

## **Appendix \_OS 7 EGL Preparation Correspondence**

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Title: \_OS - Selected correspondence & List of questions \_propositions  
Type: Email/Google Doc/ Quirkos coding analysis as image  
Event: Preparation for Evacuation of Great Learning  
Format: Open Discussion/ Proposition  
Date: October 2010  
Contributors: \_OS, O1 Philosopher, O2 Musician, Organisers of INSTAL 10

## Email

Hi there,

You are receiving this email because you've signed up for the 'Evacuation of the Great Learning' series of events at the Instal Experimental Music Festival. The\_Open School is a name under which people come together to experiment with frameworks for learning, situating itself in self-organised and improvisatory practice. Arika, the company that programme Instal, asked the school to work with O1—— and O2. to develop some propositions/frameworks/objects to bring to the events and to present to the participants. So now we are talking about this quite a lot and have planned events to try to address the situation, you are more than welcome to join us in doing this. We've just sent you a copy of the weekly email-out which has a schedule of events and some collaborative documents on. We've put you on the school mailing list too, so let us know if you'd rather not be on it.

Your also invited to use the blog -look forward to meeting you.

- let us know if you have any feelings/ propositions/ questions
- L— on behalf of Open School

-----Original Message-----

- > From: [O1](#)
- > Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2010 12:11 PM
- > To: O2.
- > Cc: B.
- > Subject: Re: Evacuation of the great learning - development...

- > hey B. and O2.
- > little by little I am getting back into email and reality.
- > I got really sick after the week.
- > O2., I think the first thing we should do is to collect some
- > questions that we have been dealing with and that we are
- > personally interested. then we should share them with the
- > open school, and ask them for more questions.
- > may be this questions might work as a kind of score but
- > without being the score, as the problem with the score is
- > that some people might not want to follow the score.
- > instead it could be something more open.
- > if people are interested in dealing with the questions
- > then there might act accordingly.
- > we should also try to just, play around to what we might

- > mean with the Evacuation of the Great Learning:
- > thinking aloud, it could be perhaps that process that we
- > talk about on desubjectification, a process where is
- > impossible to say who is contributing because it is really
- > collective. Si. s sentence might contribute to not make

> it too hippy and aslo to bring a sense of peril.  
>  
> somehow the great learning, it reminds me of some kind of  
> big ideological apparatus (a belive in freedom in  
> improvisation or noise), or some Utopian fucked up attitude  
> like Cardew s composition. I remember performing it once in  
> london, with stones and voice and so on, interesting but  
> very hippy indeed. I will look back at the score, I think  
> this can help. also I remember correctly, the scratch  
> orchestra was formed originally in order to perform the  
> great learning.  
> very exited [in sic] about what might happen  
> cheers  
> O1—

>

Quoting O2

>

>> Hi B.  
>> Understood  
>> 1) M— and I will contact the Open School and  
>> introduce ourselves  
>> to begin discussion  
>> 2)Ok---even with 30 people the utility of the  
>> conversational model  
>> breaks down and it becomes unfeasible. So even there,  
>> some other  
>> structure has to be worked out from the outset.  
>> 3) Perhaps this idea of the score needs to be revisited  
>> because the  
>> idea of collectivity is built into the model of orchestra  
>> or ensemble  
>> and that is certainly more fruitful in a situation  
>> involving large  
>> numbers of participants than the conversational model?..  
>> More about this asap  
>> best  
>> O2

hello \_O.S.!

first of all I am very happy that we can do this together.  
just to let you know R. is not going to be there on the  
first session but he will be there on the other two  
sessions and the performance/end of the festival.

I think what we can share some of questions that we are  
interested in and then try to see how we can develop them  
through the Evacuation...

keep in touch

O1—

### How:

- • To start, O2. and O1— will ask some questions and try to answer them with \_Open School, other artists at the festival and (we hope) you.
- • That questioning will start before the festival and continue through and beyond it. \_
- • Then, during INSTAL, there will be three workshops.
- • The people at the workshops will be handed responsibility for the final hours of INSTAL: to put their investigations into action (performance, discussion: it's up to the them/ you).
- • So: the final 3 or 4 hours of INSTAL 10 will be totally self-organised by this group: a putting into action the results of their discussions. A festival within a festival. A Non-Festival, if you like.
- • We're then all invited to join \_Open School from Monday 15 – Friday 20 Nov, as they continue the investigation.
- • We are asking that if you sign up for these workshops, that you make a commitment to attend all three, not just one. It is also important that you are able to be at the festival on Sunday evening.
- • There is a limited capacity for these FREE workshops, so if you are interested, you should register by emailing [info@INSTAL 10](mailto:info@INSTAL 10).
- • If you would like to find out more about the workshops and what they might entail, email [info@INSTAL 10](mailto:info@INSTAL 10)

## Google Doc

below is a copy of the questions sent by O1 and O2 to the \_os and Arika regarding questions towards the “Evacuation of the Great Learning” INSTAL workshop

**O1—— said:** “hello \_open school, sorry for taking us so long to come up with the questions. here are some of the questions that we are interested in and we would love to work on them with you  
*please add, change, subtract, edit...*

Ray also added a perversion/detournement of the Confucius's text  
The Great Learning, which perhaps can work as some sort of anti-score

I just heard from B that there are going to be around 54 people in the workshop. that's great that so many people are interested!

*I wonder what strategies we can use to organise the conversation/action  
please if you have any suggestions*

I am arriving on Wednesday so would be really great to see you then  
very much looking forward  
O1---

**O2 said:**

I) Social existence under capitalism is economically conditioned; the transformation of existence entails the transformation of economic structures. Art alone cannot achieve this; particularly when one considers its almost complete co-optation by the culture industry. Are art and life to be abandoned to capitalism? Or might it be possible to prise them free of the grip of the latter, either separately or together?

II) What is at stake in the production of art under the conditions of contemporary capitalism? What would an art of consequence be? An art whose alternative to entertainment does not just consist in investigating its own form, but one whose political content ventures beyond platitude? To what extent is it relevant to think of

art as a profession and what are the implications of this? Does the thoroughgoing professionalization of art preclude the possibility of any genuinely radical consequences? Is it possible to have cultural production beyond authorship? Is there anything in the usefulness or uselessness of cultural production that challenges the commodity form?

III) What criteria of 'success' might be relevant to these workshops? Can an event have a duration extending beyond the temporal strictures of its realization as an exhibition or performance? Why are we suspicious of belonging to a group? Is a productive collective subjectivity possible? Would it be possible to achieve a functional form of collective subjectivity that is both theoretically and practically productive but that would not be constrained by the sorts of pragmatic considerations that dissolve many putative collectives into temporary aggregates of individuals?

I also pondered the possibility of using the Confucian text whose title we've appropriated as a possible source material for a score of some sort. Below is a perversion/detournement of the original tract based on Charles Muller's online English translation.

cheers

O2.

## O2. also said:

*Evacuation of the Great Learning* O2. (Charles Muller?)	*Evacuation of the Great Learning* . _o.s
[1] The evacuation of the great learning consists in manifesting one's obscure vice; it consists in hating the people; it consists in perpetuating consummate sterility.	
[2] When you do not know where to stop, you will be unstable. When you are unstable, you will be disturbed. When you are disturbed, you will be uneasy. When you are uneasy, you will be unresolved. When you are unresolved, you will achieve nothing.	∴ instrumentalism?
[3] There is neither root nor branch; affairs neither begin nor end. When you are as ignorant of what is first as of what is last, you remain mired in the Obstacle.	
[4] The ancients who wished to keep their obscure vices from the world could not govern themselves. Unable to govern themselves, they precipitated strife among their people. Not wanting to precipitate strife among their people, they tried to stifle their own wants. Unable to stifle their own wants, they could not correct their own minds. Unable to correct their own minds, they failed to achieve sincerity. Failing to achieve sincerity, they remained ignorant. The retrenchment of knowledge consists in the ignorance of things.	Alfredo has made a film looking at the cardew score with the help of Wang Yang Ming, Neo-Confucian Philosopher -i think he will bring this
[5] When knowledge retreats, ignorance is extended. When ignorance is extended, the will becomes insincere. When the will becomes insincere, the mind is corrupted. When the mind is corrupted, the self is neglected. When the self is neglected, the community is divided. When the community is divided, the nation is ungovernable. When the nation is ungovernable, there is strife throughout the land.	
[6] Whether emperor or peasant, all must regard the neglect of the self as essential.	Nietzsche
[7] It is possible to have a situation wherein the essential is disordered even though the appearances are well ordered. Woe to those who mistake the essential for the superficial, and the superficial for the essential. This is called, 'Ignorance of the Obstacle'. This is called, 'The extension of ignorance'. We who know only apparent order, must seek out the essential chaos.	What is the job of polemic, manifesto and dictat from philosophers today?

See Section 5.3.5 Table 10

BELOW IS THE ORIGINAL \_OS PROPOSALS FOR QUESTIONS, **please continue to edit**

# **\_OPEN SCHOOL is in the process of saying:**

Moving in other ways than trying to arrive at a stable critical position.

Assembling a list of questions and a statement of intentions moving forward for O1— and O2. Arriving at a framework/ score for the time at Tramway.

## **‘EVACUATION’ OED SE 1989**

The action of evacuating; the condition of being evacuated.

1. *spec.* a. *Med.* The action or process of depleting (the body or any organ), or of clearing out (morbid matter, ‘humours’, etc.), by medicine or other artificial means. *rare* in recent use.

4. The action of making void and of no effect; cancelling, nullification.

*Evacuating* the great learning? or excavating? or excelling? is ‘The Great Learning’ to be re-purposed, or abandoned entirely (is it a shell to vacate, where its logic remains valid, or a structure to be dismantled) -- an evacuation has two senses, of getting out before it all falls down, of the trial/horror/pleasure of shitting. It is discharging as well as abandoning.

**Questions that ask them to explain their position/ Questions that ask a moving forward Questions that propose:**

- Regarding language and the production of art under the conditions of contemporary capitalism - is it useful to consider creative practice in opposition to concepts such as ‘entertainment’, which yoke the consideration to definitive models inseparable from capitalism? Can words such as entertainment and art continue to assist an effort/discussion such as this one, or must the current (historical) language of ‘art’ be forgotten/replaced to avoid furnishing consumer capitalism with yet another ‘alternative’?
- How are we to think ‘life’? Is it necessary to move away from conceptions of lived experience that value the phenomenal, the expressive, the altogether human, in order to arrive at an alternative



conception towards radical change? By correlation (and following the first question it seems), must we propose an art that stands in opposition to aestheticism, interpretation & the primacy of expression/spontaneity? "...there's no / good in the brittle effort, to snap the pace / into some more sudden glitter of light: "

- Is artists' focus on expression any better than the toddler's fascination with drawing images with his/her own feces?
- Do the radical potentials of 'art' & 'politics' suffer from their proposed fusion? Where do 'artistic' acts and 'political' acts crossover, precisely? Can art have an explicit 'political content'? Of what would this content consist? Is this content simply like the shouting a challenge, a slogan or statement, or is it the explicit change in thought/material conditions (difficult to imagine)? Or, are we talking politics here as simple subversion, as art's escaping of the commodity form? If this is accomplished, what are the implications for capitalism at large? Do we become more 'free'? If we win our freedom, do we show up the fault-lines of capitalism-as (supposed)-totality?
- Can we name any artistic practice since 1989 (say) capable of providing a foundation, a starting point, some inspiration, for the task of art now? Or are we completely in the dark?
- **Devil's advocate:** "why art and not just politics?" Do we bemoan the state of artistic practice more than the material reality of those struggling to survive under capitalism? Presumably not. Then, does art provide the resources to think wholesale change? Is the artistic process required to open up new modes of thought capable of opposing capitalism?
- What lies beyond the economically-conditioned sphere? If 'nothing', is that where we must start? If so, how? What is the radical potential of nothingness? At what point does negation become affirmative?
- If art succeeds in producing something new, something radical, how are we to know? Knowledge being as economically-conditioned as anything else, must we proceed without knowing? And if so, must we generate methods that boost our confidence in explorations of the unknown?
- **Devil's advocate:** "To what extent is the 'evacuation' of the self proposed by O2 in his Confucian text an ideological decision?" Or, perhaps, an ontological decision?
- Beyond the (far from useless) abstract disposition provoked (perhaps) by the type of thought evinced by O2. & O1—— above, what are the practical methods at our disposal for the exploration of 'essential chaos'? (The age-old question)
- "To us, desecration, destruction in the symbolic realm, is nothing compared to real destruction. To them it is everything, and destruction of the real is a mere parlour game."

- What was the dancing plague of 1518?

On 19/10/2010 21:36, "doit yourself" <[diy@gmail.com](mailto:diy@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hi

I was just thinking of B.'s suggestion of the Open School and Si. making this statement on a banner together? What does Si. think to this? I can't think of doing this without thinking of Glasgow's trade union banners referenced and done by the New Image Painters -or how Glasgow's Art School students in the 80s used to graduate and then paint murals on gable ends in the outlying council estates. and how maybe this was middle class art students representing working class struggles in a rosy way... there was a kitsch aspect to it. I get the impression there was still a lot of banners and murals made by working class communities too.

Then in the 90's there was Glasgows neo-conceptual turn in visual art with murals such as Douglas Gordon's text based *Mute*, -page 42 variant 8  
<[http://www.variant.randomstate.org/vol1/8/V8\\_All.pdf](http://www.variant.randomstate.org/vol1/8/V8_All.pdf)> . I feel like this could be good territory to explore together, to decide how a banner made by us works in this history. Also how it might relate to Cardews later turn towards a folk aesthetics. Ideas about who we are representing. Also ideas about what it is to be an art worker - this would be us very much crafting an object compared to having it outsourced. or would it?  
-L.

To: B. \_

Cc: "O1", O2, <[g\\_diy@gmail.com](mailto:g_diy@gmail.com)>

Subject: Re: Instal - Workshop Series Invite - Evacuation of the Great Learning

Hi, Good to hear from you. I would go for static banner/lettering in main space (can you hang it from the cafe railings or something like that?) and t-shirt on O1—. I think multiple t-shirts might get a bit gimmicky. Although I am wondering if it might be possible to hand out copies of the original essay, it's not that long:  
<http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/poverty.htm>

With this added:

<http://www.notbored.org/khayati-notice.html>

Its fine for your designer to do the layout, there should be a copyright symbol in the copyright notice bit, copyright notice should be smaller than main statement, but both must be included in any version of the piece. If you can send it to me before it is printed that would be great.

best wishes

Si

On Mon, Oct 18, 2010 at 12:24 PM, B. <[b@a.org.uk](mailto:b@a.org.uk)> wrote:

Hi \_OS (O1— & O2.)

Thanks for the email. All your points noted. How did the reading of Going fragile go?

Reading it now the '**TOGETHER EDITING A complicated being together**' produced a lot of really interesting stuff, for me at least. (O1—/ O2. -check it out here:  
<http://gdiy.wordpress.com/2010/10/11/together-editing-a-complicated-being-together/>).

The Skinny mag document/ interview is also really interesting, open and challenging. (again, O1/ O2: <https://docs.google.com/document/edit>  
It's very productive for us (b and i) to be involved in this level of questioning.

# QUIRKOS CODING ANALYSIS

Appendix 19\_OS Evacuation of the Great Learning\_List of Questions- Propositions\_Coded

\_OS - List of questions/propositions for O1 and O2

\_OS instal  
below is a copy of the questions sent by O2 and O1 to the \_OS and arika regarding questions towards the "Evacuation of the Great Learning" INSTAL workshop  
Excerpt from -----Original Message-----

> From: O1  
> Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2010 12:11 PM  
> To: O2.  
> Cc: B. Esson  
> Subject: Re: Evacuation of the great learning - development...

O2 said:  
"hello open \_school, sorry for taking us so long to come up with the questions. here are some of the questions that we are interested in and we would love to work on them with you  
please add, change, subtract, edit..."

O1 also added a perversion/detournement of the Confucio's text

The Great Learning, which perhaps can work as some sort of anti-score

I just heard from B that there are going to be around 54 people

in the workshop, that's great that so many people are interested!

I wonder what strategies we can use to organise the conversation/action

please if you have any suggestions

I am arriving on Wednesday so would be really great to see you then

very much looking forward

O2

O1 said:  
I) Social existence under capitalism is economically conditioned; the transformation of existence entails the transformation of economic structures. Art alone cannot achieve this; particularly when one considers its almost complete co-option by the culture industry. Are art and life to be abandoned to capitalism? Or might it be possible to prise them free of the grip of the latter, either separately or together?

II) What is at stake in the production of art under the conditions of contemporary capitalism? What would an art of consequence be? An art whose alternative to entertainment does not just consist in investigating its own form, but one whose political content ventures beyond platitudes? To what extent is it relevant to think of art as a profession and what are the implications of this? Does the thoroughgoing professionalization of art preclude the possibility of any genuinely radical consequences? Is it possible to have cultural production beyond authorship? Is there anything in the usefulness or uselessness of cultural production that challenges the commodity form?

Commented [1]: open ended propositions by st  
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Commented [3]: art expression by st  
Commented [4]: community by st  
Commented [5]: open ended propositions by st  
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Commented [7]: space by st  
Commented [8]: teaching by st  
Commented [9]: injustice by st  
Commented [10]: political by st  
Commented [11]: labour by st  
Commented [12]: resistance by st  
Commented [13]: political by st  
Commented [14]: art expression by st  
Commented [15]: co-opted by st  
Commented [16]: ethics by st  
Commented [17]: political by st  
Commented [18]: ethics by st  
Commented [19]: art expression by st  
Commented [20]: situated art by st  
Commented [21]: co-opted by st  
Commented [22]: economics by st  
Commented [23]: utility by st  
Commented [24]: art expression by st  
Commented [25]: teaching by st  
Commented [26]: co-opted by st  
Commented [27]: political by st  
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Commented [29]: schooling by st  
Commented [30]: art expression by st  
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Commented [32]: utility by st  
Commented [33]: art expression by st

III) What criteria of 'success' might be relevant to these workshops? Can an event have a duration extending beyond the temporal strictures of its realization as an exhibition or performance? Why are we suspicious of belonging to a group? Is a productive collective subjectivity possible?

Would it be possible to achieve a functional form of collective subjectivity that is both theoretically and practically productive but that would not be constrained by the sorts of pragmatic considerations that dissolve many putative collectives into temporary aggregates of individuals?

I also pondered the possibility of using the Confucian text whose title we've appropriated as a possible source material for a score of some sort. Below is a perversion/detournement of the original tract based on Charles Muller's online English translation.

cheers

O1

O1 also said:

\*Evacuation of the Great Learning\* O2. (Charles Muller?)

\*Evacuation of the Great Learning\* \_os

[1] The evacuation of the great learning consists in manifesting one's obscure vice; it consists

in hating the people; it consists in perpetuating consummate sterility.

[2] When you do not know where to stop, you will be unstable.

When you are unstable, you will be disturbed.

When you are disturbed, you will be uneasy.

When you are uneasy, you will be unresolved.

When you are unresolved, you will achieve nothing.: instrumentalism?

[3] There is neither root nor branch; affairs neither begin nor end. When you are as ignorant of what is first as of what is last, you remain mired in the Obstacle.

[4] The ancients who wished to keep their obscure vices from the world could not govern themselves. Unable to govern themselves, they precipitated strife among their people.

Not wanting to precipitate strife among their people, they tried to stifle their own wants.

Unable to stifle their own wants, they could not correct their own minds. Unable to correct their own minds, they failed to achieve sincerity. Failing to achieve sincerity, they remained

ignorant. The retrenchment of knowledge consists in the ignorance of things.

Alfredo has made a film looking at the cardew score with the help of Wang YangMing, Neo-Confucian Philosopher - i think he will bring this

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When the nation is ungovernable, there is strife throughout the land.

[6] Whether emperor or peasant, all must regard the neglect of the self as essential.

Nietzsche

[7] It is possible to have a situation wherein the essential is disordered even though the appearances are well ordered. Woe to those who mistake the essential for the superficial,

and

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Commented [45]: Art enterprise collective by st  
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Commented [48]: individual by st  
Commented [49]: self determination by st  
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Commented [55]: nature of knowing by st

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Arriving at a framework/ score for the time at Tramway.

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1. spec. a. Med. The action or process of depleting (the body or any organ), or of clearing out (morbid matter, 'humours', etc.), by medicine or other artificial means. rare in recent use.

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Questions that ask them to explain their position/ Questions that ask a moving forward

Questions that propose:

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one, or must the current (historical) language of 'art' be forgotten/replaced to avoid furnishing consumer capitalism with yet another 'alternative'?

2. How are we to think 'life'? Is it necessary to move away from conceptions of lived experience that value the phenomenal, the expressive, the altogether human, in order to arrive at an alternative conception towards radical change? By correlation (and following the first question it seems), must we propose an art that stands in opposition to aestheticism, interpretation & the primacy of expression/spontaneity? "...there's no / good in the brittle effort, to snap the pace / into some more sudden glitter of light: "

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Commented [81]: political by st

Commented [82]: self determinism by st

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Commented [84]: situated art by st

Commented [85]: austerity by st

Commented [86]: art expression by st

3. Do the radical potentials of 'art' & 'politics' suffer from their proposed fusion? Where do 'artistic' acts and 'political' acts crossover, precisely? Can art have an explicit 'political content'? Of what would this content consist? Is this content simply like the shouting a challenge, a slogan or statement, or is it the explicit change in thought/material conditions (difficult to imagine)? Or, are we talking politics here as simple subversion, as art's escaping of the commodity form? If this is accomplished, what are the implications for capitalism at large? Do we become more 'free'? If we win our freedom, do we show up the faultlines of capitalism-as (supposed)-totality?

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8. Devil's advocate: "To what extent is the 'evacuation' of the self proposed by O1 in his Confucian text an ideological decision?" Or, perhaps, an ontological decision?

9. Beyond the (far from useless) abstract disposition provoked (perhaps) by the type of thought evinced by O1 & O2 above, what are the practical methods at our disposal for the exploration of 'essential chaos'? (The age-old question)

Last modified: 08:48

-- NO ANSWER --

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