

## **Artists' Futures Money, Markets and the Digital Domain**

Timed to coincide with the fifth anniversary of the Artist's Resale Right, DACS hosted the second in its series of high-profile debates: Artists' Futures: Money, Markets and the Digital Domain, continuing DACS' exploration of the conditions for being an artist in the 21st Century.

Chaired by Paul Hobson, (Director of the Contemporary Art Society), a distinguished panel of speakers comprising Simon Faithfull, Paul Bennun, Sonia Boyce and Klaus Thymann, explored how artists' futures can be sustained and supported at a time of rapid and far reaching economic, social and technological changes.

Panellists speculated on the shape of artists' futures as a result of the economic recession and cuts to public funding; changes to visual arts production and its affect on traditional collecting practices and how developments within the digital space will co-exist, compete with or compliment the physical visual arts world. What follows is an edited transcript of the discussion.

### **The Panel**

**Paul Hobson** (Chair) is the Director of the Contemporary Art Society. Prior to this, Paul was the Interim Director of The Showroom Gallery, London and the director of a private foundation supporting new work by emerging artists.

**Sonia Boyce** is an artist whose art practice takes a multi-media and socially inclusive approach by bringing people together to comment on history and the present. She is an AHRC Research fellow at Wimbledon College of Art.

**Paul Bennun** is a Director of Somethin' Else, a leading cross-platform digital production company. Paul is a trustee of Artangel and an artistic collaborator with several Artangel artists and writer John Berger. Paul also presents science, technology and usability programmes for the BBC.

**Simon Faithfull** is an artist whose practice takes a variety of forms – ranging from video, to digital drawing, installation work and writing. Recent projects include a video work recording the journey of a domestic chair as it is carried to the edge of space. He is a lecturer at Slade School of Fine Art.

**Klaus Thymann** is an award winning photographer and film-maker. His art has been exhibited and published world-wide, and he also works on commercial assignments. Klaus serves on the Board of Directors at DACS.

**Paul Hobson (PH):** The current economic downturn, cuts to government funding and reduced private investment has led many artists to question the sustainability of their practice and their livelihoods. Against this backdrop I've asked the panel to consider what artists' futures will look like. How do artists sustain their practice and income? How can they be influential and active in affecting these changes? What are the opportunities and the challenges that these future scenarios present and in particular within the digital domain? At a time when both private collecting and public collecting are not aligned to current forms of visual production, can we anticipate what these trends in collecting and acquiring visual art might be? Are they the future? How do they translate to the digital?

Sonia [Boyce], as an artist who is also working in an educational environment and very much from a fine art perspective, what do you see as the key factors that are impacting on artists at the moment?

**Sonia Boyce (SB):** I am just coming to the end of a three year fellowship through the Arts and Humanities Research Council. As a practising artist for 25 years, it is the first time I've actually been paid what would be the equivalent of an average wage to research as well as make works of art. Before then, I taught part time as an associate lecturer. The vast majority of artists that I know teach in some shape or form. And now we're experiencing quite harsh, radical cuts within the public sector and within arts institutions themselves. These are quite radical and serious erosions so it's very difficult to predict what that's going to mean for artists and for the conditions of art practice.

**PH:** But don't you think that the current arrangement is unsustainable considering the reduction in public funding or the lack of support from private investment? Do you see this model having to change radically?

**SB:** Yes it will have to change but my fear is that we are all being pushed into becoming entrepreneurs. That's nothing against entrepreneurs: I think there are people who are naturally gifted in this area but I don't know that all artists are. I have been looking at other sources of funding from foundations and trusts not just the public sector. But there isn't much out there and it's going to get very tough. I'd like to be able to be more positive about it but there are thousands of artists so it's hard to imagine what the support structures are going to be able to sustain what is a vibrant industry.

**PH:** Simon [Faithfull], you are an artist who works from a fine art perspective but also engages with other platforms such as digital media. Do you share this perspective? Do you see new opportunities in the digital domain for example?

**Simon Faithfull (SF):** You can't ignore the threats to teaching and to funding. Over the last ten years my income has come from a number of things: teaching, commissions, sales to institutions or private individuals, so it's been a real rag bag. And a lot of this has been funded through the Arts Council. I

should be very miserable and depressed about it all but actually I think it's quite an interesting time because everything is in flux and I think there are going to be new opportunities which come out of that.

**PH:** But do you share this concern or excitement about the fact that there may be a market imperative introduced into visual cultural production?

**SF:** There's been such an emphasis upon the market for the last 10-15 years and so I've found this emphasis upon the market within public funding strange. I think everything's going to be re-assessed but I don't really have any answers for how it's going to pan out.

**SB:** It makes me think about the mid-nineties in the US when the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) experienced drastic cuts and it really did change the character of arts practice in America. I'm wondering if there is a similarity here that if one takes away this form of state support then this privileges another kind of practice. I've always thought that there was an extraordinary richness in the various areas that artists could operate and yes it is a rag bag but my fear is that we're being funnelled in some way.

**PH:** Paul [Bennun], when we were talking before the debate, you suggested that there is a need for an evolution towards the digital in support of sustainable arts practices. Could you talk about what you see these opportunities to be?

**Paul Bennun (PB):** One of the most important things to remember is that the internet and the digital domain are unavoidable. What typically happens when the internet meets something new is that it embraces it, extends it and then changes it so that it is never the same again. I think there are some interesting parallels between what's happened in the music industry over the last 20 years and what the art world is currently facing. Essentially the internet is just a giant copying and connecting machine. That's what it does. And it changes the way that people find information, talk to each other and aggregate stuff in their personal lives.

The music industry had to respond to the fact that if they didn't provide appropriate products to consumers, then consumers were just going to circumvent the way the music industry worked. To some degree it's quite possible that the internet has killed the music

industry in the way that we know it. The music industry's old business model doesn't work. It's quite possible that for many kinds of musician the way that they used to create music and retail their work has finished.

It is quite possible that the traditional way art is sold may be changed for ever. Unlike the internet, the gallery system does not see works of art duplicated ad infinitum, but as 'editions'. Perhaps for a commercially successful artist, the world is going to be the same but for other artists they will need to embrace the world in a completely different way. For artistic practice to rejuvenate itself it's going to have to change fundamentally. That's an artistic question and it's also a commercial question. The two aren't necessarily the same thing.

Klaus [Thymann], how do you see that?

**Klaus Thymann (KT):** Well I think it's very interesting you mention the music industry. In 2007 Radiohead made their album available to download for free, encouraging fans to pay what they thought the album was worth. This week they have released their new album which you can download for £6 or purchase a collectors' edition for £30. In a very short period of time there's been a fundamental shift where we've agreed 'lets not to shoot ourselves in the foot here and assume everything on the internet is for free'.

I think the internet is something that artists can utilise and can definitely profit from. But within the art world, I think we need to make a distinction between artists who make physical, unique objects and those who make their living through the reproduction of their work, sometimes digitally.

I think people accept that digital reproductions should be paid for. I am not sure what the future holds for fine art and unique productions. Will there be a place where they can exist and be easily copied?

**PH:** My understanding of the market is that works acquire both financial and critical value, by having unique access and physical form. Paul [Bennun], do you see the arts shedding that type of market structure and moving more along the lines of the music industry?

**PB:** There are new models that are compliant with the way that the internet works but that doesn't mean to say that existing models will become obsolete. Because of the logical outcome of their practice, artists are going to produce works of art that can gain additional value over time, and they're not designed to be reproduced. The internet isn't going to stop people painting. It's not going to stop people working with physical materials and arranging them artistically. However, you now have additional possibilities which are

related to objects or artefacts or ideas that by definition need to be duplicated, disseminated, to have any artistic value.

For instance, making images on a Palm Pilot and then distributing it via email is a very interesting thing. What is the artefact? If people then pay for this image, what is the value of the thing that is being transacted and does the duplication of that object reduce the value? Well, yes, in a sense, it does.

There are additional possibilities that take advantage of how the internet works. Although I'd say that there is a certain section of the art world that is based around the reproduction of an image, and that is absolutely changing.

**KT:** I think a good example is virtual gaming where non-physical objects are traded at a high value. People can now adopt an avatar or a 'digital self'. In the future this 'online self' could become more important than the 'offline self'. So the collector might go online to 'collect' works of art thereby empowering digital objects with a value.

**PB:** That's an important artistic point. Take Second Life, which is a virtual world where you build objects and have a physical presence in it. I had one of the most powerful artistic experiences in my life inside that world. There comes a time when the objects inside these environments, start having a real value. It's the object itself that becomes interesting and artistic when you spend enough time engaging with it. So I'd say that, yes, absolutely the virtual world as a place of artistic expression is hugely important and it's not going to get any less important, and those objects can have genuine financial value.

**SF:** Paul [Bennun] is right; the traditional model that operates within the art world is opposed to these new ways of distributing things. However there are examples of 'non-object based art' which have sold and Sol LeWitt is a good example of this. There's actually no object there but the art world have managed to control its distribution and make it precious.

Within my own practice, I've sold a fair amount of my films and collectors have got their heads around the concept of how artists' films are sold - by artificially restricting the amount of copies there are. Ironically in terms of my drawing practice I haven't sold that many drawings at all. I think this is because it scares collectors as it looks like they are everywhere in the world, and they are. But then the recipe that Sol LeWitt uses to make a drawing could be enacted by anybody and it's just the certificate that authenticates it.

I am working on an i-Phone App at the moment where I will create a drawing and anyone downloading the App will access the drawing instantly. Actually there has been quite a big debate about whether we should charge people. The project began with the

idea of how artists could produce other kinds of revenue streams but because it's publicly funded, one of the commissioners is adamant that we shouldn't charge for it, so it has also become problematic.

**PH:** But it is also about the idea of artistic practice as an authentic form of knowledge production and experience. I think Paul [Bennun] raised an important point about the way these things become transactional in a virtual space, where the experience of the work is radically different from the experience of a physical object in a 'real' space.

**SB:** I want to add that although we're talking about revenue for artists, I also think there is an important reciprocal relationship between the artist and the audience. With music it comes out of a machine into a shared space but with art I do get worried by this idea of limiting who can access it. **PB:** I couldn't agree more. This is a really tricky thing to address. To say that it is possible to create a market through creating artificial scarcity isn't necessarily the right thing to do. The way that the internet seems to work is that it doesn't necessarily like artificial scarcity as it is a copying machine. One could absolutely imagine an artist working in a similar way to the Radiohead model, making their work available to anyone to download and if you really wanted one of the five official copies then you could pay £20,000 for a certificate direct from the artist.

A collector can buy an official edition with proof, but it is impossible to restrict that digital work from being copied. The music industry tried to do that. They thought that by applying digital rights management to pieces of music they would magically stop pirated copies being disseminated. Within five minutes of copy protection being applied to a piece of digital work, it has been broken. It always will be. I think if you're having this discussion about artificial scarcity around works that are inherently intangible then you have to understand that it is impossible to restrict the copying of that work.

**PH:** But then what is the alternative?

**PB:** I think that we can again look at parallels in the music industry and we've touched on some of them already where you've got objects that people will pay for because they want them. Of course some people have a dislike of paying for things that they've found on the internet. Other people are entirely happy to give an artist a sum of money in return for something.

**KT:** I think that the critical thing here is: where is the bridge from the fine art market to the digital? I think the auction houses are a very big factor in how art is viewed. Thinking back to the idea of 'avatars', if the platform was developed within an auction house, maybe that would validate it.

**PH:** From an art historical perspective, artists sit within a story about what has become important at any one time and then people collect around that. Then that story is told through institutions and through a consensus amongst commercial galleries and curators. So there's quite a complicated process of subscription around works of art and the way that it's made available and recorded. I'm just wondering where the different agents are within that on this digital platform?

**SF:** I think video is an interesting model to look at. You can distribute your work widely for free on the internet but then also sell a limited number of authenticated copies to a small amount of people. YouTube has all of my videos on it now but for a really long time I resisted putting my videos on there. I had to, eventually through necessity, as people began filming my work on their mobile phones and uploading these to YouTube and I didn't want my work represented by wobbly mobile-phone footage. And I also thought why would you want to restrict your videos from being seen by as many people as possible? And actually that hasn't devalued the authenticated version. It's on YouTube, and everyone can access it but I think everyone knows that that is 'different' although in terms of quality, this difference is rapidly diminishing; I think there is a conceptual artefact that becomes more important than the physical artefact.

What I want to do with my drawings is create an App, where I can sell my prints (but not as limited editions) for a very small download fee. I will then sell the code to the drawing as a limited edition, so the collector gets a deeper connection with the conceptual artefact.

**PH:** But we still seem to be talking about a situation where artists are producing a controlled asset for a lot of money for a small group whilst also ensuring that their work is widely accessible and distributed digitally. I suppose the question is how can it be monetised?

**SF:** The App Store is quite a good model for that.

**PB:** Giving the App away for free for starters, doesn't devalue the end work. All it does is generate additional people that will get to know and love your work. And if they have a conceptual resonance with the stuff that you're doing, they will want to get to know the artist a bit more and maybe start having bespoke works made for them, or even start telling other people who may become subscribers. You know the biggest issue for artists is visibility. If you can actually get your work understood by a lot of people then it will intrinsically have greater value and the internet is fantastic at that.

**SB:** I would say that as an artist, one really tends to look towards the art institutions and how they start to take on board these questions and there has been an enormous amount of snobbery around this. I'm very aware of what Simon is saying and I've only just started to put my work on YouTube after much deliberation. But because of the wider context of the institutions and how they perceive it, I've not really been up to speed with much of this.

**KT:** This is a question to the panel, because I think we've sub-consciously assumed that everything is fine art, and I think we need to look at what happens to all the artists that don't produce fine art. Look at illustrators who sell their work to magazines. Their business model is selling one thing many times and getting things financed that way. And if things are given away free on the internet and if people aren't paying for it, then that business model doesn't work. It doesn't work for photographers either.

I'm just thinking back to the early noughties when every business model for a new internet company was giving away stuff for free and selling advertising to finance themselves. Then the bubble burst. I think if we try the same model with the art world, I don't think it's viable. I think the revenue stream would have to come from something substantial rather than hot air.

**PH:** I'm slightly mortified by the prospects of artists making available their work in that kind of way so that it can be wrapped around by different forms of selling.

**PB:** Art is something that's quite difficult to explain and it's quite difficult certainly for a new artist to come along and articulate what's interesting about their work. It's difficult enough to make money out of websites through advertising, let alone out of something tangible by design.

**KT:** I don't think there are any websites that have a limit on the number of viewers, so let's say that you can only have 30 viewers at a time and so this limited access could then be auctioned. I don't think this has been developed yet but I think as the internet is getting more and more restricted in some ways people are more open to restrictions. Maybe that's a model that could potentially be explored?

**Audience:** With Second Life you can create virtual property therefore opening up a platform for engagement and patronage. You could offer patrons the opportunity to have this virtual property named after them. Could this also work in the same way for a server or a network that's created by artists in exchange for ideas? Could this be patronised in some way?

**PB:** What's interesting is that you talk about patronage and that reminds us that the art world as it is now has not always been like this. There is no divine order that says there is a gallery system with rich private individuals who are prepared to hand over lots of money to sustain a certain kind of artist in gold. You know, 400 years ago the art world was different. It's going to be different again in 400 years' time.

**SF:** But it does use a model, and in some ways the art world is almost like an antidote to a lot of what we've been talking about. Its model belongs to a pre-mass production system. It's not surprising that the art world does have difficulty with this concept.

**PB:** But that's one of the things that we were talking about at the beginning: artificial scarcity. It works but only if you understand that it's artificial and that it needs to be a conceptual scarcity rather than a practical scarcity.

**PH:** I think there are aesthetic considerations as well. In my experience there are very few collectors for moving image. Even the majority of public collections still find it very difficult to present moving image and it seems incredible that there could be such resistance to such an important medium. We are in a situation where both public collections and private collections are not aligned to these innovative new forms of cultural production. These agencies are so crucial for artists in terms of ascribing critical and financial value, and their legacy and visibility. I can certainly see that there's a need for some new system but there needs to be an erosion of this idea of one supplementing the other which I think is structurally problematic.

**PB:** I think some artists work in physical objects and some collectors like to buy physical objects and they always will. But there's a whole new kind of work of art that is now possible that is not based around that mode of thinking.

**PH:** This is where the bridge isn't clear. How do these two things connect up?

**SF:** As an artist making work now, I do want to make physical, touchable things that have a sensory impact on the audience, but also it would be very strange if I said I'm only going to chisel wood.

**SB:** This goes back to my original point about the art college and the kind of work produced there and the way things are moving. My experience is that there isn't a great deal of work that's using the internet as the site for art. That's not to say that people haven't been involved in digital work but they are not using it in a site and it's not really an area that is actively thought through in terms of the kinds of courses that there are, so you

know, there are lots of implications here about who has the capacity to straddle these realms.

**Audience:** I notice you can attend Frieze on Facebook. Do you think social media has impacted on how artists sell their work?

**KT:** All PR is good PR and social media is definitely something that will affect how an artist promotes themselves. And you know the fact that the galleries, the media and the art fairs are exploring these tools is very much proof of that.

**PH:** I think that the art world is adopting this experience economy. There's a huge amount of buying that is happening at art fairs and less so in commercial galleries. That's one of the key shifts recently and I think that social networking supports that aspect of the art world along with the social experience of it. That's really important as you do have people that are definitely buying on the back of being sent a JPEG.

What they're having is physical ownership in perpetuity of an actual object that forms part of a system that everyone, critically or otherwise, believes in. I think they are supplementing and enabling that to operate in a different way but they're within a system.

**SF:** I think the art world has absolutely taken to Facebook due to herd mentality. Everybody rushes around something that's hot and Facebook offers a parody of that system. I think an artist's job is to infiltrate those systems and create disruptions in the world around them.

**Audience:** You've all talked a lot about space, virtual space, physical space, but you haven't talked about time and I'd like you to talk about the impact of this new digital world on time. I don't know any artist who comes out fully formed. They need time in order to become an artist, time to fail, to make mistakes before you have the confidence or you have something that you can take to market and that the market might want. And what happens to those ideas which can take years or even decades to be validated by the market?

**PB:** That is an amazing bunch of questions because time and space are the same thing and the internet is something that makes time disappear by removing space and it connects us. To deal with the last thing that you said, yes while the internet is really good at taking a massive amount of snapshots, things tend to be perceived in that moment rather than over a longer period of time. If you look at something like Twitter or Facebook status updates, the way you use that is a bunch of snapshots that have their validity at that moment so there is an aggregate validity to the whole thing over a period of time, but that's not what you focus on. But the thing is we don't know yet if something takes a long

time to emerge and become important. Facebook is less than ten years old. YouTube wasn't around six years ago so we just don't know.

I think for me the most interesting thing is if you look at Facebook: I'm not interested in it as a thing for marketing, I'm interested in the fact that digital, by its very nature, is about information. Artists are starting to use this information as the basis of their work and that's still a really hard thing for us to get our heads around. It is about as hard to imagine as what the art world thought of early conceptual art when that came along: it's ugly; it's stupid; it's pointless; I don't understand it. And that's what's happening right now. And for a time the existing art world is going to hate it and then it will co-opt it and then it will have always liked it and this won't be a problem any more.

**KT:** I think we've seen from the film industry how the window of opportunity for making money has contracted massively and now it's everything within 180 days. And I think the same is happening a little in the art world in that press coverage has shortened so that's one aspect of time influencing how money is made in the art world and how an artist can earn money. And the other point is that works of art posted online have a different longevity that isn't confined to anything physical, which could also work to its advantage. So in essence I think there are two aspects: the physical thing might have been shortened but the networking opportunity might have been extended because digital platforms give the opportunity to stagger releases and keep doing updates over a period of time.

**SF:** The one thing that the digital world gives us that we didn't have before is distributed "instantness". Also on the internet, things actually do stick around, that dodgy interview that you did when you were really tired and hung over is still there five years later. I do think it is a kind of space and there are objects in that space that turn out to be surprisingly stable.

**PH:** I think it would be very interesting to see what forms of visual art come out in response to these debates. I recently saw the Nam June Paik exhibition at the Tate and it's interesting to me how it's possible to have an artist creating recognisable cultural formats that draw attention to these conditions and experiences but in a format that continues a certain visual vocabulary and a conceptual history. It can be recognisable as part of a continuity of visual culture rather than having come with no context and no clear structure or legacy. I think it's very important for any system to have a shape and to leave a legacy.

**SF:** The problem about it being embedded in this way is more to do with the institutions and collectors rather than the artists. The artists who make work that is distributed in this way do not see themselves as any different. It's only the institutions who are trying to get their head around what to do about it.

**PH:** Absolutely. I don't think it is the artist who decides whether they're visible or not, or if they're bought or sold. I think part of the challenge for artists is that they're not always influential in those systems. They have to be identified within a consensus that is quite complicated as we know, so how that works in the virtual I think is really fascinating.

**Audience:** We're assuming that the old model was wonderful and generous for artists but it could be that the change is actually a good thing. So maybe this change that we're so scared of is actually going to bring some good news?

**PH:** Well I'm sure it will, as you say. We've probably been a bit gloomy about the conditions and we've certainly focused a lot on the digital but I think one of the key things for future artists is going to be the changes that are coming in terms of this next generation of students and the burdening of individuals with debt at a time when making a career out of being an artist seems to be unsupportable. I think that that will have a very big effect on the next generation of artists. It seems to me that we have a situation where there's been an over production of artists and curators and lots of other arts professionals at a time when there's going to be re-trenching, if you like, from those agencies that actually employ those people. I think that these are things that are going to affect the way that art is presented and mediated to audiences and those systems for producing artists and curators will be very influential.

**KT:** I was thinking about democracy and that the internet has made everything more democratic because information's available and it is the art world that is not very democratic and maybe that's a change that could come out of it.

**PH:** Personally, I think the art world is very democratic. If you look at public collections, museums and art galleries across the UK, there are more people who go and experience art in museums and galleries in this country than enjoy football. The art world offer is there, it's free, and it's on the doorstep. Of course the art historical narratives told within institutions are still hugely problematic as we know. They are not diverse, and they are overly gendered and westernized. But is there enough there that is democratic? I would say so for people who still want to make works of art and put them into the world.

**KT:** The outlets are definitely democratic but I'm thinking of the ability of artists to put their work out there and let the public decide because now it's the social networks

that decide whether something is a success or not, not necessarily the bottleneck of one or two curators. That's what I was thinking about when I said it could potentially be more democratic.

**PH:** I don't think there's a desire to be exclusive per se on the part of institutions it's just that they lack knowledge, money and networks. Many of these local authority museums are going to be on the front line of local authority spending cuts as they are not statutory.

**SB:** I am worried by the conditions that we're now facing and our discussions around the internet. It all seems very individualistic. If you're the sort of person who can speak that language and work within that sphere you do it as an individual. From my experience, working with museums and institutions, it is very much about a shared space where people come together.

**PB:** But the internet is also fantastic for exploring ideas communally. One interesting model is open source software. Here you've got people all over the world asynchronously and synchronously working on and towards a common goal. It's an intractable problem, like building an operating system to work to an incredible technical complexity. Yet by getting enough people using commoditised simple tools on the internet you can collaboratively produce this extraordinarily complicated, large and ambitious project. Then the tools that can be used to manage that process are equally as useful to create works of art if one believes that works of art can be digital works of art. Of course it can also be used to manage communal efforts to create physical artefacts as well.

**Audience:** Simon, you mentioned earlier about selling the code to your work, I think that's a really important way to differentiate the type of copy, so rather than having a copy which could be a JPEG which is a compressed image, you could sell the draw data for your photograph or you could sell the code to your animation. I think that this may be a way forward in the digital domain of differentiating between what's out there and what's available to collectors.

**SF:** Although it might not seem it, you've made a distinction between a physical object and a virtual object. I think an artist who makes a painting has created some sort of intervention in the world that has some meaning and I think what people value when they buy that work is this conceptual artefact. It's maybe within the art model that people need some sort of authenticity and closeness but I don't think that has to only reside within physical objects. I think the physical object is just one vessel for that meaning.

**PH:** That's certainly true. I think that it's possible to access that conceptual moment, without buying the work. You go to a museum and you can access it, you don't have to pay £3 million to own it physically. So I think that kind of access is possible in institutional spaces, in that shared space, and also online but I think it's the actual physical ownership of the object that is within the market...

**SF:** But isn't a Sol LeWitt bought and sold?

**PH:** But that's as a conceptual artwork isn't it? That was a particular moment that was an evolution within the discourse around what art is. It sits within a story where that was a very economic and succinct idea that could be totally dematerialised.

**SF:** Or a Tino Seghal performance?

**PH:** Yes but Tino Seghal is the only artist that I'm aware of who is a performance artist in an institution like the Tate.

**SF:** What about Chris Burden? You might buy a photograph of his performance that's authenticated but still the moment itself is intangible.

**PH:** Yes he sold blood stained rags from his performances which reinforces this idea that people want a physical residual thing that they own in addition to the experience of the work they collect.

**SF:** I think when people buy a Picasso from an auction house they want a little bit of that experience of Picasso painting it. When Richard Long makes a set of stone circles in a gallery it's only a token of this very diffuse action that he made and I think everyone knows that. I mean the person who buys that is not really saying this is the work, it's a kind of token and I don't see the huge separation.