

Inventing Abstraction, Reinventing Our Selves: The Museum of Modern Art's Artist Network Diagram and the Culture of Capitalism

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If the studio and the workshop are the places where artworks and new ways of thinking and seeing most often take shape, exhibitions are the sites where such creations meet the public and, in the course of their reception, make, and re-make, art history.

Inventing Abstraction at the Museum of Modern Art (December 23, 2012–April 15, 2013), which critics praised as offering a fresh, inclusive and cross-disciplinary perspective on the origins of artistic abstraction, is one such exhibition summoning the full potential of this form of object-based historiography.¹ Alongside modernist titans like Picasso and Mondrian, the exhibition spotlighted comparatively unfamiliar figures and many women artists. Curator Leah Dickerman further stressed the transmedial reach of abstraction beyond the traditional domains of painting and sculpture by foregrounding abstract photography, music, dance and poetry, paralleling MoMA's own disciplinary re-orientation beyond painting and sculpture over the preceding decade.

In this paper, we focus attention on the less commented upon, but equally significant, Artist Network Diagram (Figure 1) produced as part of the exhibition, which gives potent visual form to the exhibition's historical and institutional revisions. The Diagram—which was displayed as a wall-sized didactic at the exhibition's entrance and exit, was featured prominently in its promotional materials, and was available for purchase as a poster in the Museum's gift shops—boldly redraws the origin myth of abstraction, we argue, according to a neoliberal conception of art history and of creative activity.² The Diagram challenges the idea, made famous by the Museum's founding director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., that abstraction arose through an evolution of avant-garde styles shaped by historical, cultural, and aesthetic vectors. We argue that the exhibition and the Artist Network Diagram reread the logic of the avant-garde through the lens of post-welfare autonomization of the self and visualize the results using the newly ascendant imagery of the social network.

To create the Diagram, Dickerman enlisted the help of a prominent business management specialist whose expertise in the administration of human capital includes network analysis. Through their interdisciplinary collaboration, they approached the invention of abstraction as a kind of neglected case study revealing the under-appreciated importance of social capital and interpersonal relations for achieving entrepreneurial innovation.³

Despite the exhibition's generally positive critical reception, we wish to describe three troubling implications in its conception of art history and creative activity: first, its apparent presumption of a dominant entrepreneurial model of artistic labor; second, its complicity with contemporary, exploitative neoliberal discourses of human resource management and network theory; and, lastly, its marginalization of non-European cultures in the formation of modernism.

Through this discussion, we aim to forge a space to reflect critically on art's apparently ever-expanding relationship to neoliberalism. We also offer a concrete example of neoliberal governmentality at work, understood as an ethos (rather than a specific historical moment or single doctrine) operating within nearly every aspect of our individual and social lives.⁴ Examples such as *Inventing Abstraction's* extraordinary revision suggest that, at least to some extent, neoliberal practices of infusing market values and logic into all aspects of social life have led us to all but take for granted a brand new cultural image of the artist: the entrepreneurial artist.

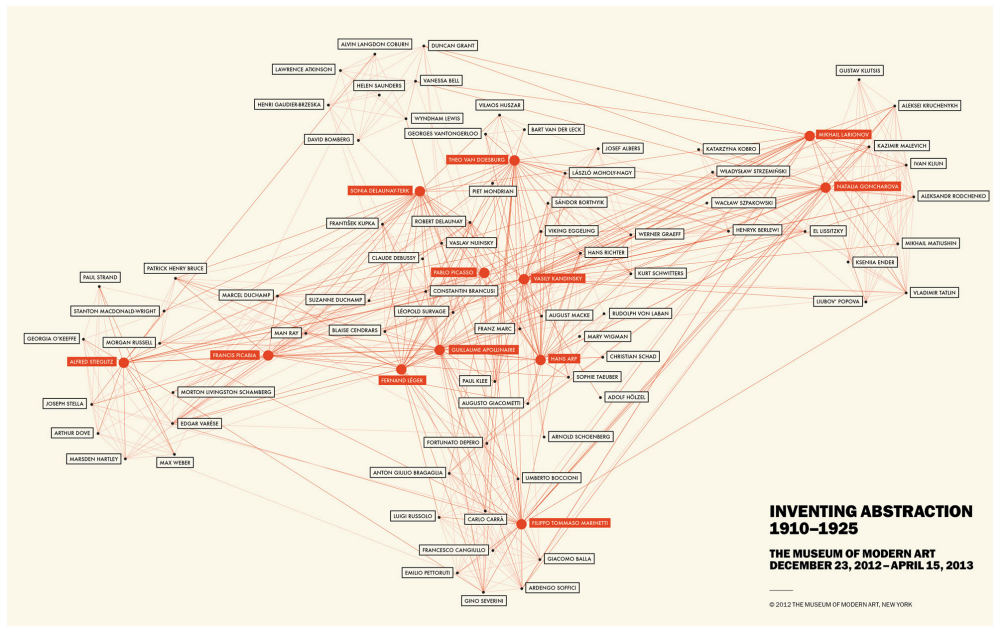


Figure 1. The Artist Network Diagram in *Inventing Abstraction: 1910-1925*, an exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, 2012–2013, organized by Leah Dickerman with Masha Chlenova. Courtesy of The Museum of Modern Art. © 2012 The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Available for download on MoMA's website: https://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/inventingabstraction/MoMA_InventingAbstraction_Network_Diagram.pdf.

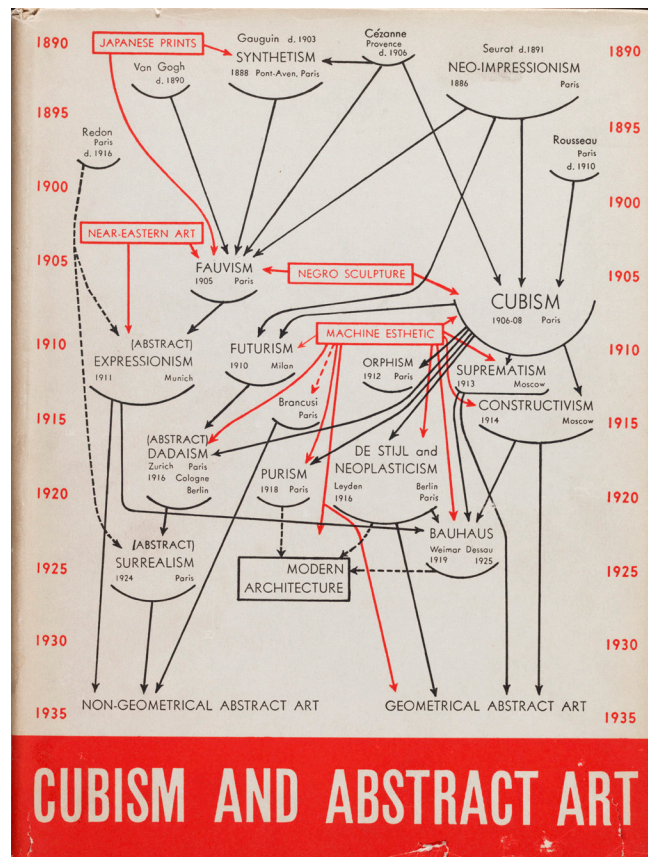


Figure 2. Dust jacket with chart prepared by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., of the exhibition catalogue, *Cubism and Abstract Art*, by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. 1936. © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

Linking In the Avant-Garde

Produced by MoMA's curatorial and design teams in collaboration with members of Columbia Business School, the Artist Network Diagram endeavors to update and rethink the iconic flowchart that Barr designed for the cover of the catalogue for MoMA's seminal 1936 exhibition, *Cubism and Abstract Art*. This original diagram, though not unchallenged, continues to serve as a key didactic device for pictorially representing the artistic transformations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Figure 2).⁵

True to the reigning formalism of mid-century American art criticism, Barr's chart harnessed the positivist language of the natural sciences to demonstrate how abstraction was the traceable culmination of artistic developments since the late nineteenth century. Tracking stylistic paths of influence along routes guided by transpersonal (e.g. cultural and aesthetic) forces, Barr sought to sketch the sequences of organic conversions from one avant-garde movement to the next, all leading to the summit of abstraction. One trajectory, for instance, charts a continuous development from Japanese prints to Synthetism, forward to Fauvism, and onward to Surrealism, the immediate precursor, we learn, to Non-Geometrical Abstract Art. Another outlines the path from Near Eastern art at the dawn of the twentieth century, to Expressionism in Munich, to Weimar and Dessau-based Bauhaus design and finally, to Modern architecture.

But while the Artist Network Diagram adopted the same typography, font and color scheme as Barr's chart, the similarities end there. Rather than charting a history of stylistic advancement through a succession of *-isms*, the Network Diagram is intended to visualize the social and professional relations between various members of the international avant-garde from 1910 to 1925. Pictorialized through a hemispheric network of nodes, the Diagram's land- and ocean-crossing lattice of affiliations evokes a vast, interconnected social body; it is a prototype, we might imagine, of today's so-called global art world. On the right-hand side, we find the names of Eastern European avant-gardists like Kazimir Malevich and El Lissitzky. To the left, we encounter New York-based artists like Francis Picabia and Alfred Stieglitz. To the north and south, we come upon clusters of artists who primarily worked in Britain and Italy, respectively. And at the literal and symbolic center lie those artists and intellectuals—from Picasso to Apollinaire—who worked in France and Germany, the conventional epicenter of modernist innovation. The names of those

LinkedIn Maps Olivier (DaffyDuke) Duquesne's Professional Network
as of January 25, 2011

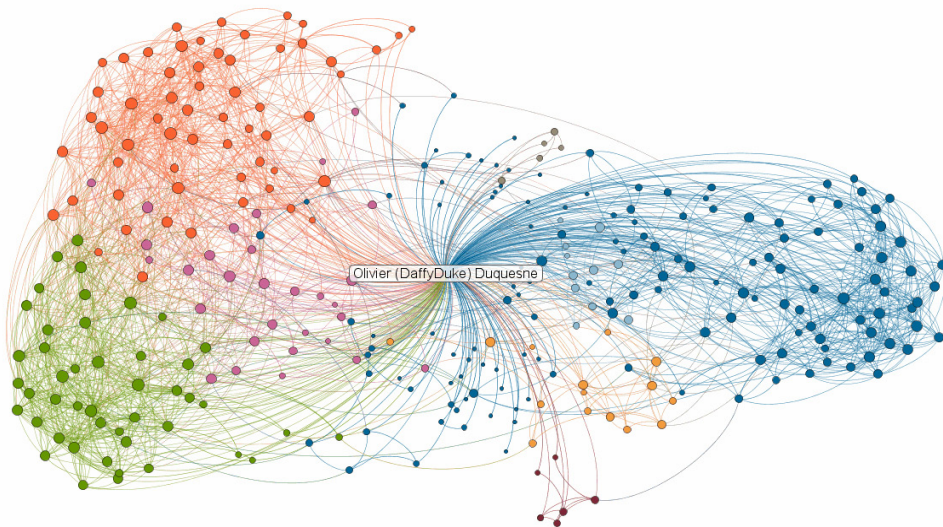


Figure 3. LinkedIn professional network map, 2011, posted to Flickr by Olivier Duquesne, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/daffyduke/5388328755> (accessed September 15, 2016), Creative Commons License (CC BY-ND 2.0).

carrying twenty-five or more connections in the grid are highlighted in red and denoted by enlarged nodes. Artists with fewer proven connections (the majority) appear in black and are tethered to smaller pinpoints. Links joining the nodes stand in for known communications and encounters between artists as established through archival research. Together, they provide a compass of influence that is calibrated in terms of the quantity of interpersonal relationships cultivated by a given artist.

The result is a diagram purposefully resembling the digital visualizations of the webs of interrelated users of social networking platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook (Figure 3). In a streaming video interview, “Behind the Scenes: The Making of *Inventing Abstraction*’s Artist Network Diagram,” published on the official exhibition website, Curator Leah Dickerman explained how her exhibition and design teams set out to “imagine what Barr’s chart would look like in this moment in time” and thought “immediately of social networks.”⁶ Rendered in this way, what had been institutionalized by earlier generations of MoMA curators as a relatively linear progression of stylistic innovation from one avant-garde movement to the next is presented anew in *Inventing Abstraction* as the outcome of the free exchange of ideas across a social network of creative individuals.

From *Inventing Abstraction* to Reinventing Our Selves

Inventing Abstraction is not the first example of Dickerman’s interest in the social networking activity of the avant-garde. In 2005, she co-curated *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris*, a major exhibition of Dada art that prefigured *Inventing Abstraction*’s concern with establishing the social links that gave rise to new forms of advanced art.⁷ Against traditional interpretations of Dada as a coherent movement of artists allied by their anti-aesthetic convictions, Dickerman argued that what distinguished it from previous avant-garde formations was its open-ended, network-like structure and international scope, describing it in the catalogue as a “web of connections linking actors and local groupings, which served as a conduit of ideas and images” that was “diffuse in an unprecedented way.”⁸ The unconventional exhibition installation reinforced this understanding of Dada as a geographically dispersed nodal network, with artworks grouped according to the city centers in which they were produced, rather than chronologically or by theme or medium.

However, *Inventing Abstraction* differs from the Dada exhibition due to the involvement of a leading scholar of business management theory in the creation of its central didactic, and consequently, by its neoliberal rationale. Paul Ingram, Kravis Professor of Business at Columbia Business School specializing in management and organizational behavior, led a team that helped to design the Artist Network Diagram. Dickerman met Ingram at the Center for Curatorial Leadership in New York, where Ingram’s teachings on network analysis and building social capital are incorporated within an intensive training program that teaches art historians and curators management and administration skills.⁹ Partly through Ingram’s involvement, we contend that the Artist Network Diagram became equally an illustration of an important moment in art history and a device for teaching contemporary viewers how to conduct and empower themselves as enterprising individuals.

In an interview available on the exhibition website, Ingram draws a direct analogy between avant-garde artists and creative entrepreneurs, and cites Bauhaus artists, architects, and designers—who, in his telling, benefitted from living and working in close proximity—as ideal examples of successful creative networkers. Highlighting certain characteristics, Ingram explains that individuals who “do” creative networks best “embrace diversity,” are “broad in their interests” and “have a capacity for social engagement with different types of people.”¹⁰ These capacities, Ingram believes, are so decisive for professional success that they can “explain why you may have two artists... in similar positions in the social structure and one of them reaches creative greatness” and the other does not.¹¹

By many accounts, the image of an autonomous and enterprising human being that

Ingram describes is a hallmark of the present mode of advanced capitalism. French sociologists Luke Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, for instance, have helped bring to light the kinds of subjectivity that this emergent form of flexible and dispersed capitalism valorizes. In *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, the authors undertake a systematic analysis of human resources management texts and organizational culture since the 1960s. They argue that from the eighties onwards, individuals have been valued less for their efficiency, expertise and obedience—traits associated with static bureaucracy—than for their ability to communicate, mediate, take risks, self-start, problem-solve and innovate ideas and practices.¹² Exemplary individuals are flexible in the face of ever-changing environmental conditions, adroit at making connections and bringing people together and, above all else, eager to explore and integrate themselves into networks in order to generate future projects.¹³

For Ingram, the historic avant-garde offers an instructive example of such a network of creative and enterprising individuals. From his point of view, it “is a gold mine... it’s the distilled essence of innovation” and an opportunity to further demonstrate that a “structural predictor of creativity is being on the path between others.” Put another way, “the network structure is the key.”¹⁴ In fact, Ingram has begun using the diagram when teaching networks to MBAs and executives. In an article in *ARTnews* for which Ingram was interviewed, he explains that, “the quality of ‘between-ness’ in the network—being on multiple paths between others—is associated with creativity.”¹⁵ Thus, at least part of the perceived value in reassessing, quantifying and mapping the interpersonal connections between the individual contributors to what Dickerman calls “the greatest rewriting of rules of artistic production since the Renaissance,” lies in the potential profitability of revealing the secret sauce to achieving such radical forms of industry-wide innovation.¹⁶

From this business-minded perspective, abstraction was not the logical outcome of the interaction between certain stylistic, cultural and historical antecedents, but the work of human innovation brought about through the exchange of ideas between creative individuals in a free-flowing network. Each artist in the Diagram, presumably, achieved success through his or her own agency by establishing connections and relying on the human capital of creativity and on the creative skills and abilities that enable people to continually change and adapt.

In a political climate that demands self-enterprise, the lesson that the Artist Network Diagram encodes can also be linked to a contemporary discourse on post-welfare citizenship in which the exhibition consumer is implicated. It idealizes a flexible subject, reliant upon personal connections and resources rather than institutional structures, flowing from post-1990 neoliberal calls for personal responsibility and self-empowerment within a deregulated social and economic field. British political theorist Nikolas Rose has described how the care of individuals became privatized and dispersed in the wake of the partial dismantlement of the Western welfare states.¹⁷ Likewise, techniques of management and sociality that once flowed predominantly through static and hierarchical institutions like the workplace and the nation state are increasingly dispersed across sprawling networks of privatized and individuated entities. In turn, citizens are encouraged, by welfare-to-work government policy as much as by competitive reality TV shows, to fend for themselves within a deregulated capitalist economy that devalues organized labor and job security and cultivates their capacities for self-motivation, self-promotion and adaptability.¹⁸

A direct connection between a museum exhibition and strategies of liberal governance might seem improbable. Like most art exhibitions, *Inventing Abstraction* was billed as a product of art historical scholarship and as compelling entertainment, not as a formal tutorial in governing. But this should not prevent us from exploring the exhibition’s relevance to diffuse mechanisms of power. Far from a neutral storehouse of culture, the museum acts as a narrative space for showing and telling with a very particular historical development as an apparatus of social regulation. In his famous political genealogy of the museum, Tony Bennett demonstrates how the idea of the public museum as an agent of social reformation lies at the foundation of the modern museum idea. What had begun in the sixteenth century as an encyclopedic venture was skillfully redeveloped within the ideological framework of nationalism in the nineteenth century in order both to promote the idea of a shared national identity and to “organize a voluntarily, self-regulating citizenry.”¹⁹ Additionally, Carol Duncan has theorized the modern art museum as a significant technology for cultivating civic capacities and for acculturating citizens into the behavioral norms of polite bourgeois society.²⁰

Museums still perform this subjectifying function today. Considering neoliberalism’s

broad rethinking and remodeling of the Welfare State, the lessons encoded in the story of *Inventing Abstraction* told through the museum exhibition and illustrated by the Diagram are meaningful in relationship to neoliberal ideals of “governing at a distance” as opposed to the perceived ineffectiveness of public assistance and big government.²¹ The problem is not that Ingram or Dickerman misrepresent the origins of artistic abstraction, or that the museum has an ideological effect on impressionable audiences; rather, the exhibition format and the cultural power of museums are useful to a political rationality that favors dispersed and informal means of guiding the ethics, behaviors and aspirations of ordinary people over formal policies and institutions (e.g., public welfare).²² As exhibition consumers experience the Diagram’s wisdom—that the secret to creative greatness lies within ourselves—within our capacities for self-motivation, self-promotion and flexibility, we become even more the kinds of subjects who can be ruled through freedom rather than control.

From Artist to Artrepreneur

How has the imperative to behave as enterprising individuals—to perform as, what sociologist Paul du Gay calls, “entrepreneurs of the self”—affected contemporary artists?²³ In *Your Everyday Art World*, art critic and historian Lane Relyea draws on Boltanski and Chiapello to argue that artists today must exhibit the values of extroversion and adaptability in order to succeed in an art world organized around short-term projects, professional networks and ceaseless travel.²⁴ Art theorist Jen Harvie also appraises the relationship between art production and contemporary commercial culture in her recent book *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism*. According to her analysis, dramatic cuts in government funding for the arts over the past twenty years have placed increasing pressure on artists to behave entrepreneurially in ways that expand the effects of neoliberal capitalism.²⁵ Though her research focuses on the United Kingdom, similar cuts have affected arts infrastructure in industrialized countries throughout the West.²⁶

Following Relyea’s and Harvie’s analyses, we suggest that Ingram’s ideal creative networker takes the precise shape of the model subject that embodies the new spirit of capitalism and is also meaningful in the context of the rise of the so-called creative industries and the repositioning of arts and culture as essential to economic growth.²⁷ As Harvie details, as early as the 1980s, cultural workers took on new importance in the post-industrial West, since it was these people who were seen to possess the creative capacity required to drive the emerging knowledge economy. At the same time, post-industrial European and North American economies bent on permanent growth want more entrepreneurial innovation and risk-taking, as the initiative of entrepreneurs is regarded as a key element in generating wealth. Entrepreneurial creative industry practitioners, or entrepreneurial artists, are the perfect hybrid. An *Art Monthly* commentator observes, “...In the era of info-capital and the rise of the creative industries the artist has become the model worker. Innovation, flexibility, creativity—these are valued above all.”²⁸

In light of these arguments, it is apparent that the ideological principles informing the Diagram, and the art historical re-reading crystallized within it, contribute to and are symptomatic of a redefinition of the kinds of subjects that artists are expected to be. Considered against the backdrop of the rise of the creative industries over the last two decades, and the idea that individuals have a responsibility to empower herself or himself privately, citizens generally, and artists in particular, are under increasing pressure to model entrepreneurialism. Therefore, the revisionism of *Inventing Abstraction* confirms the emergence of a potent new cultural image of the artist: the entrepreneurial artist or, following Jen Harvie, the *artrepreneur*.²⁹

Unsurprisingly, there are many potentially detrimental effects of expectations on artists to model entrepreneurial business practices. At an institutional level, expectations that artists should act entrepreneurially can fuel arguments for further reducing state funding of arts organizations and artists, possibly forcing them to secure private funding and to marketize to survive. It is especially detrimental to the viability of less commercial art, including some immaterial, socially engaged and/or community-based arts practices situated outside the circuits of for-profit art galleries and international art fairs. And as public support for artists continues to decline, the socioeconomic and ethnic and racial diversity of arts practitioners is also jeopardized as access to independent sources of wealth becomes requisite for subsistence.³⁰ Far from an open field for personal maximization

and self-realization, as Ingram's remarks above suggest, cultural work is an intensely uneven terrain marked by the same increasing social and economic divisions cutting through the rest of society.

Still more pernicious—if also more abstract—are the ideological consequences of this troubling redefinition of the kinds of subjects artists are supposed to be and the enterprising behavior they are meant to emulate. On this point, we are of the same mind as Jen Harvie, who argues that, “overall, accepting that artists should be entrepreneurial... fundamentally reifies neoliberal values as legitimate and legitimately ubiquitous.”³¹ As part of a broader spectrum of activities within neoliberal governmentality, this acceptance can contribute to a process which “re-signifies democracy as ubiquitous entrepreneurialism.”³²

Affinities of the Tribal and the Modern?

The representational strategies adopted by the Artist Network Diagram have another significant and troubling consequence: even as the Diagram painstakingly restores the connections between each individual avant-garde artist, it quite literally drops entire (non-European) populations of the world off the map. In doing so, *Inventing Abstraction* diverges greatly from other stories about European modernism told at MoMA, such as the 1984 exhibition “*Primitivism*” in 20th Century Art: *Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* (Figure 4) in which indigenous and tribal materials produced by peoples in Africa and Oceania were central. Co-curated by William Rubin and Kirk Varnedoe, “*Primitivism*” addressed the relationship between non-Western visual culture and European artistic modernism through the paradigms of “influence” and “affinity,” presenting striking juxtapositions of modernist and tribal objects to reveal unexpected visual congruities across space and time.³³ However, as American critic Thomas McEvilley and others quickly pointed out, this comparative formalist approach was deeply problematic and essentially racist, as it categorically stripped non-Western objects of their cultural context and function so

as to aggrandize the creative powers of European modernists, who, it suggested, merely shared affinities with non-Western cultures, rather than owing them any debts, stylistic or otherwise.³⁴

Without a doubt, “*Primitivism*” was a spectacular failure, but the question of how to account for non-Western indigenous art and culture in our institutional stories of modern art history remains important, and it is one that *Inventing Abstraction* does not address. In fact, though the subject of the appropriation of indigenous material by the historic avant-garde has been richly researched, discussed and exhibited—even Barr included “Negro Sculpture” on his flowchart—those transactions and non-Western individuals do not figure in the Diagram at all.³⁵

Of course, the invisibility of non-Western makers in the Diagram is not unique, and stems in part from how the field has historically defined such terms as “art” and “artist” within specific arts disciplines and geographic locations. Most often, the African and indigenous people who created the tribal objects that famously inspired European avant-gardists like Picasso in the early twentieth century were not considered artists, neither by the individuals who acquired them from their source communities nor by the source communities themselves. Consequently, they rarely made the effort to determine and attribute authorship of the objects to specific individuals, as this would have required them to perceive those artifacts as art and their makers as artists.

These factors notwithstanding, we believe that the network-based methodology of the

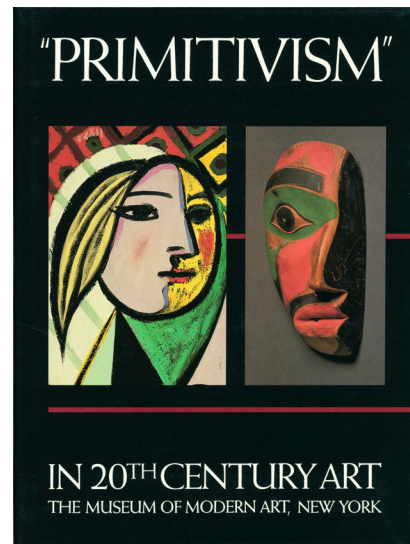


Figure 4. Cover of exhibition catalogue, “*Primitivism*” in 20th Century Art: *Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984-1985. © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCA-LA / Art Resource, NY.

Diagram and exhibition adds a new dimension to these cultural and geographic exclusions due to its formal inability to render the unequal power relations that derive from the uneven application of the term “artist,” which only applies to certain individuals working in certain places and at certain times. In other words, by virtue of its nodal structure, the Artist Network Diagram can only chart relationships between autonomous individuals that are personal and *reciprocal*. It does not account for relationships that are mediated and inequitable, such as those entailed between producers in colonial West Africa and Parisian artifact dealers across the Atlantic. As a result, the Diagram assures the invisibility of exploitive and oppressive relations between individuals as a matter of pure procedure. The visibility of certain artists is sustained and justified by the *a priori* invisibility of other actors.

Conclusion

To be clear, we do not seek to discount the historical importance of sociality and connectivity in the development of new modes of cultural production, nor to suggest that artists should necessarily refuse the individualistic imperatives of enterprise culture in the name of social democracy and collective good. But we do believe that it is important to reflect critically on art’s apparently ever-expanding relationship to and imbrication with neoliberalism. It is precisely this kind of critical reflection that seems absent in the case of *Inventing Abstraction*’s retelling. Indeed, the fact that MoMA solicited a scholar of business management to help reconceive a pivotal moment in the history of modernism exemplifies the sheer power and ubiquity of enterprise culture today.

It is telling that, unlike MoMA’s 1984 “*Primitivism*” exhibition, which sparked extensive debates on Eurocentrism and multiculturalism that reverberated through the art world, the ideological principles undergirding the Diagram, and the art historical re-reading pictured within it, have failed to raise eyebrows.³⁶ This, we believe, testifies to the degree to which the language and political imagery of the social network, and the neoliberal rationality underpinning it, have achieved cultural hegemony.³⁷

Thinking of art historical discourse in this way is not unprecedented. As social art historian T.J. Clark once wrote in regards to his approach to understanding the origins of artistic modernism, it is as important to read the silences in art criticism as the words of critics themselves, for “the public, like the unconscious, is present only where it ceases.”³⁸ We hope that this analysis serves to open up for discussion a moment in art history in which the fantasy of the solitary genius is giving way to that of the well-connected and ever-flexible creative entrepreneur, and grand historical narrative may even be losing ground to the logic and ethos of the free market.

Notes

* Originally presented as a colloquium paper at the inaugural Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium at the University of Toronto on March 20, 2014, this essay is the result of independent research undertaken collaboratively by the authors. Some of the ideas presented herein were also published in a short blog post on Material World on February 23, 2013: <http://www.materialworldblog.com/2013/02/inventing-abstraction-reinventing-our-selves>.

1. See: Roberta Smith, "When the Future Became Now," *The New York Times*, December 20, 2012, accessed June 25, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/21/arts/design/inventing-abstraction-1910-1925-at-moma.html>; Thomas Micchelli, "MoMA's Show of Shows: 'Inventing Abstraction, 1910–1925,'" *Hyperallergic*, December 22, 2012, accessed June 25, 2016, <http://hyperallergic.com/62402/momas-show-of-shows-inventing-abstraction-1910-1925>; Peter Schjeldahl, "Shape of Things: The Birth of Abstraction," *The New Yorker*, January 7, 2013, accessed June 15, 2016, http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/artworld/2013/01/07/130107craw_artworld_schjeldahl; Hal Foster, "At MoMA," *London Review of Books*, February 7 2013, accessed June 25, 2016, <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v35/n03/hal-foster/at-moma>.

2. The Artist Network Diagram displayed at the exhibition's entrance/exit stood 16 feet tall and 25 feet wide. Its scale was, according to MoMA graphic designer Hsien-yin Ingrid Chou, meant to immerse the visitor so as to convey the feeling of being "part of this network." See: "Behind the Scenes: The Making of *Inventing Abstraction's* Artist Network Diagram," video interview with Leah Dickerman, Paul Ingram, Sabine Dowek, and Hsien-yin Ingrid Chou, accessed September 1, 2016, <http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/inventingabstraction/?page=conversations>.

3. Ibid.

4. As Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose observe in their introduction to *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, eds. Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 8.

5. Barr's chart is a fixture in authoritative histories of modern and contemporary art from the popular to the scholarly. Examples from the last decade include: David Cottington, *Modern Art: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 48; Benjamin Buchloh, Hal Foster et al., eds., *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 221; Jonathan Harris, ed., *Globalization and Contemporary Art* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 10; and Richard Meyer, *What was Contemporary Art?* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 171–173.

6. "Behind the Scenes: The Making of *Inventing Abstraction's* Artist Network Diagram."

7. *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris* was co-curated by Leah Dickerman, then Associate Curator at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., with Laurent Le Bon, Curator at the Centre Pompidou, Paris. The exhibition traveled from the Centre Pompidou, Paris (October 5, 2005 – January 9, 2006) to the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. (February 19 – May 14, 2006) and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (June 18 – September 11, 2006).

8. Leah Dickerman, "Introduction," in *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris*, ed. Leah Dickerman (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2005), 1.

9. Robin Cembalest, "MoMA Makes a Facebook for Abstractionists," *ARTnews*, October 2, 2012, accessed February 4, 2016, <http://www.artnews.com/2012/10/02/momaabstractionfacebook/>.

10. "Networks and Creativity," video interview with Paul Ingram, accessed July 3, 2014, <http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/inventingabstraction/?page=conversations>.

11. Ibid.

12. Luc Boltanski, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2007). First published in French in 1999 and translated into English eight years later, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* has garnered interest well beyond the field of sociology, particularly among contemporary artists and art critics, as recently noted by Tim Griffin. See Tim Griffin, "Jacqueline Humphries," *Artforum*, December 2015 (54.4): 224–227.

13. In particular, see: Boltanski, "The Formation of the Projective City," in *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, 103–164.
14. "Behind the Scenes: The Making of *Inventing Abstraction's* Artist Network Diagram."
15. Cembalest, "MoMA Makes a Facebook for Abstractionists."
16. "Behind the Scenes: The Making of *Inventing Abstraction's* Artist Network Diagram."
17. Nikolas Rose, *Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power, and Personhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
18. James Hay and Laurie Ouellette, *Better Living Through Reality TV: Television and Post-Welfare Citizenship* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 1998).
19. Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 76.
20. Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London: Routledge, 1995). See especially: "The Modern Art Museum: It's a Man's World," 102-132.
21. For a concise overview of the discourse of "reinventing government" in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s see: Hay and Ouellette, 18-24.
22. Michel Foucault, Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, Patrick H. Hutton, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 148.
23. Paul du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work* (London: Sage, 1996), 70.
24. Lane Relyea, *Your Everyday Art World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013).
25. Jen Harvie, *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
26. For an overview of budget reductions at the United States' National Endowment for the Arts since the 1980s, see Andy Horowitz, "Who Should Pay for the Arts in America?," *The Atlantic*, January 6, 2017, accessed January 30, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/01/the-state-of-public-funding-for-the-arts-in-america/424056/>. Government funding for the arts has remained comparatively stable in continental Europe, but there have been significant cuts since the 2008 global recession in The Netherlands and Austria, among other countries. See Nina Siegal, "Dutch Arts Scene is Under Siege," *The New York Times*, January 29, 2013, accessed January 30, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/30/arts/30iht-dutch30.html>.
27. Journalist and urban studies professor Richard Florida has done much to popularize the notion of creativity as an economic asset, coining the term "creative class" to characterize the enterprising artists, bohemians and technology workers that he views as decisive to the regeneration and development of post-industrial urban economies. See: Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002).
28. John Douglas Millar, "Polemic: Art Workers," *Art Monthly* 355 (April 2012): 35.
29. Harvie coins the term *artpreneur* to encapsulate what she sees as the demands placed on artists today to "take initiative, take risks, self-start...be productive, effect impact and realize or at least stimulate financial profits," Harvie, 62.
30. The population of arts graduates and working artists, for example, is not representative of our country. The population of the United States is 63 percent White, non-Hispanic, but according to a study by BFAMFAPhD, 81 percent of visual and performing arts graduates are White, non-Hispanic. The population of the United States is 12 percent Black, non-Hispanic, but only 4 percent of arts graduates are Black, non-Hispanic and only 8 percent of working artists are Black, non-Hispanic. The population of the United States is 17 percent Hispanic, but only 6 percent of arts graduates are Hispanic and only 8 percent of working artists are Hispanic. BFAMFAPhD, *Artists Report Back: A National Study on the Lives of Arts Graduates and Working Artists*, 2014, accessed January 30, 2016, <http://bfamfaphd.com/#artists-report-back>. In recent years, studies

have also demonstrated a remarkable lack of diversity among the staffs and leadership of arts and cultural institutions in the U.S. Several of these, such as *Figuring the Plural*, have correlated the lack of racially diverse arts organization staffs to the lack of such individuals in arts management graduate programs. Mina Para Matlon, Ingrid Van Haastrect, Kaitlyn Wittig Mengüç, *Figuring the Plural: Needs and Supports of Canadian and US Ethnocultural Arts Organizations*, 2014, accessed June 1, 2016, <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Research-Art-Works-ArtChicago-rev.pdf>.

31. Harvie, 78.

32. Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," in *Edgework: Critical Essays in Knowledge and Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 50.

33. "Primitivism" in *20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (September 27, 1984-January 15, 1985).

34. For key critiques of the exhibition, see: Thomas McEvilley, "Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief: 'Primitivism' in Twentieth-Century Art at the Museum of Modern Art in 1984," *Artforum* (Nov. 1984): 54-61; James Clifford, "Histories of the Tribal and the Modern," *Art in America* 73 (April 1985): 169-170; and Hal Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art, or White Skin Black Masks," *October* 34 (Fall 1985): 45-70.

35. On the appropriation of indigenous material by the historic avant-garde see: Susan Hiller, ed., *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art* (London: Routledge, 1991); Colin Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994); and Jack Flam and Miriam Deutch, eds., *Primitivism and Twentieth-Century Art: A Documentary History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). More recently, an exhibition held concurrently with *Inventing Abstraction* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art traced the reception in New York of African artifacts imported via French art dealers and exhibited and resold to New York collectors: *African Art, New York, and the Avant-Garde* (November 27, 2012-September 2, 2013).

36. See Hal Foster's review of *Inventing Abstraction* in the *London Review of Books*. Foster, who has long been keenly attuned to art's cultural politics and once offered a forceful critique of "Primitivism"'s bald cultural imperialism, makes only a passing reference to *Inventing Abstraction's* "synchronic network" structure and focuses instead on abstraction's obsolescence as a contemporary artistic strategy. Foster, "At MoMA."

37. Drawing on the ideas of Italian cultural theorist Antonio Gramsci, "cultural hegemony" can be understood as a system of ideological power managed through a set of worldviews, such as the dominant self-enterprise philosophy, that help to maintain capitalist control. Cultural norms and values promoted by institutions become "hegemonic" when they appear to be natural "common sense," unavoidable and even beneficial to everyone although ultimately they only preserve the status quo. See: Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers Co, 1971).

38. T.J. Clark, *Image of the People* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1973), 12.