

The Global Contemporary: The Rise of New Art Worlds after 1989, eds. Hans Belting, Andrea Buddensieg, Peter Weibel (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press for ZKM, Karlsruhe, 2013) Revised text August 27, 2012

CONTEMPORARY ART: WORLD CURRENTS IN TRANSITION BEYOND GLOBALIZATION

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There is no doubt that contemporary artistic practice has been shaped above all by the forces of globalization that, from the 1980s until recently, predominated within international economic exchange, drove much of world politics, and disseminated spectacle as the theatre of individual and collective imagination in the lives of people all over the world. Globalized perceptions of contemporary art have been heavily promoted by major museums in search of competitive edge as centers of attraction within spectacle culture. They are used by the international art market to push up prices of what became, around 2000, its most glamorous, risky, and, in principle, infinitely self-replenishing, sector. Contemporary Art features prominently in the lifestyle agendas of the recently rich, prevails in popular media, and is used to anchor massive revitalization efforts or new real estate projects by cities and nations competing for tourist dollars. Acknowledging the broad outlines of these obvious connections between art and social change, a number of art critics, historians, curators, and theorists, along with certain students of visual culture, have pursued an interesting set of more specific questions.

Was the globalization of the art system prefigured in the internationalization of art during the 1960s? If so, was it expressed in aspects of the styles emergent at that time--Pop, Minimal, Conceptual, Process, Land Art, etc--or were they mainly manifestations of Cold War configurations? Did globalized art values spread from the modern cultural centers along with the inroads of multinational capital,

intergovernmental agencies, and new technologies? Or did the globalization of contemporary art take hold in art producing centers around the world in ways distinctive to each of them? In considering these questions, should we include within the overall conception of “globalization” actions and attitudes such as anti-globalist resistance, defiant localism, critical cosmopolitanism, and evasive tangentiality? Should we see such reactions as in dialectical opposition to top-down globalization, as in continuity with previous counter-currents, or as emergent modes of living? Scholars of contemporary history wonder whether these developments can be periodized. For example, it is arguable that, in contrast to reaction to the events of 1989, the idea that globalization was the inevitable, hegemonic version of late capitalism, and therefore destined for world domination, came to seem less plausible during the fallout from 9/11. Since then, a number of unanticipated world-scale changes, notably the increasing disjunction between the leading economies—each with different models of economic organization, all prioritizing national objectives, and none seeking to universalize their model—has broken the hegemonic grip of globalization as a world phenomenon. In 2008 it seemed shaky indeed. Do we need other ideas to guide our thinking on these world-picturing levels? Perhaps we can no longer so conveniently substitute “globalization” for “modernity” and/or “postmodernity” when it comes to naming the overarching framework of present and future possibility?

The “Global Art and the Museum” project, led by the editors of this volume, has pursued these questions more thoroughly, and on a wider geographic scale, than most others. Among its important precedents is the critical reaction to the Young British Artist phenomenon on the part of a few commentators who, rather than swallow the hype, placed these artists within a larger picture of contemporary art in the service of neoliberal capitalism and globalization: for example, the writings of John A. Walker, Julian Stallabrass, Peter Osborne, and Jonathan Harris. ¹ In the US, by contrast, the contemporary art history academy and much of the art press has been, with few exceptions, complicit or quiescent in its response. Against such passivity, the aggressive public campaign against corporate art waged during the

1980s and up to his recent death by art critic Robert Hughes deserves our praise for its moral vigor if not for all of the terms in which it was put. 2 While I support strongly each of these enterprises, and regard them as the best accounts of the art of our times, it has become clear in recent years that certain assumptions underlying them no longer fully address the complexity of the most current situation.

Is it still the case that globalization remains the prevalent phase in the “natural” evolution of world economic order? In his 2012 essay “Making Modernity Work: The Reconciliation of Capitalism and Democracy,” Gideon Rose, editor of the influential journal *Foreign Affairs*, pours scorn on those who would harbor such doubts: “The major battles about how to structure modern politics and economics were fought in the first half of the last century, and they ended with the emergence of the most successful system the world has ever seen...the postwar order of mutually supporting liberal democracies with mixed economies.” 3 I have already hinted that this view, a version of what was called “the Washington consensus,” is shaky, and will say more about it later. The second doubtful assumption is that, despite its vacuity and banality, one kind of art, the most globalized kind, just is the dominant form of contemporary art, and that the institutions sustaining it (especially the neoliberal markets and museums modeled on those in the West) will keep it that way. The authors cited in the preceding paragraph would agree that these are appalling presumptions. The problem is that, while many of these critics do favor instances of the really quite substantial amount of art being made today that does *not* fall subject to top-down globalization, none of them offers an alternative account of the structures that are in play. Negative description is not enough. We need, I believe, an account that locates the forces of globalization as one set among others, and that identifies the relative strengths of each of the contending forces during recent decades and through the present.

From modern to contemporary art

Let me outline such an account by offering a summary of the key ideas underlying my work on late modern and contemporary visual art. 4 These ideas take form as linked propositions about how contemporary art is made within, and how it contributes toward the making of, contemporary being-in-the-world. The propositions are, in turn, art historical, art critical, and ontological. Because my main purpose is to accurately describe, and to explicitly intervene within, the changing connectivities between world-picturing and placemaking in contemporary art and life, I will also have something to say about geopolitics, cultural formation and aesthetics today.

The core *art historical* idea is the claim that a worldwide shift from modern to contemporary art was prefigured in the major movements in late modern art of the 1950s and 1960s in Euroamerica, and became explicit in artworld discourse there during the 1970s and 1980s. Postmodernist practice was an important signal of this change, postmodern and poststructuralist theory its first analysis. A market phenomenon in the major centers during the 1990s, contemporary art was at the same time expanded, but also divided, by art emergent from the rest of the world. Since then, contemporary art everywhere has engaged more and more with spectacle culture--with image-saturated commerce, globalized lifestyle, and social media--and with anxieties caused by political volatility and climate change. These developments flow through the present, thus shaping art's imaginable futures--in the short term at least.

Unlike the great art styles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these changes from modern to contemporary art were not a monopolizing phenomenon that spread outwards from a predominant center. Rather, they occurred at different times and in distinctive ways in each cultural region and in each art-producing locality. I believe that the histories specific to each place should be acknowledged, valued, and carefully tracked alongside recognition of their interaction with other local and regional tendencies, and with the waxing and waning of more powerful regional and international art-producing centers. Applied retrospectively, under the

banner of “alternative modernities,” this approach has led to enriched histories of art throughout the world during the modern period. 5 Complexity within modernity itself laid the groundwork for the diversity that we now see flowing through the present.

Yet this diversity is not, as some claim, best understood as a “global art,” a “world art,” or a “geoaesthetics.” 6 Certainly, each of these terms spotlights a key aspect of contemporary art. Nevertheless, however loosely defined or critically intended, each of them echoes the metropolitan-provincial models that held during the age of imperialisms and would-be empires, but are now fast becoming outdated. Worse, these terms mistakenly suggest an overarching coherence, an inclination toward hegemony that, while present within parts of them, is, I argue, residual within the whole ensemble. Rather, what is most striking now is the contemporaneousness of different kinds of contemporary art, each of which, if it has an “aesthetic,” has its own, internally diversified one. From the multi-scalar perspective of worlds-within-the-World, we can see that each is, at the same time but in distinctive ways and to specific degrees, local, regional *and* international--that is to say, *worldy*--in character. 7 If, to this multi-scalar layering of worlds, we add the intensified experience of the adjacency of difference now shared by peoples everywhere, and everyone’s increased awareness of cotemporality, we come close to picturing the key elements of the *ontological* idea about contemporary being-in-the-world that is also at the core of my recent thinking. Together, these characteristics constitute our *contemporaneity*--a term that, for me, unlocks the present constellation more usefully than conceptions dependent upon ideas of modernity and postmodernity. 8

Contemporaneous currents

What, then, are the different kinds of art that coexist in contemporary conditions? As a core *art critical* idea, I argue that three strong currents may be discerned within the extraordinary quantity and seemingly limitless diversity of art made since around 1989. *Remodernist*, *retro-sensationalist*, and *spectacularist* tendencies fuse

into one current, which continues to predominate in Euroamerican and other modernizing art worlds and markets, with widespread effect both inside and outside those constituencies. Against these, art created according to nationalist, identarian, and critical priorities has emerged, especially from previously colonized cultures. It came into prominence on international circuits such as biennials and traveling temporary exhibitions: this is the art of *transnational transitionality*. For many of the artists, curators and commentators involved, it has evolved through at least three discernable phases: a reactive, anti-imperialist search for national and localist imagery; then a rejection of simplistic identarianism and corrupted nationalism in favor of a naïve internationalism; followed by a broader search for an integrated cosmopolitanism, or worldliness, in the context of the permanent transition of all things and relations. 9 The third current cannot be named as a style, a period, or a tendency. It proliferates below the radar of generalization. It results from the great increase in the number of artists worldwide and the opportunities offered by new informational and communicative technologies to millions of users. These changes have led to the viral spread of small-scale, interactive, DIY art (and art-like output) that is concerned less with high art style or confrontational politics and more with tentative explorations of temporality, place, affiliation, and affect—the ever-more-uncertain conditions of living within contemporaneity on a fragile planet.

Each of the three currents disseminates itself (not entirely, but predominantly) through appropriate—indeed, matching—institutional formats. Remodernism, retro-sensationalist and spectacularist art are usually found in major public or dedicated private museums, prominent commercial galleries, the auction rooms of the “great houses,” and the celebrity collections, largely in or near the centers of economic power that drove modernity. Biennales, along with traveling exhibitions promoting the art of a country or region, have been an ideal venue for postcolonial critique. These have led to the emergence of a string of new, area-specific markets. The widespread art of contemporaneity appears rarely in such venues—although some of it doubtless will, as the institutions adapt for survival and certain artists

make their accommodations—preferring alternative spaces, public temporary displays, the net, zines and other do-it-yourself-with-friends networks. There is, of course, no exclusive matching of tendency and disseminative format. Just as crossovers between what I am discerning here as currents are frequent at the level of art practice, connections between the formats abound, and artists have come to use them as gateways, more or less according to their potential and convenience. The museum, many artists will say today, is just one event-site among the many that are now possible. But this mobility across institutional and quasi-institutional sites is recent, and has been hard won. While convergence certainly occurs, temporary alliance—the confluence of differences—is more common. In these conditions—where a multiplicity of languages coexists in close proximity—*translation* becomes the medium of necessity, of possibility and of hope.

While these currents are contemporaneous now, how might we imagine them changing, in themselves, in relation to each other, in response to as yet unpredictable new currents and even less predictable changes to the whole flow of art in the world? The first of the currents I have discerned is dominant now, but is historically residual and may eventually fade; the second took shape due to local necessities but was also, everywhere, a reaction to the dominance of Euroamerican art. It has recently come to prominence and will prevail for some time. There is a dialectical antagonism in operation between these two currents, because both are products of modernity's inner historical logic, itself dialectical. But the third current is emergent and will increasingly set the terms of what will count in the future: these terms may be different in kind from those first formed during modern times.

The Planet to Override the Global

My argument about the currents within contemporary art can stand without dependence on the more general idea of contemporaneity, but genuinely historical hypotheses must encompass both the general and the particular. The emergent-dominant-residual paradigm that I just invoked is of course that of Raymond

Williams: his 1970s, New Left revision of the relationships between the base and the superstructure in Marxist cultural theory. 10 Despite its recognition of volatility, this paradigm implies a continuation of the dialectical unfolding of human history, as a process of continuous resolution of oppositions. But there is, I believe, a larger, deeper and more unsettling challenge facing us today. Big scale world pictures, and global forces and historical transformations, seem not only competitive but also incommensurable--indeed, they seem dangerous to the point of threatening historical extinction. This is how many in the West view terrorism from the Rest--a fear parodied by the Russian group ASE+F in their *Witness of the Future* series of postcards. More disturbing is the dawning realization that the evolution of the planet and the trajectory of human development may have diverged, fatally. As these larger trajectories contend and implode, the dark energy in dark matter comes to light. We see it everywhere today. Contemporaneity of difference, it seems, may be all that is left to us.

Introducing the essays that constitute his book *The Seeds of Time*, based on his Welleck Lectures given at the University of California, Irvine, in 1991, Fredric Jameson observed that

Even after the 'end of history,' there has seemed to persist some historical curiosity of a generally systemic--rather than merely anecdotal--kind: not merely to know what will happen next, but as a more general anxiety about the larger fate or destiny of our mode of production as such--about which individual experience (of a postmodern kind) tells us that it must be eternal, while our intelligence suggests this feeling to be most improbable indeed, without coming up with a plausible scenario as to its disintegration or replacement. It seems to be easier for us today to imagine the thoroughgoing deterioration of the earth and of nature than the breakdown of late capitalism; perhaps this is due to some weakness in our imaginations.

He goes on immediately to say: “I have come to think that the word *postmodern* ought to be reserved for thoughts of this kind.” 11

In 1991 Jameson’s diagnosis of the sickness in the world picture was acute, and the concept of postmodernity as he deployed it was the most accurate analysis. I have come to think, however, that *now*--as the condition that Jameson diagnosed so well has become exacerbated beyond what even he might have predicted--the concept of contemporaneity offers us the best key to unlock an analytic toolkit adequate to understanding our contemporary condition. It does not encompass all of this condition, yet is essential to unpacking its daunting complexity. We must be able to imagine the deterioration of the earth *and* the breakdown of late capitalism, along with many other world-shaping trajectories, less as constituting one, essentially conflicted but ultimately unified “mode of production,” rather as unfolding through time contemporaneously, as a set of antinomies rather than eventually (or at least potentially) resolvable contradictions, these elements being in relationships of contingency rather than of necessary determination, and thus as generative of the paradoxes of the present--for example, the current coexistence of world capitalism and the earth in a state of crisis, with the resultant paradox that a future containing both of them in a permanent state of crisis is all that most commentators seem able to imagine.

Is it possible to move our thinking about the contemporaneity of difference towards a framework that will encompass positive action in the face of impending disaster? In her *Death of a Discipline*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak urged students of writing to “cross borders under the auspices of a Comparative Literature supplemented by Area Studies” by imagining themselves as “planetary rather than continental, global, or worldly.” More explicitly, she stated:

I propose the planet to override the globe. Globalization is the imposition of the same system of exchange everywhere. In the gridwork of electronic capital, we achieve that abstract ball covered with latitudes and longitudes,

cut by virtual lines, once the equator and the tropics and so on, now drawn by the requirements of Geographical Information Systems. To talk planet-talk by way of an unexamined environmentalism, referring to an undivided 'natural' space rather than a differentiated political space, can work in the interests of this globalization in the mode of the abstract as such... The globe is on our computers. No one lives there. It allows us to think that we can aim to control it. The planet is in the species of alterity, belonging to another system; and yet we inhabit it, on loan. It is not really amenable to a neat contrast with the globe. I cannot say "the planet, on the other hand." When I invoke the planet, I think of the effort required to figure the (im)possibility of this underived intuition. 12

There is much to be done to invest with substance Spivak's proposal that "the planet should override the globe" in our imaginative world-picturing. To that end, let us now shift gears up through the scale of the psychic, social, economic and political worlds-within-the World that--layered together and framed by the earth within the universe--constitute our planetary sphere. The currents in the visual and other arts, I have been arguing, are manifestations of the great changes that have occurred since the mid-twentieth century in the distribution of power within and between these levels. On the political and economic levels, it is now a commonplace to observe that, while the era of the European and North American colonizers seems to be in decline, their enormous influence persists, and is taking new forms. Some, in the years after 1989, believed that the United States stood alone as the world's "last remaining superpower," as the only "hyperpower." However, its failures in international policy and national governance during the years since 2001 are clear evidence that no nation retains the kind or extent of geopolitical influence once wielded by the advanced countries of the modern period. The economic rise of China, India, Brazil and others is everywhere acknowledged, but it remains to be seen whether their efforts at global and regional influence will be of the same kind.

In the twenty-first century, nation states no longer align themselves according to the four-tier system of First, Second, Third, and Fourth Worlds. Multinational corporations based in the Euroamerican centers no longer control the world's economy, just significant parts of it. New global corporations are located in South, East, and North Asia. Manufacturing, distribution, and services are themselves dispersed around the globe, and linked to delivery points by new technologies and old-fashioned labor. Some would argue that, with globalization, or, more broadly, within "the postwar order of mutually supporting liberal democracies with mixed economies," capitalism has achieved its pure form. Certainly, the living standard of millions has been lifted, but only at enormous cost to social cohesion, peaceful cohabitation, and natural resources. National and local governments, as well as many international agencies, seek to regulate this flow and assuage its worst side effects—so far without conspicuous success. The institutions that drove modernity seem, to date, incapable of dealing with the most important unexpected outcome of their efforts: the massive disruptions to natural ecosystems that now seem to threaten the survival of the Earth itself. Despite the efforts of vested interests to foreclose debate on these issues (notably the campaigns against climate change science), consciousness of our inescapably shared, mutually dependent existence on this fragile planet is growing.

Many artists working today imagine the physical conjunction of a number of different kinds of world: the intimate, personal sense of "my world"; the close neighborhood of the local; nearby worlds, then increasingly distant beyonds, until a sense of the World in general is reached. In between these, and transversing them, are transitory spaces, "no-places," passages of physical trafficking and virtual interconnection. This multi-scalar picture also evokes both the geophysical adjacency of these worlds and their cultural co-temporality. It recognizes the differential rates of their movement through actual time, and the mobility of those whose lives weave between and through them. When it comes to individual and collective experience, antinomial friction is the most striking feature of relationships between people and their worlds, however persistent everydayness might be.

Within contemporary experience, one also sees gestures of connection, of reconciliation, and of coexistence. Both friction and connection are essential components of the (im)possible figure of planetarity. To imagine this figure is the task that the present requires from artists of all kinds, indeed, from all workers in the realms of the imagination.

Curating contemporaneous worlds

The great, historic task of the biennial exhibition--to survey the art being made around the world today, and to position local art in relation to it--is retreating as its main goal. Instead, many large-scale exhibitions attempt to show crucial aspects of contemporary art's contemporaneity--that is, it's being-in-the-world, *this* world, as it is now, and as it might be.

To date, no single exhibition has attempted to exhibit the three currents that, in their differentiation and connectedness, constitute contemporary art's ways of world being--perhaps because this would be akin to mapping the world with a map that would be indistinguishable from the world itself. Some exhibitions, including *The Global Contemporary* and dOCUMENTA (13), offer carefully considered proposals about art's contemporaneity, that is, its current world situatedness. They explicitly question terms such as "global art," or "world art," in favor of art that is, in some strong sense, "worldly." To show such art, and at the same time show the worlds in which it is being made, has become *the* challenge facing ambitious exhibition-makers today. Certainly, it is the goal of those who would make an exhibition that aspires beyond local significance.

Everyone embarking on projects of this kind is acutely aware of controversial precedents, such as "*Primitivism*" in *20th Century Art: Affinities of the Tribal and Modern* (1984), *Magiciens de la terre* (1989) and Documenta 11 (2000-2002).¹² Just as important has been the groundwork laid in exhibitions that have, since 1989, profiled the major changes in art in different parts of the world. These include (to

name just one of a number from each continent, with a preference for an exhibition that traveled) *Cities on the Move: Contemporary Asian art at the Turn of the 21st Century* (1997-8), *After the Wall: Art and Culture in Post-Communist Europe* (1999), *Inverted Utopias: Avant-Garde Art in Latin America* (2004), and *Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent* (2005 and 2008). Each of these, along with many others, has asked: what is distinctive about the contemporary art of our region, how does it derive from, break away from, or stand at an angle to, art made during our modernity, and how does it relate to “international” (Western, then transnational) contemporary art? These are art critical, and then art historical, questions, to which these exhibitions give curatorial answers. 14

The curators of *The Global Contemporary* insisted that they wanted to highlight the importance of a “global practice that has changed contemporary art as radically as ‘new media’ had done previously.” 15 At ZKM, *locus classicus*, if there is one, of new media and digital art, this claim has a strong resonance. Leaving aside debate about whether “new media” has, in fact, had as radical an impact as the comparison implies, this is a powerful generalization about contemporary art. A number of contemporary artists explicitly state that achieving such a practice is their goal, and many, such as the RAQs Media Collective, are among its most articulate theorists. 16 Some have posed it as a generality, for example, Indian cultural theorist and curator Nancy Adajania draws on Enwezor’s identification of a widespread “will to globality” on the part of peoples everywhere to characterize “globalism” as “the foundational premise” of her practice, one that is “not merely a reaction to globalisation, but as the audacious and positive reflection of a desire to release the cultural self towards others in a manner that bypasses dependency and embraces collaboration, thus making for a productive cosmopolitanism.” 17

The claim that the art exhibited at Karlsruhe demonstrates the emergence of a “global practice that has changed contemporary art as radically as ‘new media’ had done previously” is a curatorial, critical and historical idea as important as any that have been proposed in the past two decades. It is identical to that I make about

what I call the transnational transition: that, in the many art-producing centers in the rest of the world outside Euroamerica, a variety of local negotiations between indigeneity, tradition, modernity, and globalization led, first, to the forging of distinct kinds of modern art, and then, in artistic exchanges within nearby regions and with distant centers, the emergence of specific kinds of contemporary art. These developments have been underway since the 1950s in Africa, the 1960s in Latin America, the 1970s in the Central Desert of Australia, the 1980s in Central Europe and China, the 1990s in Southeast Asia, the 2000s in India and the Middle East, etc..¹⁸ Taken together (their separate origins connecting into a world current) they amount to a substantial reorientation of the way art is made in the world: they claim value for the making visible of local issues and they have become an important way in which both local and global inequities are renegotiated toward respect for difference. In doing both, they are artists' contributions toward the coming-into-being of what has been called a "new internationalism" or a "cosmopolitan aesthetic."¹⁹

In more general terms, we can see that in recent years many survey, biennial and mega-exhibitions have demonstrated that the second current is a major force in the world's art. Of course, there are many challenges facing artists and curators who are active in this current, not least is the seduction of easy exoticism, the invitation to fall for aesthetic tourism of the Other, or to simplify the local specificity of work—in other words, to become the stereotype that uncritical audiences in the West instinctively desire. Yet these exhibitions have helped us see the shape of its flow through the regions that they treated and in some of the nations that constitute each region. They alert us to the connections between regions and those that reach across to what were once the colonial centers. In some cases, these old centers remain important forums through which art must pass to have international purport. Yet new ones constantly emerge, driven first by art, with markets following on behind. (If the reverse occurs, as is happening the Middle East at the moment, the market soon retreats.) Among the next steps to be taken by historians and curators is the researching, staging and circulation of retrospectives of major artists from the

decolonizing regions who have made breakthroughs of world-picturing relevance. For example, Emily Kame Kngwarrye and El Anatsui. 20

Some remarks in conclusion. I have described what I believe to be the actual situation of contemporary art within contemporary conditions. I am not advocating this state as desirable or ideal—far from it. I believe that we must move from the present situation, in which a crisis contemporaneity of conflicted and mutually destructive incommensurabilities is the norm, to a state in which the planet and everyone and everything on it can imagine a constructive mutuality based on an inspired sharing of our differences. “Contemporaneity” and “planetarity” are the words I have come to think should be reserved for thoughts of this kind. They open us to the multiplicitous interactions through which we continuously make our worlds-with-the-World, a world still being globalized at the same time that it moves, quickly, beyond globalization.

1. Key texts by these authors include John A. Walker (with Rita Hatton), *Supercollector: A Critique of Charles Saatchi* (London: Ellipses, 2000); Julian Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and Jonathan Harris ed., *Globalization and Contemporary Art* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).
2. Robert Hughes, *Nothing If Not Critical: Selected Essays on Art and Artists* (London: Harvill, 1990).
3. Gideon Rose, “Making Modernity Work: The Reconciliation of Capitalism and Democracy,” in Gideon Rose and Jonathan Tepperman eds., *The Clash of Ideas* (New York: Foreign Affairs, January/February 2012), 2.
4. Terry Smith, *What is Contemporary Art?* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009); and Terry Smith, *Contemporary Art: World Currents* (London: Laurence King;

Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2011). Art historians interested in historiography and methodology might like to consult “The State of Art History: Contemporary Art,” *Art Bulletin*, vol. XCII, no. 4 (December 2010): 366-383.

5. See, for example, Kobena Mercer ed., *Cosmopolitan Modernisms* (London: Institute of International Visual Art; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005).

6. See, for example, Charlotte Byder, *Global Artworld Inc.: On the Globalization of Contemporary Art* (Uppsala University Press, 2004), Peter Weibel and Andrea Buddenseig eds., *Contemporary Art and the Museum: A Global Perspective* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2007), Hans Belting and Andrea Buddenseig eds., *The Global Art World: Audiences, Markets and Museums* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009); Kitty Zijlmans and Wilfred van Damme eds., *World Art Studies: Exploring Concepts and Approaches* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2008); and Amy J. Elias and Christian Moraru eds., *The Planetary Turn: Art, Dialogue and Geoaesthetics in the 21st Century* (Evanston, Il.: Northwestern University Press, 2013).

7. Discussed in more detail in Terry Smith, “Currents of World-Making in Contemporary Art,” *World Art*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2011): 20-36. Valuable essays by Ian McLean and Marsha Meskimmon may also be found in this issue.

8. On “contemporaneity” as a world-picturing term, see Terry Smith, Okwui Enwezor and Nancy Condee eds., *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

9. The impact of this current on the world as a whole has turned it into what Okwui Enwezor names “The Postcolonial Constellation,” see Smith, Enwezor, Condee eds., *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, 207-234 .

10. Raymond Williams, "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory," *New Left Review*, vol. 1, no. 8 (November-December 1973): 3-16; in John Higgins ed., *The Raymond Williams Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 158-178.

11. Fredric Jameson, *The Seeds of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), xi-xii.

12. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 72.

13. The editor of *Foreign Affairs* is in no doubt about the way things are going: "The much-ballyhooed 'rise of the rest' has involved not the discrediting of the postwar order of Western political economy but its reinforcement: the countries that have risen have done so by embracing global capitalism while keeping some of its destabilizing attributes in check, and have liberalized their politics and societies along the way (and will founder unless they continue to do so)." Gideon Rose, "Making Modernity Work: The Reconciliation of Capitalism and Democracy," 6.

14. I devote a chapter of *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2012) to a survey of exhibitions that have tackled these questions, including the remarkable number that have tracked feminist contributions during the past four or five decades. See Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating*, chapter 4.

15. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg, "Introduction," *The Global Contemporary*, exhibition guide, ZKM Karlsruhe, 2011, 6.

16. See the link "print" at <http://www.raqsmediacollective.net/print.aspx>. For example, the January 2012 discussion, "Has the Moment of the Contemporary Come and Gone?"

17. Nancy Adajania, "Time to Restage the World: Theorising a New and Complicated Sense of Solidarity," in Miranda Wallace ed., *21st Century: Art in the First Decade* (Brisbane: Queensland Art gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, 2010), 222-229. For the internal quotation, see Okwui Enwezor, "The Black Box," in *Documenta 11: Platform 5* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2002), 42.

18. I track them in the central chapters of *Contemporary Art: World Currents*.

19. INIVA (the Institute for International Visual Arts) has argued the first since the 1990s; Marsha Meskimmon profiles the latter in her book *Contemporary Art and the Cosmopolitan Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2010). See also Nikos Papastergiadis, *Cosmopolitanism and Culture* (London: Polity Press, 2012).

20. See, for example, *Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, National Art Center, Tokyo, and Museum of Australia, Canberra, 2008; *El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You About Africa*, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, 2010. For my review of the latter, see *Nka: Journal of African Art*, no. 28 (Spring 2011): 142-45; for an essay on Emily Kame Kngwarreye, see "Kngwarreye Woman Abstract Painter," in Jennifer Isaacs, ed., *Emily Kame Kngwarreye* (Sydney: Craftsman House, 1998).