



# Introduction

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## The Fall of the Studio

The artist's studio is in dire standing, or, at least, so many critics and artists would have one believe. In recent decades, this customary space used for artistic creation and production has been discussed widely, yet mostly in a casually negative form. Any praise is by definition considered to be ideologically suspect.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, ever since artists embarked upon the radical program of questioning and eventually overturning the traditional and conventional modes of production, circulation, and reception of artworks in the late 1960s, the studio has suffered a series of tragic blows. It became a prime target for critique, was declared to have *fallen*, and finally lost both its conventional prominence and mythical stature — its putative station as “imagination's chamber.”<sup>2</sup> To many artists, the space not only accommodated, but, above all, represented a type of artistic practice, material production, and creative identity that they wished to supersede or avoid altogether. “Deliverance from the confines of the studio,” wrote Robert Smithson in 1968, “frees the artist to a degree from the snares of craft and the bondage of creativity.”<sup>3</sup> Just as the studio was experienced as a romantic straitjacket, an outdated and restrictive context for the development of new modes and strategies of making, distributing, presenting or experiencing art, the long-established mediums of painting and sculpture, which had traditionally been considered studio arts, were deemed passé, and likewise their tools and techniques seen to be irrelevant. New modes of production were developed and tested with seeming





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urgency. Some artists simply stopped making works themselves and began outsourcing the production of

- 1 Isabelle Graw, 'Atelier. Raum ohne Zeit; Vorwort', *Texte Zur Kunst*, 13, 49, (2003), p. 5. This negative perception is certainly symptomatic of the persistent lacunae in critical scholarship on the artist's studio. In stark contrast to the spectacular increase of the field of critical museum studies, which has resulted in a wide range of publications, engaging disciplines as varied as art history, anthropology, sociology, and political science, the artist's studio has not yet received the full consideration that it deserves. The beginnings of the proposed consideration can be found in Caroline A. Jones's groundbreaking compendium about studio practices of key American artists, *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996. More recently, too, there has been a spate of exhibitions that have presented the artist's studio as a vital topic in contemporary art (at the Henry Moore Institute in 2002, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in 2006, the Kunst Akademie in Berlin in 2006, the Hugh Lane Museum in Dublin in 2006, and the Centre Pompidou in 2007). These shows have evaluated fundamental changes made in artmaking since the 1960s and also examined the means by which artists have questioned and reinvented the studio. For the respective catalogues, see Jon Wood (ed.), *Close Encounters: The Sculptor's Studio in the Age of the Camera* (exh. cat.), Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2002; *Stedelijk Museum Bulletin*, 2 (2006); Jens Hoffmann and Christina Kennedy (eds.), *The Studio* (exh. cat.), Dublin: Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane, 2006; and Didier Schulmann (ed.), *Ateliers: L'artiste et ses lieux de création dans les collections de la Bibliothèque Kandinsky* (exh. cat.), Paris: Editions du Centre Pompidou, 2007. In popular culture however, the studio still enjoys a high status. In January 2007, British life-style magazine *Wallpaper\**, for example, ran a remarkable quiz-like article in the 'Art' section, entitled 'Private Viewing'. It showed photographs of a certain Gautier Deblonde, who travelled around the world to "capture the inner sanctum of artists." Readers were invited to "spot the clues" and "name the absent genius." The answers were printed in the last pages of the magazine. They revealed that photographs of the studios of such famous artists as Jeff Koons, Jasper Johns, Chuck Close, Rachel Whiteread, Luc Tuymans and Richard Serra had been included – some of which were easier to guess at than others. For more substantial and historical publications that have taken up the topic of the artist's studio as a photographic subject, we would like to single out Alexander Liberman, *The Artist in his Studio*, New York: Thames & Hudson, 1960; Lieven Nolle, *Ateliers d'artistes* (exh. cat), Antwerpen: MUHKA, 2001; and Dominique de Font-Réaulx, *The Artist's Studio*, Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 2005; Liza Kirwin and Joan Lord, *Artists in their Studios: Images from the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art*, New York: Harper Collins, 2008. For the historical use of the studio as a backdrop for fashion photography, we would like to refer readers to the study by visual artist Joke Robaard within the context of the Research Group of Visual Arts of the Academie voor Kunst en Vormgeving/St.Joost, Avans Hogeschool, and published as Joke Robaard: *Folders # 53, 54, 55, 56*, edited by Joke Robaard, Camiel van Winkel, Jaap van Triest, 's-Hertogenbosch/Breda: Lectoraat Beeldende Kunst, Avans Hogeschool, AKCIST.Joost, 2008.
- 2 Michael Peppiatt and Alice Bellony-Rewald, *Imagination's Chamber: Artists and Their Studios*, Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1982.
- 3 Robert Smithson, 'A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects' (1968), in: Robert Smithson: *The Collected Writings*, edited by Jack D. Flam, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996, pp. 100-113 (107).





works of all kinds and scales to engineering firms and industrial manufacturers. As Richard Serra recounted in 1985, when he started to produce large-scale steel sculptures in the late 1960s, he was forced outside of a private studio: “The studio has been replaced by urbanism and industry. Steel mills, shipyards, and fabrication plants have become my on-the-road extended studios.”<sup>4</sup> Other artists tried to circumvent the conventional division between the site of production and reception that persists in the system of studio and gallery, and opted for site-specific work, either inside the gallery itself or on remote locations — hoping thereby to subvert the tried presentational techniques of art institutions and ultimately to short-circuit the commodification of art. In 1971, Daniel Buren decided to reverse the dominant way of doing things and no longer to force the artwork into a course of eternal nomadism.<sup>5</sup> He ended his seminal essay ‘Fonction de l’atelier’ with the radical statement that his decision to work in situ compelled him to leave the studio and to “abolish” it.<sup>6</sup> Desires to make monumental earthworks and ecological art led some artists to reclaim derelict sites for their work — as was the case for Agnes Denes, who declared a landfill in southern Manhattan to be her “studio.”<sup>7</sup> The endeavour of taking exception with any notion of a preset spatial ontology of the studio was also clearly at issue in the conceptualist renunciation or suspension of the materiality of the art object. When an artwork comes into being and exists as a mere idea, its ‘creator’ is no longer in need of a separate, let





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alone an especially assigned and equipped workplace at her or his disposal. As Lawrence Weiner's notorious "declaration of intent" bluntly indicated, neither the construction of the piece by the artist, its fabrication, nor its actual building was a guarantor of 'art'. The ultimate existence of a work depended on the presence of a someone at the receiving end: "Each being equal and consistent with the intent of the artist, the decision as to condition rests with the receiver upon the occasion of receivership."<sup>8</sup>

In recent decades, the desertion of the studio has become still more apparent and involved. In such films as *Trying to Find the Spiral Jetty* (1997) and *Section Cinema (Homage to Marcel Broodthaers)* (2002), Tacita Dean calmly positions the studio as one among other lost and phantasmatic objects, as her camera

- 4 Richard Serra, 'Extended Notes from Sight Point Road' (1985), in Richard Serra: Writings, Interviews, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 167-173 (168).
- 5 Daniel Buren, and Jens Hoffmann, 'The Function of the Studio Revisited: Daniel Buren in Conversation', in Jens Hoffmann and Christina Kennedy (eds.), *The Studio*, Dublin: Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane, 2006, p. 104.
- 6 Daniel Buren, 'Fonction de l'Atelier' (1971), in Daniel Buren: Les Écrits (1965-1990). Tome I: 1965-1976, edited by Daniel Buren and Jean-Marc Poinot, Bordeaux: CAPC Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, 1991, pp. 195-204.
- 7 Agnes Denes, 'Living Murals In the Land: Crossing Boundaries of Time and Space', *Public Art Review*, 17:1, 33 (Fall/Winter 2005), pp. 24-27 (25). Reflecting on her *Wheatfield: A Confrontation* (1982), she explained: "Wheatfield sprang up twenty feet from the Hudson, one block from Wall Street, flanked by the World Trade Center and the Statue of Liberty. At sunset the four-block site was my studio. Exhausted from the day's work, I'd look out at the rushing waters of the Hudson and the yellow stalks of wheat waving in the wind, savor the heavy smell of the field and the buzzing of dragon flies, surrounded by ladybugs, field mice, praying mantis. I was on an island of peace, just a block away from the heartbeat of the city and evening rush hour on West Street."
- 8 Lawrence Weiner, as quoted in Alexander Alberro, 'Reconsidering Conceptual Art, 1966-1977', in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999, pp. xvi-xxvii (xxii). This statement was first published in the catalogue for the exhibition January 5-31, 1969, New York: Seth Siegelau, 1969, n.p.





languorously haunts Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1969) or Marcel Broodthaers's studio in Dusseldorf. Furthermore, it is now rare for art to be produced in a single spot and by a sole individual. Rather it comes into being on myriad 'sites,' via both physical and virtual bases, and through the collaboration of different people with varied skills and backgrounds. For that matter, few artists can be said to reside in one place. Most operate in multiple locations around the globe and participate in a network of multiple artistic, institutional, and socio-political 'actors'.<sup>9</sup> As Philippe Parreno, a celebrated exponent of the nomadic existence, relational activity, and collaborative practice that has flourished since the 1990s, remarked in 2003: "I don't need one studio, but I do need a lot of studios." His ideal studio, he continued, "would be one place made of many different places, (...) made of different qualities and useful in different time frames."<sup>10</sup>

The dispersal of the artistic workplace across globalized networks has led to the widespread acknowledgment of the 'post-studio' era. We often speak of or read about inhabiting a moment in history that is *past* or *beyond* the studio. Indeed, the space has been deemed on many occasions to be *over*, and *done with*. In the contemporary scholarship about art, the nomenclature of the 'post-studio' has become utterly commonplace. In both theoretical and critical prose the terminology is used frequently. And yet it is still challenging to determine precisely when and with whom this manner of speaking about the





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studio began. Although Smithson and Buren are often considered as the pioneering figures of ‘post-studio’ practices, neither one of them ever used the term, despite producing voluminous writings on this matter.<sup>11</sup> John Baldessari, who employed the term to describe a course he taught at the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, in the early 1970s, does not recall where he took the term from — “perhaps from Carl Andre,” he guessed, in an interview in 1992.<sup>12</sup> Andre indeed coined himself in an interview of 1970 as “the first of the post-studio artists,” although he immediately hedged that the claim was “probably not true.”<sup>13</sup>

The history of the origination of the idea of the ‘post-studio’ is apparently as uncertain as that of ‘institutional critique’.<sup>14</sup> Although both terms have played a

- 9 For a broad discussion of the roles and significance of art’s industrial fabrication, we refer readers to the October 2007 issue of *Artforum* on the theme of ‘The Art of Production’.
- 10 Kate van den Boogert, *Studio Visit: ‘Alien’ Philippe Parreno*, in *TATE*, January / February 2003, pp. 48–53.
- 11 Caroline A. Jones has observed that Smithson “aspired to become the first post-studio artist,” only later to acknowledge that, “[n]either ‘post-studio’ nor ‘post-modern’ were yet common in Smithson’s lexicon, of course.” See Jones, *Machine in the Studio*, p. 270. In the sequel to Brian O’Doherty’s famous book of essays, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1976), it is quite revealing that the author does not use the term ‘post-studio’. Rather, his succinct text reinvigorates our understanding of the importance and crucial role of the studio. See Brian O’Doherty, *Studio and Cube: On the Relationship Between Where Art is Made and Where Art is Displayed*, Buell Center/FORuM Project, New York, Columbia University, 2007.
- 12 Interview with John Baldessari, conducted by Christopher Knight at the artist’s studio in Santa Monica, California, April 4, 1992; Smithsonian Archives of Modern Art; <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/oralhistories/transcripts/baldes92.htm>.
- 13 Carl Andre and Phyllis Tuchman, ‘An interview with Carl Andre’, *Artforum*, 8, 6 (June 1970), pp. 55–61 (55).
- 14 Andrea Fraser, ‘From the Critique of Institutions to the Institution of Critique’, *Artforum*, 44, 1 (September, 2005), pp. 278–283. In this brilliant essay, Fraser establishes that not a single one of the leading artists-protagonists of ‘institutional critique’ – including Smithson or Buren – had ever used the term.





crucial role in critics' and artists' parlance of the past four decades, there is no one person who can claim to be the sole author or exponent of either one. But in the case of the 'post-studio,' we should also consider the extent to which the term does justice to the current status and nature of the space(s) and place(s) of art production. Following four decades of the critical exploration of the institutional art regime and its paradigmatic spaces by artists, the studio curiously seems to be the only space of the so-called 'art nexus' that remains systematically endowed with the prefix 'post'. How often do we read or hear about a post-museum, post-gallery, or post-house-of-the-collector? Has the studio become the ultimate casualty of the neo-avant-garde's wishes to dismember the institutional apparatus?

Despite profound changes in the understandings and processes of artistic production in the 1960s, not everyone considered the studio to be obsolete. As early as 1968, Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler, in their famous essay 'The Dematerialization of Art', recognized that the seeming evaporation of the art object in conceptualism could not be equated with a vanishing studio. On the contrary, with an explanation that is strikingly structuralist, Lippard and Chandler informed *Arts Magazine* readers of the notion that the studio was merely undergoing a functional, and not a fundamental, change: it was "again becoming a study."<sup>15</sup> Lippard and Chandler eluded taking up a funeral voice, and struck more







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nanced tones — albeit without examining the implications of their statements. Their assertions, however, prompt us to consider the historical dimension of the modern artist's studio, namely the relation between the workplace of artists and scholars, represented by the long-established historical model of the study. In that sense, the term 'studio' signifies more than an enclosed space for genius, creativity, or melancholia; and this resonates with the postwar abandonment of related notions of the author, and is aligned with the discourse of the 'post-studio'. The historical use of the term 'studio' sealed the gradual transformation of the early-modern artist's workshop from a place of manual practice to one of intellectual labor. It embodied the gradual blurring of the distinction between artistic and academic activities and thus could be said to emblemize a virtual condition of personal artistic reflection or 'studious activity' that permeates contemporary artistic ways of making.<sup>16</sup> In this respect, Lippard and Chandler then seem to hint that if

15 Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler, 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, 12, 2 (February 1968), pp. 31-36, as reprinted in Alberro and Stimson (eds.), *Conceptual Art*, pp. 46-50 (46).

16 For this understanding, we would like to refer readers to the brilliant collection of essays by Christopher S. Wood, Walter S. Melion, H. Perry Chapman and Marc Gottlieb, in Michael Wayne Cole and Mary Pardo (eds.), *Inventions of the Studio: Renaissance to Romanticism*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. In the introduction, Cole and Pardo explain that the current use of the English word 'studio' for the early-modern artist's atelier is historically incorrect. In English the word 'studio' does not appear in this meaning until well into the 19th century; in Italy, until far into the 17th century, people called the artist's atelier a bottega, or simply a stanza (room). The Italian word studio (or studiolo) refers to the room, or even only to the furniture of a scholar. Since the 15th century, artists have increasingly often also had a studio, where they collected books and all sorts of curiosities and to which they could withdraw for private artistic reflection, away from the busy public workshop or bottega.





conceptual art grants us a new understanding of the role and significance of the studio, on the one hand, and of the nature and identity of the space, on the other, it does so neither by discarding the customary model of the studio, nor by inventing a new one altogether: it revisits the stakes of an existing, yet overlooked model of the studio.

An analogous argument and approach informs the present compendium of essays on the artist's studio. Instead of upholding the accepted wisdom or narrative that *the studio has fallen*, this book ambitiously questions many assumptions that underlie the popular and international discussions of the 'post-studio'. It traces the shifting nature and identity of the artist's studio in postwar art and art criticism, both in Europe and in the United States, and aims to achieve this by way of detailed analyses of seminal artists' practices. The contributors are concerned with artists who are, to be precise, *at work*. So, the essays gathered here are devoted to individual practitioners and their understanding and use of the place of work — not necessarily in order to frame their practices *in* the studio, rather to analyse their practices *of* the studio — across media and geographies. Thus, *The Fall of the Studio* deliberately focuses on the artist's studio as key trope, institutional construct, and critical theme in postwar art. While some of the artists discussed here are canonical figures of the second half of the 20th century, others maintain highly active careers at the beginning of the 21st. All of them, however, partake in the staging, re-





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staging, performing, critiquing, and displaying of the space and place of the artist's studio, in one way or another. While the list of the artists who figure in this study is by no means exhaustive or even representative of possible rapports that artists have had with the studio since the 1950s, the collected essays, nevertheless, present a succinct palette of significant positions and approaches; and this variety allows us to broach key medium-related, gender, cultural, as well as socio-political issues that lend specificity to our understanding of the institution of the studio.<sup>17</sup> Its wealth lies in the acknowledgment of the discontinuities more so than the continuities in practices of the studio.

One proposition that permeates the following essays is that the rapport of postwar art and artists with the studio is in no way transparent, as seems to be implied by the overly broad term 'post-studio'. While some of the essays here demonstrate that artists most closely associated with the romance of the studio have a far more complicated relationship with the space and its aesthetic regime than is commonly accepted, other essays insist that protagonists of the 'post-studio' era do not maintain so radical a distance from the studio, as is often claimed — either by the artists themselves or by their critical advocates.

<sup>17</sup> Admittedly, the present collection of essays remains hopelessly partial and does little to examine and frame the subject of the studio within such methodological perspectives as post-colonialism, multiculturalism, and contemporary identity politics. Yet this would have required a different approach than that of gathering the papers we received in our call for the College Art Association's Annual Conference, but one we will certainly take into account when, in all likelihood, we expand upon this compendium in the future.





In the first essay, Morgan Thomas discloses the complex ‘figure’ of the studio that can be discerned in the work of the celebrated painter Mark Rothko, who remains closely and yet problematically associated with Abstract Expressionism. Even though Rothko’s work “has been framed as emblematic for the limitations of the studio as it functions in modernist art,” Thomas argues, “[it] opens up the possibility of an alternative thinking of the studio.” Contrary to the reading of the “closed nature” of the paintings as a direct token of the painter’s isolated, romantic, and heroic use of his studio, Thomas wants us to consider them “in terms of an aesthetic of oscillating forces.” Rothko’s paintings, and in particular the later ones that were commissioned for specific sites, are defined, she explains, by a “complicated and often volatile two-way traffic between the studios and the real or imagined destination,” a series of quasi-cinematic moves that, Thomas provocatively says, produce a “vertiginous effect,” not unlike the one evoked by the dialectic of site and non-site in the work of Smithson.

Next, MaryJo Marks lays out the blunt and sophisticated understanding of the studio of Bruce Nauman, an artist who most famously wondered in the late 1960s what it meant to be an artist and possess a studio to do all kinds of things in — when consciously “not start[ing] out with some canvas.” As Marks demonstrates, Nauman embarks upon a self-reflexive examination of “the form of strategic deprivation,” or the “deliberate loss of conventions, materials, or rou-





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tines that had formerly determined (...) what an artist does and practices doing in the studio,” better known as “deskilling.” To these ends, Nauman makes the most of the “conjunction of empty time” and “empty space” in his various studios. He turns away from conventional studio activities to the staging of multiple everyday activities — which he then documents either in photographs or on film — in his studio works of the late 1960s and finally records his vacant studio at night in *Mapping the Studio I (Fat Chance John Cage)* (2001), thereby revealing, as Marks convincingly asserts, that “mutually dependent, the art and the studio exist by virtue of the artist’s mere presence, a minimal guarantor of their identity as they are of his.”

The actual presence of the artist is further explored by Kirsten Swenson, who discusses Eva Hesse’s self-portrayal in her studio, both *with* her work and *with* items that she collected and used in her studio. Examining the famous, and as-yet under-analyzed photographs of Hesse, literally posing with certain sculptures in her studio and taken by fashion photographer Hermann Landshoff in 1968, Swenson demonstrates how the artist herself intelligently and sensibly responded to “the phenomenological premises and tacit gender politics of minimalism,” and also used her studio “for negotiating the diverse post-studio strategies” that prevailed in the New York art world of the late 1960s. Looking closely at one of the most-reproduced photographs of the series, in which Hesse lies on a chaise longue and is covered in a tangle of





rope, Swenson unravels the convoluted references that the artist advances through the conscious arrangement of work by artist friends such as Smithson and Sol LeWitt and reviews of Hesse's own latest exhibitions. The Landshoff photographs, Swenson points out, serve "as historically conscious depictions of the artist in her studio" that reveal the extent to which Hesse, who "notably maintained a more conventional studio-based practice" than many of her contemporaries, nevertheless "incorporated diverse extra-studio practices into the conceptual bedrock of her art."

In her essay on Robert Morris, Kim Paice starts by wondering why, although this well-known American artist is thought to be one of the artists responsible for the fall of the studio, he himself never wrote about studio practice as such. Throughout the 1960s, the artist maintained several studios in which he deconstructively expropriated the studio's margins, noise, and activity into photographic and performance works that, Paice contends, are in some ways "about displacing or ruining the artist's studio." Folded into the famous *Box with the Sound of its Own Making* (1961) and *Card File* (1963), as well as the ambitious *Continuous Project Altered Daily* (1969), she also recognizes the artist's desires "to increase public awareness" of the conceptualization of works while limiting "the symbolical presence of language, images and gestures" in them. Morris's early Neo-Dada objects, later minimal sculpture, and process-oriented installations all involved attempts to "expose the everyday as well as the





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category of publicity,” the creation of exchange value, and limits in artmaking. Decades later, these issues led him, curiously, to endow his collected writings with the supplemental title of his 1969 project. The fact of being at work and of maintaining a “workly” quality of work, whether in or outside the studio, Morris discerned, is valuable.

Daniel Buren, who is widely considered a key protagonist of the ‘post-studio’ generation, took a more definite decision in 1971. Writing his, by now, canonical essay on the function of the studio, the artist believed that his decision to work in situ had forced him not only to leave the studio, but also to declare it “extinct.” Through a close reading of the 1971 essay, however, Wouter Davidts shows that Buren’s particular farewell to the studio, while based upon a highly intricate and efficient analysis of the role and significance of the space, in a triad with the gallery and the museum, that is, is anything but ultimate. Buren’s desire for a “true relationship” between the artwork and its place of creation — epitomized by the historical studio of Constantin Brancusi in Paris — inhibits him, Davidts argues, from accepting or exploiting “the loss that takes place within every exhibition.” It is remarkable, Davidts observes, that the very condition of publicity that befalls every artwork, and which Buren has repeatedly analyzed in detail, seems to trouble him to such an extent that he feels obliged to abolish precisely the space of the studio. Even more so, since his solution is not to ‘leave’ the studio, but to





‘incorporate’ it — through “a complete identification between the studio, the world, and himself.”

The artist’s bodily encounter with the studio forms the core of Julia Gelshorn’s essay on the negotiation of the studio as a gendered space in the art of several male artists in the late 1990s. The work of such diverse and controversial figures as Matthew Barney, Martin Kippenberger, Jason Rhoades, and Paul McCarthy, she argues, amounts to more than merely juvenile or pathetic veneration of the space of the studio, but in fact involves highly coded and self-conscious engagements with the latter’s historical “masculine mystique” — in the aftermath of both feminist and post-feminist critiques of the studio’s potential implications in the masculinity in art. Through a close reading of some of these artists’ celebrated sculptures, performances, and large-scale installations, Gelshorn demonstrates how these works deliver a smart and ambiguous update of “the studio as a frame for the ritual display and formation of the artist’s identity.” Ultimately, she concludes with the admission that “attempts to undermine, subvert or renounce the myth of the studio, tend only to reveal that the annihilation of the studio is itself a counter-myth.”

The question of mythification pervades Philip Ursprung’s essay on the studio of Olafur Eliasson. Using his own experience of visiting Eliasson’s studio, and having participated in debates and symposia that the artist organized there, and ultimately contributing to a book on the studio proper, Ursprung







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sets out to uncover the undeniable appeal of Eliasson's whirling work space and task force of collaborators in his Berlin studio, formerly called *Olafur Eliasson Werkstatt & Buro* (*Olafur Eliasson Workshop & Office*). He meticulously unravels Eliasson's posture as artist-cum-entrepreneur-cum-scientist by tracing the various assignments of the studio, to then expose the trailblazing enterprise that its system has made possible. The artist, explains Ursprung, "at once demystifies and remystifies the studio as a site of artistic production," since he "manages to appeal to both the romantic idea of the workplace and the administrative notion of the office." In this way, we learn that Eliasson has succeeded in launching the studio as a virtual brand, an attractive label of experimentation that all the products that it engenders are endowed with, all while creating a marvel that narcissistically mirrors and reproduces itself over and again.

In the final essay, Jon Wood embarks on a similar quest to grasp the role of an artist's studio, quizzically asking, "Where is the studio?" Deeply intrigued by Jan De Cock's site-specific wooden fiberboard sculptures, called *Denkmal*, Wood thoughtfully and evocatively traces the importance of the "rich, anxious and deeply contested tradition and legacy of the studio, and of the studio of the sculptor in particular," that is, first in 19th and 20th century literature, and then in the young artist's self-aware sculptural practice. A Jan De Cock *Denkmal*, Wood points out, presents itself to the visitors as a studio, "albeit an abandoned one," that





demonstrates a “subtle awareness of its [own] museological status and problematic posterity.” These sculptural environments, he explains, bear the material residue of the manual work it took to produce them, and when they are displayed as “sculptural and architectural interventions” and accompanied by “staged installation photographs” of people frequenting them, the artist’s sensitivity to “the theatre of the studio and art museum” allows us to grasp the studio both as a stage set with “off-screen sculptures” and as “material existence as archive and documentation.”

In concluding, we would be remiss not to mention the debates about the artist’s studio that are being waged today, in real institutions, for example, in ongoing discussions about ‘research in the arts,’ and in the practical spheres in which recent changes in the conception, goals, and functions of higher art education are occurring. Within these discussions, which are very lively in Europe and in the United States, about the different modes and modalities, and the goals and purposes of artistic production and creativity, the artist’s studio remains *both* a crucial referent and reference point for future forms of practice and knowledge. Within the current exploration and evaluation of the scientific and/or academic value, potential, and significance of artistic work, the studio as the (private and/or personal) site of that work, remains to serve as a crucial subject.

Additionally, a discussion of the contemporary status and nature of the studio can add to the ongo-





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ing debate in art schools around the world about the necessity and significance of providing art students with a proper workspace. In an era when students work ever more systematically on personal computers and laptops, questions arise as to what extent the architectural and institutional investment in separate and viable workspaces for all students remains valid, let alone crucial to preparing our students for professional practices. Our expectation is that this publication, which critically questions and evaluates the historical and contemporary modes and modalities of the artist's usage of studio space, finds concrete relevance in these contexts. We sincerely hope that this anthology puts to rest the many sweeping claims and prevailing misconceptions about the obsolescence of private workplaces in the era of global informaticization and mobility.

While many essays do indeed emphasize the calamitous status and heritage of the studio, they reveal, if anything, that the studio, up to this day, continues to emerge as a fabulous, hydra-headed monster that — like the museum — survives every radical attack. The present collection of essays is marked by the credence that one can not easily dispense with the condition of the studio. One is forced to deal with it through a critical engagement with its multiple historical legacies and with the different modes and modalities in which it has been used, displayed, represented or 'practiced' by artists. This endeavour paradoxically forces us to pay the studio a visit, over





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and over again, or at least to consider those myriad spaces where artists are at work; an endeavour for which this book wishes to act as a thought-provoking exercise and an inspiring invitation.





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