(business))

[3] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_aid_\(politics\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_aid_(politics))

Contextual slides

http://apaterso.info/projects/addpf/apateron_addpf_slides_2008.pdf

Add+PF+? events

See below

Add+PF+1: 08.10.2007: Tall-Ship Sailing Tourist Trip with Glenda Reed

http://apaterso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_01_event_100807.pdf

Invited by Glenda Reed, exploring urban desires of open-sea freedom and pirate fantasies. Take a 1.5 hr ride on the tall sailing ship 'Windy', with other public citizens and tourists. There will be 5 paid crew members and potentially 20-150 passengers. Where: Navy pier, downtown Chicago.

Add+PF+2: 08.14.2007: 'Rousseau's Garden' Documentary Film-screening

Welcome to a preview-screening of 'Viimeinen Kesä'/'The Last Summer' AKA 'Rousseau's Garden' documentary [45 mins] directed by Roope Ahola. This commissioned YLE documentary is due to be debuted 25th August at 'Happihuone', and broadcast on Finnish national TV this december 2007. It focuses upon 'Happihuone' activities in summer 2005, and the ongoing issues of urban redevelopment in central Helsinki. Where: Hyde Park Art Centre.

Add+PF+3: 08.18.2007: Annual Ramon B. Price Heritage Bus Tour

http://apaterso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_03_event_180807.pdf

Invited, guided and chauffeured by Sherry Williams, exploring and annually re-appreciating the illustrious Bronzeville history and testimonies of it's famous Black citizens. "The Annual Bronzeville / Woodlawn communities tour is sponsored by the Ramon Price Heritage Club. This year, the tour guide is Professor Robert Starks. Visit N'Digo Magazine website to learn more about him. He is currently at the Northeastern Illinois Center for Inner City Studies". Where: The streets of Bronzeville.

Add+PF+4: 08.26.2007: TAMMS Letter-Signing & Envelope-Stuffing

http://apaterso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_04_event_260807.pdf

Joining up with Laurie Jo, Alison, Anthony, Scott, Kent, and Nadya for 'TAMMS LETTER-SIGNING and ENVELOPE-STUFFING'! "We are having yet another letter-signing and envelope-stuffing event in order to send a piece of mail to each of the 265 prisoners housed in the Tamms supermax prison. It is also an occasion to eat. The signing and mailing usually takes about 70 minutes, but the socializing can last for hours. Where: Nadya and Anthony's apartment, 2840 N. Francisco 2-A, Logans Square.

Add+PF+5: 08.29.2007: 'Storytelling as Cultural Memory' with Ramon Lopez

http://apaterso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_05_event_290807.pdf

"Much can be learned about a particular culture through the communal and participatory tradition of oral storytelling. Join The Public Square at IHC and the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center for a special evening with noted storyteller and anthropologist Ramon Lopez. Lopez will discuss the value of oral history and storytelling as a vital part of cultural identity in Puerto Rico and on Division Street in Chicago. His presentation will be followed by a lively conversation with the audience. Where: CPL: Humboldt Park Branch, 1605 N Troy St.

Add+PF+6: 09.01.2007: 'One Mile Meal' with Robin Hewlett & Ally Reeves

http://apaterso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_06_event_010907.pdf

"One Mile Meal is a research expedition and performance unit that will tour US cities during the growing/harvesting seasons, in 2007 and 2008. The project explores a one-mile radius of the earth, selected based on the location of the hosting gallery space. The goal of the expedition is to find food growing within one mile of the gallery, with which to feed our audience. In some cities we'll return with more food to share than in others, but we'll always have plenty of stories to tell. Where: Experimental Station, 6100 S. Blackstone Ave.

Add+PF+7: 09.03.2007: 'Fungus Family Fun Fair' Tour by Rael Bassan

http://apateroso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_07_event_030907.pdf

A Talk/Walk/Show/Smell/Taste (perhaps) event by Rael Bassan, celebrating FUNGI (Family fun fair): "a mutualist lifeform, their stories, and significance. Come a bit earlier to visit our display of fungal specimens and lore. Touch, smell and explore these often overlooked lifeforms, which are closer to animals than plants. Learn about their unique behavior and some fun and practical uses. And about Earth's original internet". Where: North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N Pulaski Rd.

Add+PF+8: 09.03.2007: 'Heaven Gallery Reboot' by Heaven Gallery

http://apateroso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_08_event_060907.pdf

'Heaven is Rebooted, evoking a sharing of past experience, and spreading of the new.. via its new online social platform. "Please join us as we celebrate the new community based web site of Heaven Gallery. There will be a slide show presentation by owner Dave Dobie about the history of the gallery and also it's plans for the future". Where: Heaven Gallery, 1550 N. Milwaukee Ave (2nd Floor).

Add+PF+9: 09.06.2007: 'Home-style Gallery' opening by Laura Schaeffer

http://apateroso.info/projects/addpf/documents/addpf_09_event_080907.pdf

Laura Schaeffer invites you to mingle and view art in a new 'home-style' gallery. "I hope you can come by Saturday the 8th, anytime after 6 and have a glass of wine, meet people you may not know and take a look at Casey Robert's recent cyanotype artworks". Where: 1407 E. 54th place, Hyde Park.

Add+PF+10: 09.22.2007: 'Urban Lifeboat Open Academy' Discussion

Are you worried about the end of industrial urban society? Heard about climate and global change, peak oil and energy-descent scenarios, but not sure how to fit it into your life? Come join us for a feel-good open discussion about it, with other people who care and know about our potential troubles ahead. Where: Hyde Park Art Centre.